

After Beethoven, After Hegel: Legacies of Selfhood in Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4

The string quartet, as a genre and institutionalised musical practice, is often conceived of as a space for negotiating issues of subjectivity. Many have identified it as a vehicle of intimacy, a markedly 'subjective' trope. Take for instance three different contributors to the same recent essay collection: Robin Stowell writes that the quartet affords composers a vehicle for (among other things) »the most intimate compositional thought«;¹ Christina Bashford that, as a genre, »[in the 20th century] the quartet retained its hold over composers as a repository of their most intimate thoughts and close working-out«;² and, Kenneth Gloag, »that many twentieth-century composers from many different cultural backgrounds and stylistic positions looked to the genre as a context suitable for their most intimate

¹ Robin STOWELL, 'Traditional and Progressive Nineteenth-Century Trends: France, Italy, Great Britain and America' in *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet*, ed. Robin Stowell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 250.

² Christina BASHFORD, 'The String Quartet and Society', in *ibid.*, 15.

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Abstract - Résumé

Music can articulate ideas of selfhood, as is often illustrated with regard to the 'Heroic' works of Beethoven, and the relationship found between Beethoven's music and Hegel's philosophy. Alfred Schnittke confronts this tradition in aspects of his String Quartet No. 4 (1989), a work that highlights contemporary music's subtle and complex relationship with the entangled histories of both music and philosophy. In the second movement of his quartet, figures of musical closure, as metonymic symbols of musical and subjective self-coherence, are taken as a discursive starting point, as images of an objectified self. Contradictions within this symbolic presentation of selfhood are then opened up dialectically. In so doing, a critical exploration of self-understanding – of its process, reifications, and paradoxes – is performed musically.

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thoughts«. ³ Another essay collection, focusing specifically on twentieth-century quartets, is even entitled *Intimate Voices*. ⁴ I do not contest that the quartet enables musical explorations of intimacy. Instead, I suggest that this characteristic reminds us that the quartet (still) allows for articulating markedly subjective concerns, and that this is an articulation of subjectivities based on, though not limited to, historically sedimented ways of doing so. The quartet is a form of musical discourse that, perhaps more readily than others, resonates with legacies of inherited subjectivities.

Gloag argues that, in the twentieth century, »the string quartet continued to provide a generic framework which reflected the inherited traditions and conventions as accumulated through history and stylistic developments of the genre, even if in some cases it was only to construct a point for new departure«. ⁵ Taking this suggestion in mind, I propose that in Alfred Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 (1989), especially in moments from the second movement, one of these points of departure is the historicity of the subject and of musical constructions of the self. This is a quality that is evoked both semantically, through allusion to ('heteronomous') historical materials and musical conventions, as well as through connections that develop within the work ('autonomously').

Below I draw on philosophy and critical theory in demonstrating Schnittke's musical exploration of these issues of subjectivity. Analytic elaborations allow me to evidence my findings. I make particular reference to poststructuralist thinking about selfhood, much of which is indebted to the philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel. I argue that the Beethoven's 'Heroic' self – a concept of self related to Hegelian notions of selfhood and self-determination⁶ – is itself a historicised subject of critique in Schnittke's quartet. Thus, in discussing this post-Beethovenian – although Beethoven-indebted – musical work I make substantial reference to the work of post-Hegelian philosophers, to work that bears traces of Hegel's philosophical legacy.

Lawrence Kramer discusses Schnittke's Third Quartet (1983) in his *Interpreting Music*. Similarly to my focus on the Fourth, Kramer focuses on the use of markedly historical musical materials in a problematic, 'modern' context. »The piece«, he states, »is above all a study of when, if, and whether a – musical – message from the past can arrive safely in the present.«⁷ In the context of the

³ Kenneth GLOAG, 'The String Quartet in the Twentieth Century', in *ibid.*, 288.

⁴ Evan Jones (ed.), *Intimate Voices: The Twentieth-Century String Quartet*, two vols. (Rochester: Rochester University Press, 2009).

⁵ K. GLOAG, 'The String Quartet in the Twentieth Century', 288.

⁶ This connection has recently been explored in Janet SCHMALFELDT'S *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁷ Lawrence KRAMER, *Interpreting Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 232. The essay in which Kramer makes these remarks is entitled simply 'Modern'.

Third Quartet, these messages take the form of explicit quotations. They are even labelled in the score. These are textual fragments now distanced from their historical contexts; »these distanced forms of meaning [the quoted materials, as these allude to wider associations] are like phantoms or specters. Initially, at least, the citations that recall them are empty husks betokening a historical condition that renders the meanings, perhaps any meanings, no longer accessible except as cancelled.«⁸ In the Third, distanced materials are quotations, intertextual elements that are derived from music history and which are now brought into new relationships with each other. 'Distancing' also occurs in the Fourth: there is an appeal to distanced, intertextual conventions (to figures of closure in particular). However, there is a notable difference between the two quartets. In contrast with the distanced material of the Third Quartet, in the Fourth this intertextual material also derives from material developed *intratexturally*, i.e. 'within' the work; in the Fourth we find a dialectical development of material that appeals both to what is 'outside' (historical, conventional, heterogeneous) and that which emerges (autonomously) from 'within'.

The Fourth Quartet consists of five movements, the first three of which are played without a break. The first movement acts as a kind of slow introduction to the second. There is a focus on glissandi and textures are bare, gradually changing, and chromatic, sometimes with microtonal fluctuations. The *Allegro* second movement juxtaposes material heard in embryonic forms in the first. A central point of focus is a recurring entry of material marked with historical connotations – a stylistic breakthrough that interjects into the flow of the movement. This stylistic intervention bears an acute relationship with historically established mediations of the self in music. Hence, much of the following discussion focuses on this 'intervention' and its relationship to other materials in the quartet. The third movement mirrors the *Lento* of the first, but is infused with some of the *Allegro's* features. The fourth is quick, and leads into a final *Lento*, which echoes the mood of the first. A feature that occurs across these movements is a gesture of movement up and down between semitones.

This gestural figure becomes a central feature of the musical discourse, and one that I explore below. I argue that, given this figure's associations with the conventions of musical closure – conventions themselves related to past forms of musical subjectivity – its significance derives in part from historical relationship with past ways of performing subjectivity musically. I thus hope to supplement the valuable analytic insights into Schnittke's music that have been made by others⁹ – by interrogating the historical and philosophical significance of Schnittke's

⁸ *Ibid.*, 234.

