BUT WHY IS IT SO LONG?: ESCHATOLOGY AND TIME PERCEPTION AS AN INTERPRETATION OF MORTON FELDMAN'S 'FOR PHILIP GUSTON'

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ABSTRACT

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The late compositions (ca. 1980-1987) by Morton Feldman are noted for slow tempos, a quiet dynamic, but most of all, for their length. The *String Quartet No. 2* (1983), at approximately six hours, and *For Philip Guston* (1984), at approximately four hours, are the most extreme examples of his late style. Inevitably, someone listening to these works must come to grips with this duration; traditional modes of listening in terms of form and memory are thwarted. Christian eschatology, the theology of the future, meditates on the differences between human time and the eternal time of God.

Considering Feldman, length, manner of composition, and perception of time can be interpreted as a symbolic representation of an eternal sense of time. I will combine psychological and philosophical approaches towards time to suggest that experiential time is essentially subjective. By using musical analysis, and eschatology, I will apply this way of thinking about time to devise a theory of interpreting the experience of *For Philip Guston*. It is my conclusion that the piece represents the state of the eschaton—the spiritual place where divine eternity and human temporality meet—by making use of nonlinear music (representing the divine) but featuring a structurally important linear motive (representing the human).

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INTRODUCTION

Morton Feldman (b. 1926, Brooklyn NY, d. 1987, Buffalo, NY) was an American composer long on the forefront of modern compositional techniques. The story is often told that the most influential moment in Feldman's career was meeting John Cage as they both left a New York Philharmonic performance of Webern's *Symphony, Op. 21*, wonderstruck. Cage is regarded as one of the most influential American composer in terms of abstract thought, thus one could read many of Feldman's innovations as a product of his friendship with the older man. Feldman claimed otherwise: "Cage was not my teacher. If anything, I think I influenced Cage…When I met Cage, in a sense he was the Cage of the *Sonatas-and-interludes* Cage…And then I started my early graph music…essentially, in that it's all the furniture that's left in the room."[1]

In fact, Feldman claimed that it was the painter Philip Guston who had the greatest artistic influence on his life and work: "I don't think I would have become an artist if I didn't have that luck in meeting Philip Guston."[2] Guston was a Canadian-born, American-trained painter who for a time was on the forefront of Abstract Expressionism. From their first meeting in 1950, the two spoke often, trading artistic ideas and each memorialized the other in his own work. An artistic shift on Guston's part in 1970 resulted in a severe disagreement and the two were not on speaking terms through Guston's death ten years later.

For Philip Guston, a trio for flutist (doubling on piccolo and alto flute), pianist (doubling on celeste) and percussionist (playing glockenspiel, marimba, vibraphone and chimes), was written in 1984 and premiered in April of 1985. The work, in Feldman's late style, is very long

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[1] Quoted in Clarkson "Conversation about Stefan Wolpe", 110-111.
[2] Feldman, *Morton Feldman Introduction to World.*

(lasting about four hours[3]), very quiet, with slowly evolving repetitive figures. One of the greatest problems in considering the music of Morton Feldman is that someone listening to these works must come to grips with this duration; traditional modes of listening in terms of form and memory are thwarted.

I would contend that in order to appreciate a piece that is so long, the listener must have some method of creating meaning in this music. Otherwise, one abstract sound follows another without purpose, without care. I do believe that Feldman wanted the audience to get more than a meditative experience when listening to his music. He took great care in his aesthetic philosophy and executed great precision in notating his music. But due to its abstract nature, one cannot create a linear story from this work, which would be counterintuitive to Feldman's intent. Meaning in this music must speak to a truth somewhere between narration and mindless jargon.

Music, as it is, is a particularly difficult art form from which to derive meaning. Music cannot correlate semiotic signifiers (the physical form of a sign) from a signified (the meaning of a sign) as speaking a language can. Sad music must sound sad, whereas in a sentence, the words might mean sadness, but the same sentence can be spoken with a happy tone. Music's meaning is no more than the product of process and forces external to it, that is, the perception and interpretation of the audience.[4]

Musical theorists and psychologists have offered suggestions for finding meaning in a piece of music. Leonard B. Meyer produced *Emotion and Meaning in Music* in 1956, on which musical meaning hinged on a sense of expectation, or the thwarted sense of expectation. David Huron built on this work with *Sweet Anticipation* in 2006, which drew on psychological data to back many of Meyer's philosophical assumptions.

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[3] My first performance of this work, on July 29, 2012 with Chamber Cartel in Atlanta, GA, lasted about four hours and forty-five minutes).
[4] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time,* 22-23.

Although maintaining that music is organized, abstract sound, Huron maintains that certain organizations of sound can evoke direct meanings: "*tragedy* can be evoked by using predominantly minor chords played with rich sonorities in the bass register. *Suspense* can be evoked using a diminished seventh chord with rapid tremolo. *Surprise* can be evoked by introducing a loud chromatic chord on a weak beat."[5] This concept has long been in practice, as shown by Leonard Ratner's description of Mozart's consistent use of musical topics. The introduction to Huron's book seems to suggest that composers can intentionally add an objective emotion by picking a tool from a proverbial emotional tool-box.

