



**Title:** The Anatomy of a Flawed Success: Comprehensive Musicianship Revisited

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*It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication. Visions of Research in Music Education will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish The Quarterly in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.*

# The Anatomy of a Flawed Success: Comprehensive Musicianship Revisited

By William Thomson  
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**L**ike many of life's most cherished activities, the Contemporary Music Project began with one exemplary goal and ended with another. Begun toward the end of the 1950s as a means for providing real-life experiences for young composers (and at the same time thrusting some new music into the public schools), its final breaths in 1973 marked the expiration of a remarkable success story. CMP was one of the century's most ambitious overhauls of the substance and procedures of music education. I know of no other single project in the United States that more profoundly questioned the whys and wherefores of the conventional wisdoms invoked in developing musicality in lay and profession-bound students.

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And once the questions had been asked, CMP confidently pitched revitalizing answers to a sometimes eager, sometimes inattentive professional audience. Whatever its full and persisting effect on music training may or may not have been, CMP unarguably accomplished one thing: It brought a fresh heuristic perspective of method and a liberating conception of the musical repertoire to institutionalized music pedagogy. These products were noticed and publicly examined throughout the world, in the Orient as well as in Western Europe and English-speaking countries.<sup>1</sup>

CMP could not fail to stir up healthy educational excitement; it incorporated within its operations some of the best musical minds of this country. It united them—to the extent that such creative and self-sufficient individuals can be united within a common effort—into a domain of inquiry and action that was urgently needed by a field that (although its own participants seemed blissfully unaware of the danger) was on the verge of rapid decline.

## Change in the Schools

CMP came along at a time, beginning with the infamous 1960s, when a surprising number of persons outside the professional circle of education took it upon themselves to show real concern for what was taking place within the schools. An MIT mathematician tinkered seriously with how mathematics might better be taught in the middle schools, and a Princeton physicist grew noseey about how empirical sciences were taught in secondary schools. Similarly, through the machinery of CMP, composers like Sam Adler, Ingolf Dahl, Norman Dello Joio, Leo Kraft, and Vincent Persichetti could become excited over how music fared in the third grade; theorists Allen Forte and Bill Mitchell might grapple with how ideas of musical structure could best be transmitted to eighth grade trombone players. Historians of the lofty accomplishments of Calvin Bower and Jan La Rue might ponder ways to account for musical style to a high school chorus. And these wise and powerful persons joined the considerable intellectual and emotional confederacy of veteran educators like Beth Landis, Eunice Boardman, Robert Werner, Louis Werson,

and Charles Leonhard. These were the CMP people. They decided what its issues should be.

The project could not have entered the American music education scene at a time of greater need. I generalize broadly, but one need not be a cultural historian to know that post-war music education had fussily set up housekeeping in a comfortable vacuum. As a national totality, the discipline lacked convincing and united purpose, not to mention rousing ideals.

Why should music exist in the schools? Answers were diverse at the time except in two critical aspects: They were preponderately bromidic and they were invariably extrinsic to the art:

“Music makes good citizens!”

“Music makes good neighbors!”

“The boy who blows a horn  
will never blow a safe!”

In short, music education, as a field of inquiry and action, desperately sought its goals in the wrong places. The idea that music makes sense as a human activity in and for itself was not a dominating motivation in the schools of the post-war world.

CMP urged that this should not be the case. It argued that music accomplishes something for humankind that is unique and irreplaceable. Its proponents argued that music, with other fine arts, can be the most direct road to an individual's ability to value things in and for themselves, a condition long touted and broadly revered as one of the moral cornerstones of Judeo-Christian life. Playing in a band or singing in a choir may make more poised, more ethical, more logic-prone, more reverent individuals of us all; but that it might do so is somewhat beside a more cosmic point: Music embodies its own intrinsic worth. We do it for itself. That was a daring perspective to lay on band directors or high school principals or school boards around 1965.

Through its Composers-in-Residence Program, leaders in the project—its policy committee and administrative staff—had discovered a disarming but widely confirmed weakness in the country's schools: Pre-collegiate music faculties had been infiltrated by many persons of little musical know-how and even less creative imagina-

tion, persons weak in musical enthusiasm themselves and thus unlikely to cultivate them in others. These teachers were direct products of an educational system that mixed a strait-jacketed music curriculum with inept “methods” courses, then polished off the final product with a brief period of on-site testing called “practice teaching.” This final indoctrination often occurred under the supervision of people whose own training had been at least as confining.