⁹ I have made particular reference to Aaminah Durrani's perceptive analysis of the Fourth Quartet. See Aaminah DURRANI, *Chorale and Canon in Alfred Schnittke's Fourth String Quartet*, PhD Diss. (Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2005).

musical materials. This, at least, shall be a first step. Adorno wrote in *Aesthetic Theory* that, »[h]istory is the content of artworks. To analyze artworks means no less than to become conscious of the history immanently sedimented in them.«¹⁰ I take this as one point of theoretical impetus.

Richard Taruskin writes that, in Schnittke's music, »the pot frequently boils over in violent extremes of dissonance: tone clusters (a Schnittke specialty), dense polytonal counterpoint (often in the form of close canons), 'verticalized' melodies whereby the notes of a tune are sounded simultaneously as a chord.«¹¹ The Fourth Quartet bears all these stylistic hallmarks. It also accords with Schnittke's move, in the last decade of his life, towards »less frequently [relying] on quotation; stylistic pluralism is still present, but manifest by way of allusion rather than literal borrowing.«¹² Indeed, this typifies the dialectic of historical allusion and self-determined development, of heteronomy and autonomy, cited above.

I start by briefly outlining notions of selfhood as they relate to Schnittke's Quartet – what it is to 'do' or 'perform' selfhood in music after Beethoven. The understanding of a coherent, centred self, and its relationship with musical closure, is of importance here. An examination of the *objectification* of the self – when the self becomes an object of understanding – and Schnittke's musically discursive treatment of objectification, follows. Last, I note how this objectification is reacted to in the Fourth Quartet, how new lines of connection and mediation are drawn from and through it.

i. Understanding the Music(al Self)

Selfhood is a site of ideology, of materiality, and of identity. As such it is also a point of contestation, one at which something is at stake in these terms. It has become a concept of musicological interest in recent years. Susan McClary writes of how, in the Classical sonata, through internal synthesis of contradictory materials, the ideal of an autonomous and centred self was negotiated musically.¹³ Mark Evan Bonds (following Scott Burnham¹⁴) writes similarly of the music of Beethoven and his enduring influence that, »[i]n the unfolding of a central musical idea, in the close integration of contrasting gestures, and in a trajectory that traces a path from struggle to triumph, we hear what amounts to an idealized progres-

¹⁰ Theodor W. ADORNO, *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Gretel Adorno & Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: The Athlone Press, 1997 [orig. 1970]), 85.

¹¹ Richard TARUSKIN, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 101.

¹² A. DURRANI, *Chorale and Canon*, 150.

¹³ Susan McCLARY, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 102.

¹⁴ Scott BURNHAM, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

sion of life itself». ¹⁵ Subjectivity and an idealised image of selfhood was here objectified into musical artworks. More recently, Daniel Chua has written of the articulation of self through the concept of 'iPodic selves'. ¹⁶ Despite the differences between the music focused upon, and what they consider as being at stake, what these authors have in common is a taking of selfhood as something that is articulated musically in order to be experienced. The world and the self are constructed musically so as to be understood – if not consciously or linguistically, then as a form of reperformable practice.

Commenters have often characterised Schnittke's music as displaying polystylistic ¹⁷ or polyglossic ¹⁸ tendencies. Building on this, I suggest that collisions of differing musical styles make visible collisions of past selves, past ways of being musically in the world. Hence, Schnittke's music does not merely juxtapose musical genres, forms, and materials, but worlds with worlds, and selves with selves. His String Quartet No. 4 – moments from the second movement in particular – provides a case in point.

One moment of historical allusion stands out in particular, speaking to the historicity of the articulation of subjectivity and (self) understanding as these are objectified musically. This returns, in slightly adapted forms, as a position around which much of the rest of the movement's materials revolve. The first entry of the material occurs towards the opening of the second movement (Example 1, p. 316). ¹⁹ This returning figure suggests unity in a sound world of otherwise complex polyphony and, contrary to the music preceding it, strongly articulates a cohesive discursive identity. ²⁰ It can be grasped on to, a sturdy, floating object in the otherwise continuous and stormy polyphonic sea in which subjectivity is set adrift. This object articulates a discursive identity, situated amongst other

¹⁵ Mark Evan BONDS, *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 57.

¹⁶ Daniel CHUA, 'Listening to the Self: The Shawshank Redemption and the Technology of Music', *19th-Century Music*, 34/3 (2011), pp. 341-55, 355. See also D. CHUA's 'Listening to the Other: A Counter-Cultural Ear in iPodic Times', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 135 (2011), Supplement 1, pp. 103-08.

¹⁷ Alexander IVASHKIN, *Alfred Schnittke* (London: Phaidon Books Ltd, 1996), 88. See also Alfred SCHNITTKE 'Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music' [orig. c. 1971], in *A Schnittke Reader*, ed. Alexander Ivashkin (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), and Richard Taruskin's essay, 'After Everything' (in R. TARUSKIN, *Defining Russia Musically*).

¹⁸ Gavin Thomas DIXON, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke's Symphonies 3, 4, and His Concerto Grosso No.4/Symphony No.5* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, University of London, 2007).

¹⁹ Note that there seems to be a B-flat missing in the score in the cello's line in the second bar of fig. 2.

²⁰ This is not to say polyphony and unity are exclusive phenomena in general (a polyphonic work, like a fugue, can suggest a larger unity). It is instead to suggest that an opposition of these things is presented in the discourse of *this* work, as particular means by which expressive and dramatic results are produced.

Example 1 – Schnittke: String Quartet No. 4 (ii), five bars before fig. 2

polyphonic materials that often undermine distinctive, centred discursive identities. The latter (polyphonic) materials, set in contrast with these objects, arise from close canons and contrapuntal lines that regularly trespass into the other players' registers. As Aminah Durrani summarises, »traditional canons of the common practice period are typically composed so that the lines are heard as independent entities.«²¹ However, »[Schnittke's] canons, like Ligeti's micropolyphony, create – by virtue of their brevity, short durations between entrances, or uniform rhythmic patterns – a texture continuously in motion.«²²

²¹ A. DURRANI, *Chorale and Canon*, 56.

²² *Ibid.*, 80. Durrani also notes that Schnittke was familiar with Ligeti's micropolyphony; »Schnittke wrote an analysis of Ligeti's *Lontano* during the 1970s« (*Ibid.*, 58).

This figure, standing in bold contrast with other materials (yet also arising from them, as I illustrate below), speaks to legacies of the self directly, reminiscent of mannerisms of musical concordance – of closure and synthesis – as heard in earlier art musics. It is a reference point for understanding, one readily heard thanks to the material's markedness both immanently to the work (as formally unprepared juxtaposition) and historically (because, as I show below, it is a moment reminiscent of past discourses of musical selves at odds with what now surrounds it).²³ However, it does not provide synthesis or resolution, rather acting as a *symbol* of a unity, of integration of subject and object.