Feldman, though certainly aware of musical history before him, never used these tools. In fact, he almost never used musical elements in a traditional way. There are very few melodies. His rhythm lacks discernible movement of beats; meter is simply a measure of duration, not a collection of directional strong and weak beats. Harmony is rich and colorful, full of sublime dissonances, but there is never a sense of harmonic motion; his sonority is stationary. In short, Feldman truly embraced the abstract elements of music like the Abstract Expressionist painters who were among his closest friends.

Feldman was emphatic that there was no compositional process through which one might build a system of expectation in his music: "My ideas, my notes, for whatever reason, just come to me. The only time I do have a system is when I'm stuck and it's almost like a little gasoline or a little push of the car to get it going."[6] Pure theoretical analysis will do little good to find meaning due to this lack of initial organization and indeed, few musical theorists have any concrete way to analyze his music systematically.

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[5] Huron, *Sweet Anticipation*, 2. Emphasis in the original.
[6] Feldman, "Johannesburg Lecture 2," 176.

Greater good is found in adjusting the perspective of listening to include metaphor. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, a linguist and a philosopher respectively, suggest that the use of metaphor, "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another"[7] is a common means by which people navigate the world around them. We typically use metaphors of personification to describe the world around us, anthropomorphizing objects or actions: "Inflation *has robbed* me of my savings." [8] Personification is already at work when we ascribe a collection of pitches, say C-Eb-G the feeling of 'sad'.

Instead of listening for modes of expectation, I would like to offer another metaphor for listening to *For Philip Guston*: time. The 'when' is often disregarded in traditional musical analysis and this does not resonate when considering our plans and actions. If I am hosting a party and just tell my friends where to go, why I am having it, what to bring, all of this information is meaningless unless I tell them *when* to show up. Time is of the utmost importance when considering the meaning of information, whether it is activities or art.

Time is intimately wrapped in the experience of Feldman's music, and in more ways than the obvious extreme length. We do not experience time in the same way when listening to Feldman as we do listening to the music of other composers. Time seems to float, and yet it is not still. This perception of time includes, but goes beyond the mere analysis of the score. Lakoff and Johnson suggest that the meaning of language can be more apparent when language is put into space, that is, written down: "He ran and ran and ran and ran." suggests a longer period of time than "He ran."[9] But upon hearing the late music of Feldman, the sound does not belie notation. The music goes beyond linear space, beyond our typical conception of time.

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[7] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 5.
[8] Ibid., 33. Emphasis in the original
[9] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By,* 126.

Therefore a more specific metaphor is needed. I will use the Christian theology of time: eschatology. In the past, eschatology has evoked ideas of rapture, hellfire and brimstone, it has more implications for the relationship between the temporal world of humans and the temporal world (or lack thereof) of God.[10] Feldman was decidedly not a Christian; in fact, although he maintained knowledge of the Jewish faith he was born into, anecdotal information of his gluttonous approach to food and women confirms it had no effect on his lifestyle.[11] Just as religious music (say Bach's *Mass in b-minor)* can be appreciated by one without faith, religious thought can be imposed on non-religious music. Theologians Trevor Hart, Anthony Monti and composer Alastair Borthwick demonstrated this in their article "Musical Time and Eschatology" by considering a theological meaning in the works of Mahler, Tippett and Birtwistle; my intention in this document is to extend their framework onto music that is even more abstract.[12]

In this work, I am using a framework of religious thought which might resonate with the devout believer, those with a cultural affiliation with a religious group, or even the most sincere secularist. Christian thought advocates that all thought is filtered through one's understanding of God. David Brooks recently argued in the New York Times that even secular societies need to adopt transcendent religious systems in order to navigate the hardships of life.[13] Therefore, I believe that a religious metaphor is a useful tool in navigating meaning in Feldman's abstract sound world.

In order to extend my argument so that it is relevant in a scholarly way to one of a non-Christian faith (or non-faith altogether), consider this hypothetical dilemma: Would you rather live in the twelfth century or the twenty-first century? Most will answer strongly for the latter;

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[10] In addition, emphasis on the rapture in eschatology is at best an exaggeration, at worst, an outright error. I will elaborate upon this idea in Chapter 4.
[11] This has most recently been brought to the fore by the Twitter accusations of his former student Bunita Marcus.
[12] Their arguments will be discussed in the latter part of Chapter 4.
[13] Brooks, "Building Better Secularists."

the ease that technology affords our lives is undeniable. Worlds are connected like never before and one's life experiences can be enriched by sharing the experiences of others. But, press one who chooses the latter and they will admit shortcomings to today's way of life. Technology also makes it easier than ever to avoid personal interaction with others and our emotional maturity may suffer. The availability of tangible merchandise means one can spend their income collecting things but ignoring experiences. Happy as we may be with the state of affairs today, it is not enough to provide true happiness.[14] One would assume that technological development over the next millennium will still fail to satisfy one's every need, or, that advancement will continue to bring about new problems and stressors. In numbers, the amount of real integers between 0 and 1 is infinite; showing this graphically, one may arch closer and closer towards an axis while never crossing it. Eschatology is the Christian answer to this dilemma, that no matter how far we have progressed, we can never progress 'far enough'; true happiness, free from the problems of this world, are available only in communion with an eternal God.