As a result, the discipline of music education, despite blessed pockets of inspiring exceptions throughout the country, had become a ghetto of empty methodology. What happens in a music class presided over by one who is insufficiently prepared is bad enough; when this is combined with no convincing motive for action, pure devastation was on occasion the result. The pep bands of the world had as much to do with educating future music lovers as steer-wrestling had to do with developing future farmers. The glee clubs of America were fun, but their typical repertoires, which extended all the way from “I'm Taking a Jet Plane” to resurrections of “Oh, What a Beautiful Morning,” did little to evoke the aesthetic thrill of the choral sound. Pep bands and glee clubs were fun, yes; the clinker was that too many people thought they constituted sound arts education.

### **Tracing Back to the Epicenter: 1870**

The many causes for this educational grinding-of-gears and spinning-of-wheels would be easy to oversimplify, and I don't wish to commit that error. My immediate purpose and my tangential grasp of the whole problem lead me to deal only with those causes which the Contemporary Music Project attempted to address directly. Problems were not hard to find in the early 1960s. As participants in the project looked inward as well as outward, they traced the shortcomings of public school music to disturbing conditions in higher education, where the schools' teachers had been educated. The pervading music discourse that gave substance to their educations was more confining than liberating. It was dominated—

depending on the particular institution under scrutiny—by the harmony of Bach's chorale settings via the sterile computations of a chemist-cum-music theorist; or the contrapuntal magic of Palestrina and Lassus filtered through the scholarly sieve of a Danish musicologist; or perhaps even the two-centuries-old compositional rules-of-thumb of Jean-Phillipe Rameau as they had been refined and elaborated by a succession of French, German, and English pedagogues, from Andre Geldage and Hugo Riemann to Ebenezer Prout, via American Percy Goetschius.

The rumblings of music, as represented in these pedagogical tracts, had their epicenter around 1870; they did not extend far in either direction, earlier or later. Their shock waves branched cautiously back into the madrigals and motets of "ancient times," and forward perhaps as far as the "ultra-moderns" like Faure, Debussy, Reger, Elgar, and maybe even John Alden Carpenter. The world of music, as represented in sonic explications of the educational setting, was not broadening; it was not interactive with the rich and compelling real world, and it suggested no inquisitiveness about that world, past, present, or future. Its vision tunneled through a magnificent but confined lode.

Teachers of the 1960s developed as musicians and educators, depending upon their individual maturities at the time, within the decades of 1930–1960. Yet the music of Shostakovich (d. 1975), of Hindemith (d. 1963), of Schoenberg (d. 1951), of Bartok (d. 1945), or even of Mahler (d. 1911) was little more than alluded to in our music classrooms, much less performed, dissected, or made the object of contemplation. This music was not made a part of the generalizations that can provide knowing people with tools for understanding unforeseen conditions of the future. And this silence about these contemporary masters was not imposed because of excessive attention being paid to the music of America, whether jazz of indigenous musicians or the European-influenced musics of Varese, Copland, Ives, Gershwin, Harris, or Piston. The silence was not imposed along

political nor geographical lines. The void was by nature indiscriminate and total.

Thus musician/teachers entered professional life equipped only with a repertory in the mind's ear that most charitably might be called "skimpy," and armed with discursive and analytical techniques foraged from harmonic ideas of the eighteenth century (as they might apply to the music of Bach-through-Brahms). Overall, they lacked the kind of musical insight and professional passion that inspires remarkable learning, that spurs students on to lifelong enthusiasms for the art. Direct application of the McHose-Jepesen-Goetschius-Prout formalizations to any music of any time or place was tenuous if not wholly irrelevant, yet it was accepted as standard, professional practice. If the field of medicine held tenets parallel to those of music education, physicians would still be administering aspirin to patients with polio.