It would at this point be wise to examine the concept of 'understanding' itself, something central to any 'self-understanding'. This concept has its own historical-philosophical legacy. I will start by outlining the concept of understanding – in particular as a notion after Hegel²⁴ – before exploring how this shapes the dialectics of experiencing musical form, expression, and meaning in moments from the second movement. Drawing on stable understanding, I argue that Schnittke then goes on to problematise it – not so as to obscure the music's meaning – but, paradoxically, to form the basis by which musical moments are meaningful. So, whilst I consider my outlook to be discursive (i.e. through taking the music as a discourse that relates to questions of subjectivity), I do not take an unproblematically semiotic line (one in which messages are sent from sender to receiver via objectified semiotic codes).²⁵ In contrast to the sender-receiver model, 'understanding', as it is pursued here, is taken as an on-going negotiation of meaning between an experiencing subject and its object of understanding.

I principally follow a Hegelian inspired notion of subjectivity and understanding – heterodox contemporary subjectivities do exist, after all – due to the impact still left on experiencing and thinking about music by what Janet Schmalfeldt calls the 'Beethoven-Hegelian tradition'.²⁶ This is a dialectical conception of experience tied in closely with the well-established perspective that Beethoven's 'Heroic' works offer up the articulation of a particular kind of self in music; that is, that the substance of Beethoven's music, like Hegel's self, emerges through the process of *becoming* rather than simply being. Gary Tomlinson, commenting on Scott Burnham's now classic *Beethoven Hero*, notes that

²³ For a discussion of markedness in music see Robert HATTEN, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

²⁴ The theoretical framework of my discussion is primarily structured around Fredric Jameson's recent work on Hegelian 'understanding' as found in his *Valences of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 2010).

²⁵ See, for example, Eero TARASTI, 'Understanding, Misunderstanding, and Self-Understanding', in *Le Sens Langagier du Musical: Sémiosis et Hermenéia. Actes du 1er symposium d'Aix-en-Provence*, eds. Bernard Vecchione & Christian Hauer (Paris: Institut d'Esthétique des Arts et Technologies, 2009).

²⁶ Janet SCHMALFELDT, *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music*, 23.

the processes of integral teleological development constructed into this music were assimilated to a modern model of subjectivity just then taking shape. The music came to concretise an elite European self just as it wished itself to be. Thus the music's sense of self-sufficiency answered to the post-Enlightenment ideology of individual freedom and self determination.²⁷

This is a synthesised self in which subject and object express unification through musical works. »The influence of the Beethoven-Hegelian tradition remains very much part of our musicological heritage«, writes Schmalfeldt in her discussion of the writings of A.B. Marx, E.T.A Hoffman, and others.²⁸ The self – and this point concerns conceptions of selfhood beyond a Beethoven-Hegelian self – *has historically been something conceived of as centred, with boundaries, a unitary ideal*. It is this legacy of self and subjectivity that I argue that Schnittke takes as an important yet historically distant point of reference.

What Carl Dahlhaus has called the 'overpowering legacy of Beethoven'²⁹ is important here too. He writes that, not

until the modern music of our century was the history of the string quartet, which virtually seeped away in the nineteenth century, resumed in representative bodies of works by Schoenberg, Bartók, and Hindemith. And in spite of the radically new musical idiom, or perhaps under its protection, these works unmistakably took Beethoven as their starting point.³⁰

For Schnittke, even if we are to say that in his musical language he draws on the developments of Schoenberg (twelve-tone writing), Bartók (juxtaposition of pan-tonal materials), or even Shostakovich, this Beethovenian legacy still resonates. Furthermore, Beethoven's music provides a prototypical way in which the *understanding* of music is significant:

The thought that music can be destined to be »understood« had probably arisen a few decades earlier [than Beethoven's Late, »difficult« works], around 1800; but only in connection with the reception of Beethoven did it have a significant impact on music history – significance which then grew steadily throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.³¹

²⁷ Gary TOMLINSON, 'Finding Ground to Stand On', in *Music and Historical Critique: Selected Essays* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2007), 184.

²⁸ J. SCHMALFELDT, *In the Process of Becoming*, 25.

²⁹ Carl DAHLHAUS, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989 [orig. 1980]), 78.

³⁰ C. DAHLHAUS, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 78.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

Schnittke's facing of these legacies principally concerns the connections between the self-sufficiency of musical forms and the self-sufficiency of the self, with musical closure being perhaps the most visible point of contact between both. Closure is important to a centred subject, in giving form to its self-sufficiency. Cadential figures have a crucial role in achieving this, whether this is in accomplishing Classical balance in the eighteenth century, or in bringing completion to the synthesis of musical developmental processes in the nineteenth century. A question might be asked here: why, given that in the Third Quartet Schnittke explicitly quotes a cadential figure (from Orlando di Lasso's *Stabat Mater*), should we focus on allusions to such figures in the Fourth? The answer is twofold. Firstly, this quotation in the Third alludes to a figure of pre-Classical closure, a figure that has very different functions and resonances than the closure alluded to in the Fourth. Secondly, and more importantly, in the Fourth the figure arises through a dialectic of autonomy and heteronomy, rather than appearing as an explicit quotation. The dialectic development of material in the Fourth Quartet accords with resonates with a Beethoven-Hegelian dialectics, one that incorporates autonomous self-determination of musical material as well as the negotiation of a world of heterogeneous musical forms. The Fourth thus engages with wider, philosophically resonant issues of the development and determination of musical works and musical selves.

Notably audible in codas and codettas, repeating cadences provide clear structural markers of closure. They rhetorically confirm the synthesis of a work's resolution and the viability of the form as an affirmatory ideal of subjectivity. In Beethoven-Hegelian terms, the legacy of closure is closely related (though by no means identical) to the legacy of the self. In Beethoven's music, the coda's cementing of the work's processually driven unification »contributes to the perception of the closed and self-consuming work«, the completion of a self-generated process.³² The coda to Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 provides what is perhaps the most famous (and overstated) example of this. Gigantic in size, the coda triumphantly resolves not only the movement of which it is part, but the symphony as a whole.

Schnittke's stylistic intervention is a figure of historically established closure, though one acting outside of both its historical time and the temporal flow of the immediate musical context. This connection with the past is doubly achieved. Firstly, this is accomplished through its taking on a clear form: to take its original statement by way of example (Example 1, p. 316), through establishing a firm homophony, falling into regular phrasing, and anchoring itself around a pitch centre. All these features demonstrate ready contrast with the shifting polyphonic textures that appear before and after it (an arrangement that is later complicated).

³² S. BURNHAM, *Beethoven Hero*, 121-22.

The musical score for Example 2, Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*, bars 293-296, is presented in a five-staff format. The top staff is for Piccolo & Flute, followed by Oboes & Clarinets, Bassoons & Horns, Violins I & II, and Violas, Cellos & Double Basses. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic texture. The dynamics are marked *ff* (fortissimo) and *sf* (sforzando). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 2 – Beethoven: *Egmont Overture*, bars 293-296

Secondly, this is achieved through this figure's rhetorical likenesses with previous paradigms of closure.

This second quality – allusion – can be illustrated with reference to figures of closure found in Beethoven's codas. As seen in the coda of the Fifth Symphony, the reiteration of a motion between tonic and dominant affirms a pitch centre, with repetitive cadential figures, through localised surface movement, affirming the finality of tonal immobility. In a comparable recurring gesture, Schnittke's stylistic intervention affirms a static, steady position, oscillating between two chords, with the top voice semitonally moving back and forth as akin to a leading note repeatedly finding its tonic. These chords themselves recall tonality, without providing it. They make connections within the work, to tonal triads already introduced as »independent elements throughout the Quartet«,³³ as well as to a history 'outside' of it. For example, in the first two bars of both figs. 2 (Example 1) and 6, forgiving the 'grace notes' – the quavers and crotchets in the first bars of each – A major and B-flat minor chords are spelt out.³⁴

The rhetorical scheme of Schnittke's material supplements this; Schnittke plays with a figurative paradigm of closing. Whilst I do not wish to suggest a

³³ A. DURRANI, *Chorale and Canon*, 47.

³⁴ Durrani cites Schnittke's comments regarding the use of such pseudo-tonal harmonic relationships: »At the end of the 1950s, after [Russian musicologist and professor at the Moscow Conservatory] Lev Mazel described the harmonic phenomenon of 'common mediant' (for example between B major and C minor), many composers, myself included, made use of it.« Schnittke cited in A. DURRANI, *Chorale and Canon*, 112 (footnote).

direct connection with this work in particular, a paradigmatic example of such a figure can be observed in Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture. The Overture provides an illustrative token of this type of closing figure. (Oscillating repeated cadential figures of closing can also be heard in many other works, his Third and Fifth symphonies, for example.) Indeed, there can be observed an immediate gestural affinity between the climactic moment of the return to the tonic in Beethoven's Overture (Example 2, p. 320) and the stylistic intervention as seen in the Schnittke quartet (Example 1), which, as I have noted above, also alludes to the circling around of a central, if problematic, tonal identity (A or B-flat). What is also of importance here is the rhythmic organisation of Beethoven's figure (bars 295-296) – an emphatically held chord, followed by shorter (quaver) movement up and down – and Schnittke's echoing of this rhetorical paradigm.

Schnittke's figure makes heterogeneous connections with past paradigmatic figures of closure. At the same time it also develops intramusically from materials interior to the musical discourse. Step-wise semitonal figures appear throughout all the movements; they formulate into this emphatic rhetorical figure in the second. Durrani labels this figure the 'Rhythmic Theme', writing that it is defined by »oscillating semitones driven by pounding rhythms.«³⁵ I concur with Durrani's analysis, that the »semitone oscillation, double stops, and homorhythmic texture introduced in m. 37 [in the first movement] grow to become a principal motive in the second movement of the Quartet.«³⁶ This is also pre-figured in the viola's microtonal oscillation in the first movement, from bars 29-35. The principal figure of the second movement – as a figure or 'object' within the discourse – thus *develops*, 'becoming', in addition to rupturing into this discourse intertextually, from 'outside'. Again, this distinguishes its character from that of the appearance of di Lasso's cadential figure at the opening of the Third Quartet, which arises through intertextual quotation alone. In becoming as such, in articulating a discernable identity, they become »clearly recognizable objects, they serve as points of arrival within the movement.«³⁷

However – and this point takes us towards aesthetic concerns beyond the valuable analytic observations made by Durrani – this object, its restatement, is not only significant in terms of form. These restatements *are* a formal concern, but this 'formal character' also relates to the *historicity of forms as this pertains to the historicity of subjectivity*. Schnittke makes connection with the past, to a figure of closure recalling, through associative proximity with it, the determination of a synthesised subjectivity. This is a metonymic relationship because, even if such figures of closure cannot be said to represent a coherent self (i.e. metaphorically),

³⁵ A. DURRANI, *Chorale and Canon*, 110.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

they may still be taken as symbolic indices of it (related to it, found beside it). The past here gives value to the present, if only in an objectified, partial form.

So what of understanding after Hegel, and of the musical self in particular after Beethoven? The philosopher and cultural critic Fredric Jameson writes that understanding is based in 'the law of non-contradiction.'³⁸ This means that understanding requires the division of one's world into separable elements – for example: self and other, or into a series of divisible objects, concepts, and ideas. Jameson continues: »...[it] is what Hegel called *Verstand*... and what Marx called reification.«³⁹ Understanding tends towards order, concrete knowledge, and systematisation, rationalisation and conceptualisation. Jameson's reference to Marxist thinking may remind us that reification (and, by extension, understanding) is not a neutral process, but may find itself complicit or reconciled with dominant logics. Hence, understanding is not guided merely by naïve perception – it is not a phenomenological given – but by historical and ideological forces. Indeed, this understanding of the world is closely related to *self*-understanding – imagining the world encompasses a situating of the self in relation to that world.

In order to understand the self – to order it, and to have knowledge of it – subjectivity must be *objectified*.⁴⁰ As Julia Kristeva put it, »the subject must separate from and through his image, from and through his objects.«⁴¹ Subjectivity is articulated through objects, be this in the assigning of meaning to physical objects, linguistic concepts, musical works, and so on. It becomes visible through them. Objectification of the subject enables the internalised self to take understand itself in a world of objects.

At an extreme, in capturing subjectivity in objects, selfhood is *frozen in place* – *reified*. This is where a paradox arises, a contradiction of selfhood in music that Schnittke capitalises upon. In freezing subjective processes into images and objects, the continuous, slipperiness of experience that characterises subjective experience in general, and the experience of music in particular, is lost. Through objectification, the subjective dimension of selfhood is alienated from itself. The material of the stylistic intervention figure acts similarly. Nominating itself as a moment that may act to visibly articulate an image of subjective selfhood, it simultaneously betrays this through eschewing the expressivity required of it. Consequently, a dialectical chasm opens between subjectivity's objectification in historical musical material, and the inability of this same material to be constitu-

³⁸ Fredric JAMESON, *Valences*, 50.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ This idea takes on an explicitly historical role if considered in Adornian terms, that musical material (in Giles Hooper's words) bears »the sedimented traces of previous compositional activity – it is objectified subjectivity.« Giles HOOPER, *The Discourse of Musicology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 100.