I remember well a CMP seminar class I taught at Eastman in the summer of 1972. A large circle of the students expressed a fervent wish to introduce some of Schoenberg's early atonal music to their classes. So why didn't they? Because, they meekly admitted, they didn't know what to say about it. And they asked: "What do you say about a piece that isn't in a major or minor key, that doesn't have the kind of melody you find in Mozart or Haydn, that doesn't fall into an A B A form, that doesn't have a melody-accompaniment texture (or isn't a fugue), or doesn't contain the kinds of chords that can be symbolized by Roman numerals?" (Of course, I told them.)

### Seeking a Synthesis

Leadership of CMP was dominated by an infectious mixture of idealism, optimism, and a powerful sense of mission. Like William Schuman's earlier L and M Project at Juilliard<sup>2</sup> (a more limited project in scope and depth, although similar in aims and techniques), the educational facet of CMP's work was motivated by a simple yet radical premise: Educated musicians, whether they be composers, historians, theorists, performers, conductors or educators, should be diligently and explicitly cultivated—to "reasonable



degrees”—in each of those mutually complementary subdisciplines, regardless of narrow professional niches sought in life. And like the Juilliard experiment, teachers of broad and certain musical knowledge and perspective were demanded. We openly eschewed the Romanticist ideal of the aspiring pupil, who through a mixture of pious mimicry and patient osmosis, absorbs the Artist-Teacher's accumulated vision.

What we sought, as hindsight makes rather clear, was complementary to a conspicuous and profound change that was taking place in postsecondary music education in this country just after World War II: Conservatories (which trained professional performers), and normal schools (which trained teachers), and music departments (which trained musicologists) were all essential cogs in our American educational machine, but they were being eclipsed by a broader-based type of music institution. Under the unifying roof of new schools of music, a synthesis of functions was subsuming what had in the past been separate.<sup>3</sup>

New and powerful schools of music, such as those at Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, University of Rochester, North Texas State, Northwestern, and Southern California<sup>4</sup>, set the model and the standards and experienced immediate and rapid growth. These awesome schools, usually more heavily populated than their more specialized counterparts, were in many ways amalgamations of the virtues and the foibles of those three kinds of training institutions they attempted to forge into one. By and large, however, they pursued a more egalitarian student-institution relationship and a more holistic approach to subject matter.

This egalitarian-holistic bias fit CMP predilections admirably. Whereas in the past a teacher might order, “More pedal there!”, the CMP-favored discourse would make some choice additions. While it might well achieve the same immediate end with about the same injunction, it could also store up helpful generalizations for application to future musical encounters; it would engage teacher and student in dialogue, seeking just when and why certain musical conditions might transpire

in a particular location to make “More pedal there!” an appropriate gesture. I suspect that the reader can readily imagine the same heuristic scenario applied to a host of educational situations, from crescendos for tuba players to parallel fifths for theory students.

Related to this comingling of the whys of music-making with the whats of tradition was the project's distinctly ecumenical air. It derived from three implicit hypotheses that, to my knowledge, were shared by the participants. First, we believed that the repertory of teaching should in principle omit nothing that could contribute to sharpened understandings and broadened perspectives. Certainly, modern musicians must be introduced to music from outside the West-European concert orbit of 1700–1900, the music of Common Practice.

This conviction was perhaps felt and pushed most strongly in the case of music composed in our own time, which we fervently argued in our second hypothesis: The music of our own time should be the point of departure from which an individual's musical skills and values must extend, backward and forward in time. The infant begins a linguistic life with the sounds of the present. The growing child learns language from the hit-and-miss encounters of vibrant life around him. And rightfully, the adolescent musician begins formal training with a ready-made musical culture. It may be a culture dominated by Mantovani strings, or by the guitars of the Lightcrust Doughboys, by the brass of Stan Kenton or by the tunes of Giuseppe Verdi. Whatever, it is a mixture of sonic immediacy that must be recognized and accounted for as a meaningful point of departure.

## **A Place for All Musics**

But the catholicity of CMP policy could not stop with imposing only recent music on a reluctant teaching profession. Most of us realized that all music, not just what we revere as Art music, can be a part of education, and usually with immediate beneficent effect. Certainly the most treasured products of jazz and popular traditions deserve integration, and serious encounters with the musics of other cultures—

music well removed from the White-West-European circularity of the past two centuries—could but deepen the understanding of one's own cultural trappings. Just as the study of a foreign language can solidify the conceptual grasp of one's native tongue, so can the study of a "foreign music" enliven receptivity and enhance meanings for one's native music. Concert music—or let us say "Classical Music"—is only one of many musical subcultures; it is not the sole source of musical wisdom nor of aesthetic gratification.

So this was our CMP pitch: All musics must have a place in the learning process, as they might be directly cogent to better understanding, to a tightened hold on the musical experience and its properties.

This ideal of expanded teaching repertory was misunderstood by some musicians. On occasion it became the butt of the charge that CMP ideas were unrealistically overdrawn; they could lead only to superficiality, to very little learned about a lot. It was an honest and understandable inference, even though false. The project's goal was never to irresponsibly add all the world's music to an already crowded evidentiary docket. Teachers were in fact urged to draw in their own teaching from sources close to them, expanded to the limits possible, but always deriving generalizations from a personal reservoir of expertise rather than from hawked facts and truisms about unknown quantities.

I remember with admiration how the gifted composer David Ward-Steinman would use his monumental skills at jazz improvisation, within a seminar setting, to illustrate how procedures and techniques from that genre could be used to introduce or support ideas from Bach or Stravinsky. Teachers for whom jazz improvisation was an integral part of their musical lives were inspired to do the same; those who didn't know a riff from a twelve-bar blues were urged to cultivate greater familiarity with the idiom. But lacking a confirmed understanding, they were well-advised to turn elsewhere for their broadening exemplars, to established roots—perhaps Victor Herbert or Richard Rogers or even to television commercials—

but by all means to some source that could undergird a sturdier conceptual base than one confined to the Bach-Brahms orbit.

This enriched "personal repertory" was, in our collective judgment, an improvement over a sampling from a limited cultural milieu, deep and profound though it might be. An understanding of general principles is enhanced through acquaintance with ever-larger numbers of particular instances, whether we study music or fruitflies. Thus, for the American educator, Japanese gagaku or North Indian ragas or Javanese gamelans or Byzantine chants were never imagined as replacements (nor as serious contenders) for traditions closer to home. They were seen as enriching potentials, as side issues in a larger context, as a supporting cast rather than co-stars. And it was in this ecumenical spirit that we viewed the educator's professional responsibility as one of remaining artistically alive, maintaining a responsive attitude toward new musical artifacts as they become known, regardless of whether new or reclaimed from the past. From this, we trusted, one could continue arriving at ever-renewed syntheses of what is "true," and what might be of sufficient value to retain and pass on to a subsequent generation.

The so-called "all-properties" approach championed by CMP gained some influential status during the late 1960s and early 1970s, sometimes under the unfortunate designate "The Parametric Approach." It has remained a helpful guide in analysis for which Schenkerian harmonic/melodic prescriptions do not dominate. It became more a part of collegiate teaching after Jan La Rue's textbook, *Guidelines For Style Analysis*, was published in 1970. It sometimes became one of those jargon phrases—whether as properties or parameters—whose cliché status could hide a very precious truth: Any view of music furnished solely by dissections of only harmony or melody is ultimately impotent. Music consists of far more determining elements, even if non-melodic and nonharmonic properties have been ignored by speculative theory during the preceding centuries. In CMP we tried to stem this powerful tide.

## Beyond Melody and Harmony

Our antidote was to replace myopic duality with a perspective and with techniques that could better account for the totality of music as kinetic process. Timbre is not a word nor concept even suggested in Piston's *Harmony*, in McHose's *Contrapuntal Harmonic Techniques of the Eighteenth Century*, nor in Goetschius's *The Homophonic Forms of Musical Composition*. And yet that property's determining importance, in the music of Mozart as well as in the music of Debussy or Varese or Schoenberg, would be hard to overstate.

And texture! Surely those old cubby-holes of conventional wisdom, monophonic, homophonic and polyphonic, could not, in their exclusivity, adequately channel our testimonials about how sound complexes relate as they move through time. They don't help, for example, in categorizing the ways stratification plays a role in Ives' *Unanswered Question*; but they leave equally inexplicable similar conditions in Bach fugues (like the C# minor of WTC 1). We can find too many instances of how fluctuating densities of sound strata shape a work, convincing us that the hallowed harmony texts of yesteryear were poor almanacs for predicting the weather of music.