⁴¹ Julia KRISTEVA, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984 [orig. 1974]), 43.

tive of subjective experience – the fact that any construction of subjectivity is itself alienating.

As noted above, whilst emerging from properties of material already introduced (centrally, movement via semitones), this material also seems to intrude into the work from 'outside' in something approaching what Theodor W. Adorno would characterise as 'breakthrough' (*Durchbruch*).⁴² Whilst these entries, in their reified historical character, suggest a means of understanding, their intrusion into the flow of the musical discourse potentially highlights the 'inauthentic' character of this understanding. That is, as they are *so* fixed, they become evacuated of their expressive content, and »in its zeal severs the bonds between subject and object.«⁴³

This dialectical gulf is echoed in discursive terms. Rather than subject and object synthesising in the 'ideal' Beethoven-Hegelian manner, subject-object synthesis is merely presented as another discursive figure, as an 'object' within the musical discourse. The material, reminiscent of a repeatedly cadential, unifying figure, fails to bring closure, and fails to unify. Synthesis is represented as a symbol, divided from the temporal and processual dimension that facilitates the basis of its former character. It is merely asserted: being, rather than becoming, dead, rather than dynamically lived. In its objectified character, it is not the figure of an expressive subject being worked-through in the present, but the disfigurement of a past self. The subject is divided from this object, no longer proximally close to it (as it was in the former synthesis). Despite this, the former, ideal synthetic self is remembered, even if this dialectical process is no-longer inhabited. I call this a *shift in the level of discourse*, one by which on-going dialectical process is recalled, but not processually. It is objectified as a metonymic symbol of its former self.

»Meaningful music is not necessarily expressive«, a dictum from Adorno, rings true for this material.⁴⁴ These chords are not expressive but they are meaningful, in that they refer to the idea of subjective expression whilst pointing to the fact that they fail in providing it. In fact, their very evacuation of expression in the present – their estrangement from it as an idea of a bygone historical past – is what makes them meaningful. Like the first entry, the entries that immediately follow it remain fixed and expressionless, as arbitrary *symbols* of expression. Their significance arises from this paradoxical, dual status. Crucially, whilst this chordal material is historically connotative of an expressive figure, it fails to provide the

⁴² Th. W. ADORNO, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), 41.

⁴³ I borrow this phrase from Adorno's discussion of Stravinsky's music. Theodor W. ADORNO, *Philosophy of New Music*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006 [orig. 1949]), 127.

⁴⁴ Th. W. ADORNO, *Sound Figures*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999 [orig. 1978]), 161.

expression that this figure seems to promise. As a result, this objectified symbol of subjectivity may no longer to be *identified as* a vehicle of subjective expression, and is no longer to be *identified with* by a subject striving for expression. The notion of constructing and understanding selfhood through objectification is looked on, and heard, sceptically.

The quartet genre has provided historically a space for the negotiation of subjectivity and selfhood. The latter is a concept whose own self-sufficiency, in musical discourses at least, is in part derived from the synthesis and closure of these musical discourses. Schnittke engages with this tradition through attending to figures of closure as symbolic, metonymic markers of this highly influential legacy of musical selfhood. These figures are treated not as the outcome of some musical, development process – not as the ultimate closing moments of an impending musical synthesis, for example – but are instead engaged as reified objects standing outside of the development of the musical discourse. This is not simply an objectification by Schnittke, but rather a critical engagement with the paradoxical idea that the subjective interiority of the self finds articulation in exterior objects; selfhood is always, to some degree, made possible through objectification; it can never derive solely from within. The next question, then, becomes one of how these objects function in the present discourse of the String Quartet No. 4 so as to modify, react to, and play with legacies of selfhood inscribed immanently into musical materials inherited from the past.

ii. Contradiction – Repression – Opposition

In his discussion of understanding, Fredric Jameson develops his characterisation of the concept (as 'the law of non-contradiction') through showing that contradictions are not overcome but are instead repressed.

We may here therefore in some virtually proto-Freudian movement *avant le lettre* identify a repression of contradiction as one of the driving impulses of *Verstand*, along with the displacement of the contradiction onto the positing of some single stable determination or quality.⁴⁵

Jameson's account of understanding can help us come to terms with Schnittke's distant treatment of symbols of subjectivity and selfhood; in particular, the requirements that contradictions are not faced, not overcome, but are instead repressed. Jameson's statement can be read in discursive terms: through

⁴⁵ F. JAMESON, *Valences*, 88. This also leads to the conclusion that understanding is not completely about what needs to become known, be made visible, but also about what needs to be repressed, made hidden.

understanding, experience is divided up; instead of instabilities existing within the continuum of experience, differences are seen to exist between separable elements of that experience, or between isolatable concepts.

Potentially the clearest case of this new, 'understood' stability is that of oppositions, in which the heterogeneity of experience becomes understood as a case of 'either/or'. Two stable positions are set up, with the instability of experience understood through reference to them. Hence, in general terms, the world and the self are understood with reference to the cultural and natural, the masculine and the feminine, the historical and the immediate, and so on. »[K]nowledge, to establish itself, will proceed through a supplementary reversal of meaning, by repressing meaning's heterogeneity and by ordering it into concepts or structures based on the divided unity of the subject,« Kristeva claims in *Revolution in Poetic Language*.⁴⁶ Oppositions facilitate understanding, an understanding not only of the world but also of a self in relation to that world, or defined oppositionally against an 'Other'. In this respect, Schnittke's treatment of the objectified symbols of self – as these correspond or oppose other musical materials – becomes of great importance to how understanding is constructed in the discourse.

Schnittke sets up various oppositions in the second movement of the quartet: the stylistic intervention, connotative of tonally cadential mannerisms, opposes chromatic saturation (see the bars preceding fig. 2, in which we are plunged from one into the contrasting other); the historically resonant (the intervention) opposes bodily, criss-crossing polyphony, characterised by gestural immediacy (see the bars preceding fig. 6); and, the tangible (the cadential figure, as a comparatively stable object of experience), opposes the amorphous character of the fluctuating atonal lines that surround it. This supplements oppositions explored throughout all five movements (for example, triads as historical elements, as these oppose chromatic textures). These binaries correlate to some degree:⁴⁷ chords suggesting tonally cadential mannerisms (even if they are not literally tonal or functional) can be understood as historical and tangible; their atonal Other is cast as bodily and amorphous, even intangible.⁴⁸

The articulation of difference within the discourse of the second movement, principally in terms of these sets of contrasts, echoes deep-seated conceptual oppositions between the historical and the immediate, the amorphous and the tangible, and so on, with these materials performatively playing with these

⁴⁶ J. KRISTEVA, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 188.