Clearly our teaching lexicon had to be fattened up; otherwise we were struggling along trying to talk about automobiles while using the conceptual frames of goatherds. It seemed abundantly clear that we could not even describe what we heard if it did not readily and neatly align with our eighteenth-century vocabularies, if it could not yield to tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords fraternizing within spans of symmetrically articulated time. Faced with a new (or very old) piece of music, the uninformed music teacher of 1965 might have responded like the farmer visiting the zoo who saw his first giraffe: "There ain't no such animal!"

And last, this vastly enriched repertory, to be viewed through a new set of cognitive filters that includes grids for more properties than just harmony and melody, was to be dealt with in teaching in a slightly different way. It was to be inter-

acted with by people who at various times would be involved in the range of professional roles that prevail in the real music world. "Learn by Deweying" was a crucial injunction for us. Musicians learn to be musical by doing musical things. Musicians play and sing, of course, but they can play and sing better by knowing well the motions that complement playing and singing. They compose music (which meant a good deal more for CMP than adding chords to hymn tunes). They engage in research—preferably with primary sources—to answer questions about style, historical successions, performance practice. They theorize as an approach to comprehending structure. They learn by teaching others.

All of this was a well-calculated reaction to the wasteful tradition of artistic instruction as a laying-on-of-hands ritual, one in which an ineffable goodness and truth flow, when the connecting pipes are right, from teacher to student. Music education under CMP auspices became an earnest search, not the terminal inculcation of unarguable facts *ex cathedra*. It was an open-ended process, teacher and student searching together, teacher (most of the time) leading the way. The end goal was musicians who could continue to learn, whether as pianist for the local Rotary Club, as principal horn for the Cleveland Orchestra, as musicology professor in the state university, or as music teacher in the local elementary school.

## Assessing CMP's Contributions

CMP officially ceased as a project in 1973, when its funding grant from the Ford Foundation expired. Now, some two decades later, many of its basic tenets and some of its treasured techniques and procedures have trickled down to become part of the conventional wisdom of the pedagogical world. Compared with usual practice in 1955 or 1945, the actual amount of music that confronts students today in music theory and history classes (as aural reality, not just as notes on paper or names and dates) is stunning. Some of this wealth of access to sounding music came about, of course, through the unprecedented developments of music reproduction and storage—reel-to-reel

tape, cassettes, compact disks—that have transformed that industry since the 1950s. But CMP helped show people that traditional teaching had relied too often and too heavily on words and notes without constant reference to the real thing. CMP gave us something worthwhile to do with all of those new sound-reproduction playthings, something cogent to say about the messages they carry. CMP brought to a needy profession a way of dealing with its subject matter.

And maybe the project's most important contribution to music education was its fuming and fussing and pointing accusing fingers until the classroom's musical diet was exposed for the starvation fare it was. Today, institutions that purport to educate musicians revel in rich repertoires, in the musics of other cultures, in new music, ancient music, even occasionally in forgotten music composed by the not-so-famous. Some of these musics have unobtrusively crept into our consciousness via anthologies, which were themselves a kind of publication unneeded, and thus unconceived, prior to CMP's influence. [A case in point is Charles Burkhart's anthology, first published in 1979, which begins with plainchant and ends with a work by Bruce Saylor (b. 1946).] A monumental range of musics is regularly tapped for teaching, not just as exotic overlay nor afterthought but as integral enrichment of regular study. Few major schools today do not have early music programs, ensembles devoted exclusively to music of recent vintage, classes and ensembles whose performance metier is music of cultures remote from the Christian-Hebraic orbit of our history. Through CMP urging and guidance, many teachers now in their maturity were led to discover and develop ways of thinking through and communicating about music in ways that free the spirit rather than imprison the mind.

Hindsight forces us to observe that CMP attention was focused more on composition, theory, and history teaching than on performance teaching as such. For this reason, its impact was less in that domain than in any other, and I find rare evidence in solo performance teaching today that leads me to believe that CMP's

pioneering in those other areas spilled over into it. For too many piano and violin teachers today, Prokofiev sonatas and Debussy and Scriabin etudes still seem to represent the avant-garde.

This oversight reveals an error of strategy on the part of the project's policy committee, an error which I helped to perpetuate as a committee member from 1963 until 1973. It meant overlooking or neglecting the incomparable power wielded by performance teachers in modeling the perspective and sense of values of young musicians. Since their earliest and most vivid experiences in the art (except as listeners) is in performing—certainly not in reflective pursuit of conceptual wisdom—that aspect of the educational process is a far more critical influence than superb courses in junior analysis or music history can be.

### **Conflicting Conditions and Ideologies**

Its acknowledged victories aside, the ways and means of CMP did not, alas, sweep the civilized world. To my knowledge, people from the world's centers of culture do not on occasion give signs of recognition with such responses as "Why, that came from the CMP!" as one might say "Why, that's a bit Freudian!" or "That's much too Darwinian for me!" My personal disdain for the canonization of anything manmade leads me to believe that in the long run this is for the best. We can nonetheless recognize two broad and powerful reasons for a less-than-cosmic infiltration of CMP particulars, reasons that have nothing to do with the force or relevancy of CMP ideas nor the way they were developed during its lifetime.

The first of these reasons was continuing change in the public perception of the place of music education in the schools. After the release of the vaunted Harvard Report in 1952, and with the insistent scrappy urging of Admiral Hiram Rickover, the post-Sputnik world found music lumped together in the educational pecking order with shop and home economics. Perhaps, as a subject, music was perceived as even slightly less important than these subjects because it was "less

practical''; whatever the reason, as a "soft subject" music did not fare well in the competitive struggle for public support and educational funds.

The initiation of this long-lived and eventually crippling reduction of the funds channelled into arts education at all levels of precollegiate instruction coincided with the early 1960s, while CMP was first beginning to frame its own educational policies. It soon became clear that the finest teachers, using the most elegantly planned strategies and foolproof materials, cannot make a difference if no money is made available to keep them employed. It makes no difference whether CMP or Suzuki or Kodaly or Ouija boards prevail; if the teacher isn't there, or if the time for music is cut down to one hour a week, or if the school board can't buy books or records, then the music program is scrapped.

The national arts education neglect, whose potential depth began to show itself by the 1970s, and which continues to erode even remnants of programs today,<sup>5</sup> is not likely to impress the ideas, processes, or values of music education on anybody. In this respect, the Contemporary Music Project came along about ten years too late to realize what could have been its impact, or to provide the basis for persuasive arguments that might have saved more resources for the arts in the schools.

The second reason for the attenuation of CMP influence can be traced to music departments and schools and conservatories. A product of a curious conservatism, not to say reactionism, began to settle over musical academia in the mid-1960s. This conservatism was manifested most directly by two musical ideologies which, although themselves mutually contradictory, dampened the airy atmosphere of CMP's liberating gestures. One of these ideologies was the prescriptive harmonic/melodic theory of Heinrich Schenker; the other was the wave of serialism and set theory that enveloped influential faculty members in the most progressive schools, beginning as early as 1950. Both of these remain thoroughly operative in music in higher education today, although both reached their apogees within the decade of the 1980s.

Schenker's doctrines began to be talked about in superficial ways just after the war. No translations of his considerable writings were available at that time, except in limited batches and in indirect ways.<sup>6</sup> Championed early by Allen Forte, Bill Mitchell, Roger Sessions, and Felix Salzer in New York and by Oswald Jonas in Chicago, a discernable spread did not occur until around the early 1960s, when the better-known ideas (structural levels, tonicization, and the concept of the *Urlinie*) began to seep into graduate-class discussions. By 1975 I suspect that most undergraduate music theory classes were in some way influenced, directly or indirectly, by Schenker's principal ideas about structural unfolding.

The influx of Schenkerian ideas gave musicians insights they had found in no other theoretical systems. His perspective of an elaborated basic structure and his co-embodiment of contrapuntal and chordal principles as shapers of the musical utterance marked an advance over the separation of melody and harmony that had dogged (and perplexed) musical speculation over the ages. But these advances were not made without cost. His theories, like Rameau's, can tell us more about eighteenth-century music than about anything before or after. A clearer view of the scenery was opened up, but the breadth of coverage still left much to be desired.