⁴⁷ In musical-semiotic terms, sets of correlation such as these give rise to what Robert Hatten has identified as 'markedness assimilation'. See R. HATTEN, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 64.

⁴⁸ As such, a larger binary can be seen to be at play, that of culture (historical, tangible, mindful, and knowing) and nature (ahistorical, amorphous, bodily, and feeling). Such series of correspondences, Kristeva suggests, point to processes behind signification and understanding; the place »where positions and their syntheses (i.e., their relations) are set up.« J. KRISTEVA, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 72.

philosophical and conceptual associations and so enabling a starting point for the discourse's understanding. Indeed, these ideas are engaged with in such a way as to give form to this object of the discourse. The immediate context of the markedly historical figure allows for its reification – its understanding – as opposite, or as counterposition, to much of the rest of the material which makes up the movement. This material is a raft of symbolic meaning, one given shape through its tangible historical resonance. It is a recognisable object foregrounded in the context of otherwise ever-changing material. In light of understanding, materials are positioned differentially with the musical movement pushing and pulling between divisible positions. Indeed, and paradoxically, differential positioning also enables understanding, and for correlations to be made with larger associations 'outside' of the music (the cultural and the natural, the historical and the immediate, and so on).

It is interesting to note that this opposition is retained, but inverted, in the final movement. Towards the very end of the work, a cluster (C, C-sharp, D, and D-sharp/E-flat) enters (at fig. 24, movement five) from 'outside', triple-*forte*. What this gestural, amorphic entity enters 'into' is not a polyphonic storm like that of the second movement. Instead, it is a foreign object that disturbs a reflective and historically evocative pseudo-tonal chorale; the immediate enters the historical. This triggers the return of the twelve-tone row that opened the first movement, microtonal fluctuations, and a final fade into nothingness.

The self is identified symbolically with figures of (self) closure. This contrasts with the Beethovenian Heroic self, which is not defined differentially but rather through the work in its entirety; as a synthesis of the Whole. Self-sufficiency, self-creation, self-determination are its ideals: »one does not hear a world order against which a hero defines himself – one hears only the hero, the self, fighting against its own element,« Burnham writes.⁴⁹ In Schnittke's quartet, due to the shift in the level of discourse, the determination of the self is not something performed by the music – it is not something to be worked out *through* synthesis within the discourse – instead, it is uncovered as alien: as an objectified self, an object of understanding.

Seeing (the signification of) selfhood as an object goes hand-in-hand with self-understanding – »I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object,« Jacques Lacan famously said.⁵⁰ In giving the signification of self a discursive position, selfhood is given an image that sets it apart from the subjective flow of time. This contrasts strongly with the Beethoven-Hegelian self, a dialectic of temporal becoming par excellence. However, given that Schnittke engages with figures of closing, as metonymic of selfhood, another dialectical

⁴⁹ S. BURNHAM, *Beethoven Hero*, 121.

⁵⁰ In the essay 'The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis' in Jacques LACAN, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink in collaboration with Héroïse Fink and Russell Grigg (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006 [orig. 1966]), 247.

contradiction emerges: closing requires temporal processes as a fundamental basis of its effective functioning.

To say that closure comes at the end seems tautological; it is the *result* of a process, after all. However, Schnittke's figures of closure intersperse this movement. This is not to say that Schnittke was the first to take cadences outside of their function of finality. It has been noted that, in Classical music, »cadence formations became so standardized that they could be used, for rhetorical effect, even in positions other than endings.«⁵¹ An excellent example of this is provided at the very opening of Haydn's String Quartet in C op. 74, No. 1. Schnittke can be seen as drawing on this tradition, but he also goes much further, something that can be illustrated through comparison. Such cadences in Haydn's quartets are formal dissonances, playing with the expectations of how temporality is musically structured within the framework of Classical conventions. Those in Schnittke's quartet are stylistically and historically, rather than formally, out of place. They no longer perform their previous closing function. Rather, they are objectified as markedly 'historical' through contrast with other musical materials. Whilst their use is rhetorical, a quality shared with Haydn's playful use of cadential rhetoric, their dissonance with time is with the time of history.

Subjectivity grasped merely through understanding is a kind of nondialectical Being, »a reified thought which must reify itself in order to grasp its reified objects.«⁵² Understanding thus reifies subjectivity itself so that it may become a thing to be perceived. Indeed, understanding's inability to capture the continuum of experience – the slipperiness of subjectivity – is symptomatic of subjectivity's self-alienation. This recognition of alienation is important as it suggests that objectification is always incomplete in objectifying subjectivity.

As Philip Kain notes, the estrangement of the objectified, external world – its apparent independence outside of ourselves – can be overcome through recognizing its alien character:

Because alienation is an objectification – because the alienation of individuals constructs the monarch, the state, or God – this very same alienation can also allow us eventually to recognize the estranged reality as our own creation, our own selves objectified, our own alienation, and thus alienation can allow us to see through, and thus overcome, the estrangement.⁵³

⁵¹ See W.S. ROCKSTRO, George DYSON, William DRABKIN, Harold POWERS, and Julian RUSTON, 'Cadence, §2: History', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell), 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 2001), Vol. 4, 781.

⁵² F. JAMESON, *Valences*, 76.

⁵³ Philip KAIN, *Hegel and the Other: A Study of the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Albany: State University of New York, 2005), 158.

Hence, in a dialectical manoeuvre of inversion, this closing through objectification might open the way for immanent critical reactions to these existential conditions, beginning from the inherent paradoxes of objectification held therein, a process partaken of through dialectical reaction.

iii. Dialectic as Reaction

This process may only take place in light of reification. Firstly, there is no »pure« language that is outside of mediation by understanding. Secondly, as Jameson notes, dialectics are *reactive* to understanding. As he puts it: »[the dialectic] is parasitic on *Verstand* itself, on the externalized thinking of a material world of objects, for its own operation of correction and subversion, of negation and critique.«⁵⁴ So, Schnittke's musical dialectic is not a presentation of the 'opposite' of the reified, but instead a playing with the incompleteness of the object of understanding, and looking at it in terms of its incompleteness.⁵⁵ This means that whilst at first, through an expository strategy, Schnittke presents the closing figure as a reified, if alien, entity, he later constructs the music as reactive to this presentation.

Importantly, his musical dialectic does not provide synthesis. Instead, it attends to the unlocking of potential connections and affectivities in the materials, without affirming a new, higher understanding through achieving synthesis. His dialectic therefore is one of heteronomy over synthesis and multiplication over unification, where understanding is not satisfied through realising a unitary, teleological 'Whole'.

As Jameson notes, a particular treatment of mediation is a central function of understanding: »It may be said that... the primary vice of Understanding consists in its effacement of mediation.«⁵⁶ This follows the Hegelian idea that »in the very act of mediation the mediation itself vanishes«⁵⁷. After the differential positioning of materials – an *expository* tactic – Schnittke moves towards exploring the inherent tensions between these positions, the possibilities of affects repressed through their understanding. In reaction to the expository, differentially understood discourse, the focus later moves to one of audibly exploring the

⁵⁴ F. JAMESON, *Valences*, 61.

⁵⁵ In Hegelian terms, negation is not the »opposite« of a concept but rather the seeing that the concept is not complete. See P. KAIN, *Hegel and the Other*, 14, for a discussion of determinate negation. Indeed, here I am also implicitly critiquing poststructuralist positions which see music as other to language, as part of a »pre-linguistic« realm.

⁵⁶ F. JAMESON, *Valences*, 98.

⁵⁷ Hegel cited in Max PADDISON, 'Music and Social Relations: Towards a Theory of Mediation', in *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Max Paddison & Irène Deliège (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 261.

mediation of musical ideas by one another. In other words, there is a movement from overstating the restrictions of positions, of their divisibility, to transgressing the semi-permeability of positional boundaries.

The scepticism with which Schnittke treats reified material in the Fourth Quartet can be thought of as a repositioning of subjectivity in relation to mediation, or at least, a marking of the alienating effect of reification in the mediation of subjectivity. In dialectical, musically developmental terms, this is accomplished through expounding mediative relationships with other materials in the work, rather than letting these features stand for themselves – for understanding on their own, differentially divisible terms – as they did *expositionally*.⁵⁸

This is accomplished through dialectically exploring positions previously held as separable through their mutual differentiation. Three examples of this will be given. Firstly, the homophonic, stylistic material, connotative of a rhetorical device under tonality, is audibly mediated through the chromatic saturation of the clusters and atonal polyphony found elsewhere in the work. Secondly, 'historically' encultured past associations are rediscovered as immediate, bodily, and gestural. Thirdly, the reified historical object, something divisible and graspable from the discursive flow, becomes experienced fluidly as part of an on-going process, rather than as an object situated outside of this process. Importantly, one aspect does not win over the other – this would only affirm differential discursive positioning – rather the one side of the opposition is shown to be inherent in the other, relationships previously repressed through what Jameson called above the »effacement of mediation«.

The first example is readily perceivable: the rhetorical character of the stylistic intervention becomes infused with the pitch content of the saturated atonality that was held previously in counterposition to it. Intervention figures lose their 'tonal' associations (with A major and B-flat minor, as at figs. 2 and 6) and find themselves becoming chromatically saturated. For example, in contrast with the tonal associations of the figure's first entry, an octatonic pitch collection forms corresponding material at fig. 21 (B, C, D, E-flat, F, F-sharp). At fig. 22, such saturation increases even more so.

However, this does not result in a synthesis of the identities of the 'pseudo-tonal' and the chromatic materials; rather, discursive terms proliferate. Take, for instance, the fact that these clusters are not presented merely as clusters – they no longer conform to their established position in the discourse – but are refracted through the range and voicings found in an Other, the closing figures. In examining the content of the widely ranged chords at fig. 22, and three bars after 22 (Example 3), it can be observed that they relate to chromatic clusters in terms of

⁵⁸ In Lacanian terms, this could be characterised as a critical play on the subject's misrecognition (*méconnaissance*) of itself in the images and objects through which it finds imagistic or objective articulation.

The image displays three musical figures from Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4. Figure 22 (left) shows a string quartet passage with 'pizz.' and 'arco.' markings. An annotation 'Two minor 3rd clusters' points to a specific chordal structure. The middle figure, 'Three bars after fig. 22', shows a similar passage with an annotation 'Tritone cluster' pointing to a different chordal structure. Figure 23 (right) shows a further development of the material. The score is written for four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass).

Example 3 – Clusters (fig. 22, three bars after fig. 22, and fig. 23).

pitch as much as they do to the homophonic figures rhetorically. This means that, despite the expositionally fixed character of the chordal figures towards the beginning of the movement, later these fixed positions – and this understanding – are brought into disarray.

What is reified as historical and stylistic enters into dialectical play with the bodily and gestural, tropes of immediacy. This can be put in semiotic terms. The stylistic intervention, in its reified dimension, acts symbolically, representationally, almost linguistically. The chromatically saturated materials set in counterposition to this (at least at its first moment of intervention, fig. 2) suggest the opposite – the immediacy of a 'pre-linguistic' continuum in which gesture is favoured over representation, texture over (inter)textual meaning. Schnittke organises these as somewhat separable positions before drawing the historical through the immediate, the symbolic through the gestural.

At fig. 23 (Example 4, p. 331) the rhetorical content of what was historically evocative material is taken to an extreme, being pushed towards gestural violence. What began as a reasonably self-contained symbol loses its articulatory identity. Its boundaries become smudged, ensconced by the textures that surround it. Indeed, a similar manoeuvre has been identified by Alistair Williams in Wolfgang Rihm's *Klavierstück No. 7* – where historical material becomes seen through the lens of the gestural. He notes how in the work obsessively repeated E-flat major chords lose their historical connotations, failing to provide »security and respite«, and, through »the sheer violence of the gestures«, move to suggest the contrary – purely somatic content.⁵⁹ In both these cases, immediacy over history – the *sound* of symbolic utterances rather than their representational signification or historical connection – is brought to the fore.

⁵⁹ Alastair WILLIAMS, 'Wolfgang Rihm and the Adorno Legacy', in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), 94-95.

The image displays a musical score for Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4, specifically Example 4 (ii), figure 23. It consists of four staves, likely representing Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The score is marked with various dynamics including *fff*, *mf*, *ff*, *p sub.*, and *mp*. There are also articulations such as *gliss.* and triplets (indicated by '3'). The music is characterized by complex, atonal chordal structures and frequent shifts in dynamics and articulation.

Example 4 – Schnittke: String Quartet No. 4 (ii), fig. 23

Without an overarching Whole, an affirmed, singular character of the movement (of the work too), and of the self, is denied. There is no synthesis between subject and object as in the ideal Hegelian synthesis of Beethoven's Heroics. The object of understanding fails to articulate a singular self, and subjectivity and its object are put at odds. A similar situation is often recognised in Late Beethoven.⁶⁰ However, Schnittke goes further than this. He marks the alienating effect of reifying subjectivity into objects and symbols in the first place. The chordal figures, as connotative of subjective expression without providing it, encapsulate this in microcosm. As objects of this musical discourse, through which, it is remembered, selfhood is constituted and articulated, they are sceptically perceived at a distance. These symbols are presented as inherently alien before they are reacted to dialectically. In this subsequent dialectic, Schnittke makes apparent connections between musical materials, allowing for ideas that were previously separable, solid, and 'understood', to interconnect fluidly.