Schenkerian prescriptions and "approaches" nonetheless became canonic law for a growing number of professors, especially theorists and historians, as the decade of the 1970s rolled on. Even today some of our colleagues would have us impose Schenker's ideas of musical explication on the whole of basic instruction as a kind of grand pedagogical *Ursatz*.<sup>7</sup> This would be about as beneficial as for contemporary medical schools to base all anatomy instruction for surgeons on the collected works of Galen, but such proposals merit public discussion.

Whatever posterity may hold for a Schenkerian Utopia, academia's adoption of his basic premises and its consequent reversion to a tighter rein on the musical substance, around 1970-75, essentially froze many persons in their tracks, frus-



trating attempts to widen the perspective, to face up to a larger reality that exceeds tertial chords hovering within the celestial balance of I IV V harmonies. The waxing of Schenkerian procedures ineluctably accompanied the waning of CMP's One World.

Coincidentally and synchronically with the spread of this new-old perspective came the advent into academic discourse of set theory, initially developed as the explanatory concepts and illuminating vocabulary of serial music. Too few of us pause to marvel at how inherently contradictory are Schenker's harmonic reductionism and the set-theoretic elaborated by Milton Babbitt (from Schoenberg's more intuitively derived axioms). That they began to be folded together into the educations of musicians, by many of the same people at about the same time, suggests only that we still sometimes fail to proceed cautiously when confronted with implausible bedfellows.

Be that as it may, the simultaneous installations of Schenker and Serialism unwittingly solved the problem of how musical people can meaningfully conceive of and discourse about the totality of music—or so it seemed. Indeed, it was simple: Heinrich Schenker showed us how to talk about tonal music (tonal music composed, that is, from J. S. Bach through J. Brahms), and Professor Babbitt taught us how to talk about serial and dodecaphonic music.

Thus these unidentical twins, the pre-eminent conceptual systems of 1960–1980, gave birth to a new taxonomy of music itself. It became evident that now there are two musics: One is Tonal, and the other is Post-Tonal. (Nomenclature can give an inkling of rough chronology, even if it does little to characterize musical substances.) Evidence of this turn of events is easy to find today in the bulletins of most progressive music departments and conservatories. Courses like Tonal Analysis and Post-Tonal Analysis, Tonal Counterpoint and Post-Tonal Counterpoint limn the pages of those testi-

monials to educational wisdom, which perhaps take their cue from the Hollywood film principle that Every Success Must Have Its Sequel.

For obvious reasons, emphasis on note structures imposed by adoption of this new duality, Schenkerian harmonic theory and the set theory of dodecaphony, inevitably led to a condition of repertorial anorexia quite as damaging as that which existed before CMP. With the marked decline of serial music among young composers today, the strength of set theory as a conceptual tool can be expected to fade correspondingly to a lesser role in the total educational stream. But until that happens, and until Schenker's theories are viewed more soberly as enlightening but less than cosmically prophetic, the CMP legacy will necessarily remain modest and, to a large extent, covert.

As in all else, timing turns out to be everything. □

## Notes

1. I fondly remember the thrill CMP regulars felt when we first received copies of Japanese translations of some of our CMP-induced articles. The articles were fortunately printed in English as well as Japanese; otherwise we would not have known what they were.

2. Vincent Persichetti, who was a central figure in the L and M program, was a member of the CMP Policy Committee and taught in some of our seminars.

3. Certainly there were schools where all three educational functions had occurred for years. The shift after the war was mainly one of student drawing-power and prominence in the professions.

4. Prior to the ease and speed of jet travel, artist-teachers were confined to conservatory faculties, which were invariably in large metropolitan centers. An active concert artist like Janos Starker could not have lived in Bloomington, Indiana (and maintained a concert career) before 1955.

5. For a recent informative survey of this continuing decline, see James Hanshumaker's "Forging Instrumental Programs for an Urban Society," *Music Educators Journal*, November 1989, pages 34–37.

6. Explanatory exhortations of Schenker's ideas appeared in America as early as 1935 (Roger Sessions, *Modern Music* 12, May–June, 1935, 170–178).

7. A recent plea is that of professors Riggins and Proctor in the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 3, 1989, 1–24.