This brings us to the third and final example, implicit in the first two, namely the move from the divisible object of focus to the fluidity of discursive process. This dialectic can be observed in a series of 'false returns' to the chordal material in the second half of the movement, each of which processually refigures the relationships between this figure and its surroundings. The original, expository presentation of this material was assured positionally through its purported fixity. It expressed homophonic rhythmic stability, was connotative of a closing figure in the tonal tradition, and was a moment in which all instruments found

⁶⁰ Adorno took this view. See 'Adorno's Diagnosis of Beethoven's Late Style: Early Symptom of a Fatal Condition', in Rose Rosengard SUBOTNIK, *Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

themselves in unity. The 'returns' of this material (figs. 21, 22, 23, and 28 in the score, not reproduced in the examples) bring this fixity into question, as it is increasingly disturbed by, but not synthesised with, the movement's other materials.

These false returns keep entering but never actually return us to a point of fixed stability. With no such true return, the falseness of these moments becomes problematic; when no true return is found, they retrospectively become progressive stages in dissolving this figure's fixity, rather than deviations from a final goal. The dissolution of this material – this object of understanding – means that no true return, no final understanding is affirmed. In Schmalfeldt's terms, these returns are unable to *become* part of a larger formal scheme, as, given their eschewal of formal function, their »retrospective formal reinterpretation« is not affirmed.⁶¹ Said differently, there is no final stable point by which they may retrospectively be understood as parts of a larger Whole. Each attempt at return, or each attempt at finding stable closure in the fixity of this material, is thwarted. Rather than clarifying understanding, these returns suggest a dissolving of the fixity of objectification. The reified object is lost to a proliferation of connections between previously divisible, segmentable positions.

The changing role of the chordal 'closing' material throughout the movement – from *being* external and opposed to other materials of the movement, to *becoming* mediated by them – is encapsulated in this passage of returns. At fig. 28, the previously intrusive object is brought into the processual flow of the movement (rather than being counterpoised externally to it). This moment is climactic, being led into through increasing dynamic levels and register, and a quickening of rhythmic values. This climatic moment captures the dialectical contradiction of the figures that form the tensional basis of the movement – the static, historically connotative homophony against the moving, chromatic, and gestural polyphony. This moment is particularly important, as, in contrast with much of the rest of the movement, here this tension is expressed processually. One aspect (the polyphonic and gestural) quite literally leads into the other. This contrasts with the differential understanding heard previously, an understanding based around reference to two different, and seemingly pre-existent, positions. Nevertheless, this processual moment does not suggest synthesis as, despite this climax (fig. 28) being the goal of the process, no sense of resolution is provided. If anything, here the tension is at its highest.

Through taking a discursive approach, it has been illustrated that, through a shift in the level of discourse, Schnittke's Fourth Quartet plays critically with historically established indices of selfhood. Subject-object synthesis has been abandoned, replaced by a semiotics of self. Or, taken another way, the signification of self, which has always played a role, has now been brought audibly to the

⁶¹ J. SCHMALFELDT, *In the Process of Becoming*, 9.

forefront of experience. Figures of closure, as metonymically marking a past, coherent self, have been crucial here. This music draws on complex, subtle relationships to the intertwined pasts of music and philosophy, pasts whose features are both still current and active (activated) in the musical present. Former contexts – ways of understanding the self and the world, for example – are sedimented textually into musical materials. Whilst not identical, musical processes and subjective processes bear close relations. And, in this sense, experiencing, identifying, and understanding music, in some dimension at least, performs our striving to do these things of ourselves.

*Sažetak***Nakon Beethovena, nakon Hegela: Baština vlastitosti
u Gudačkom kvartetu br. 4 Alfreda Schnittkea**

U ovom članku razmatram sebstvo prema utjecajnom modelu glazbene subjektivnosti koja je u prvome planu Beethovenove glazbe i Hegelove filozofije. Detaljno se raspravlja o Schnittkeovu *Četvrtom gudačkom kvartetu* kao djelu koje evocira, ali i problematizira beethovenско-hegelovsku vlastitost. Članak ima tri dijela kojima prethodi uvodni odlomak.

Uvod: Započinje se s primjedbom da je gudački kvartet pružio povijesni prostor za istraživanje problema subjektivnosti i vlastitosti. Zatim se uvodi Schnittkeova glazba i ukratko rezimira rasprava Lawrencea Kramera (2011) o Schnittkeovu *Trećem kvartetu* (za razliku od moje rasprave o *Četvrtom kvartetu*). Primjećuje se da *Četvrti kvartet* istražuje dijalektiku: onu glazbenog samorazvoja iznutra (autonomija) i intertekstualnog nametanja izvana (heteronomija).

i. Razumijevanje glazbe(ne vlastitosti): Tvrdi se da drugi stavak Schnittkeova kvarteta sadrži materijal koji priziva bivše figure glazbenog završetka. Završetak je bio bitan za potvrđivanje sinteze i stabilne slike o vlastitosti u Beethovenovoj glazbi (kao i u mnogo druge glazbe). Schnittke priziva tu baštinu vlastitosti i završetka. Međutim, on umanjuje završnu funkciju tih figura. Te figure objektiviziraju prijašnju subjektivnu vlastitost. Umjesto izvođenja iz idealne hegelijanske sinteze subjekta i objekta te se figure pojavljuju kao objekti koji se istražuju glazbenim diskursom.

ii. Kontradikcija – Represija – Opozicija: Zatim se raspravlja o filozofijskim i kritičkim implikacijama ove objektivizacije. Navodi se rasprava Fredrica Jamesona o »razumijevanju« (koju on razvija iz Hegela). On tvrdi da nam objektivizacija dopušta razumijevanje svijeta samo kroz potiskivanje njegovih određenih aspekata. Suprotnosti koje brišu svako posredništvo između njihovih dvaju pojmova izvrstan su primjer represivne funkcije razumijevanja.

iii. Dijalektika kao reakcija: U završnom dijelu pokazuje se kako Schnittke, nakon što nam je pružio objektivizirane glazbene materijale i jasne suprotnosti, prelazi na dijalektičko problematiziranje tih materijala. Navode se tri glazbena primjera ovog dijalektičkog problematiziranja.