Linguist Ray Jackendoff suggests that meaning is found by beginning thought with an intuitive "huh?" and progressing with rational to an "uh-huh" conclusion.[15] I will begin with the obvious 'huh?' of Feldman's music—the floating but moving sense of time—and use eschatology to bring the listener to a sense of 'uh-huh'. While still performing detailed analysis of the music and the philosophy and psychology of time perception, governing all of these modes of thinking through the lens of eschatology will enable a more intimate appreciation of Feldman's music.

Chapter 1 will consider time itself. Countless theories from philosophers and psychologists are available, often hinging on other parameters, such as memory. Time is of

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[14] Borthwick, Hart and Monti, "Musical Time and Eschatology," 278. So goes the euphemism "Happiness is a journey, not a destination."
[15] Jackendoff, *User's Guide to Thought*, 230.

course intrinsic to any and all experiences in life, not just music. Short of saying all approaches to time are equally valid, it is difficult to prove or disprove any single theory of time as all encompassing. Through all of this, I am neglecting to consider the physics of time, which is objective, but lies largely beyond our perceptual boundaries, thus is not a part of this study. I will consider ways that time interacts with our lives, and suggest that time is functionally subjective. Given that it is impossible to measure or define time by a clock (as one is wont to do), other means of definition are needed and I will end the chapter discussing time as it relates to God, and how a relatively timeless God relates to human existence.

Chapter 2 will consider time as it relates to music. Music is nothing without time, as time is needed to give a horizontal identity to sound so that it can be heard. But musical time is more than beats on a metronome; here, too, there is a subjective quality. Music from the common practice, which is written in the tonal system, is linear, direction-oriented. Music that is outside the common practice, especially for my purposes, atonality, is non-linear which itself may or may not be direction-oriented. I will discuss these terms and their various manifestations; in particular, how the aspect of time within a piece has various implications for how the piece continues and how the listener experiences it. I will make numerous references to Beethoven's *Piano Sonata in Ab, Op. 110* as an example of tonal music that combines aspects of linear and non-linear time. The chapter will end by considering Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin due temps* as a case study in using theology to derive greater understanding of music's temporality.

The third chapter will look intimately at the music of Morton Feldman. I will look at ways that he spoke about his own music, as well as commentary from others, such as his student Bunita Marcus, and theorist Dora Hanninen. Sound as an object, instead of an element of a developed theme, will be the reoccurring theme. This concept will be supplemented by

considering Feldman's interested in other art forms, particularly Abstract Expressionist painters, and Turkish rugs. There are implications for time; aided by our understanding of the subjective nature of time, the focus on sound allows time to become an element in itself, rather than a vehicle in which music is heard. The musical experience is then subjectively enriched accordingly.

Chapter 4 will introduce eschatology as a concept and ruminate on ways that knowledge of the theology can influence life on earth, and one's relation to a relatively timeless God. An important aspect of my discussion is that eschatology is not about the end times as popular perception might indicate. The theology is much more oriented towards reconciling the dichotomy between temporal existence of humans and eternal existence of deity. Eschatology offers hope of not just a new time, but a renewal of the present, one's temporal world, but also one's physical body. The second part of the chapter will address preexisting eschatological interpretations of music, none of which carry their ideas to music that is so abstract like Feldman's.

My final chapter will tie the theology of eschatology with *For Philip Guston*. This piece is even more appropriate for an eschatological understanding than most of his works. His typical style certainly points to a temporal world beyond this earth, but *For Philip Guston* contains a notable modal melody which permeates the ending of the piece. This "old" music alludes to the important concept of restoration afforded by eschatology. I will offer an analysis of this work, focusing on a few particular sections to illuminate how the piece correlates to both the temporal world of mortal humans and a timeless God.

CHAPTER 1: PERSPECTIVES ON TIME

What, then, is time?

Time may be considered one of the most powerful forces in day to day life. We structure our daily lives by the clock, guiding and evaluating events on the micro- and macro-scale: from seconds to minutes, from hours to days and from months to years. We use our conception of time to remember the past, to celebrate the present and to anticipate what will happen in the future. Time regulates our speech: the tense of a verb, corresponding to significant linguistic content, describes whether something is happening then, now, or later. Concepts of time permeate our clichés ('all in due time', 'there's no time like the present') and time structures our thoughts ('at the same time', 'meanwhile').

Time relates to the arts and sciences. It is oft discussed amongst physicists, from Isaac Newton's concept of time evolving in sequential events, to Albert Einstein's theory of flexible, relative time and beyond. Time is a profound tool for film media—what better way to build suspense than to pose conflict and literally wait to resolve it? In literature, the amount of time the author spends on sections of a story affects the reader's interpretation. Tolkien is popularly criticized for his abundant descriptions of mundane landscape details, yet the time it takes to read such descriptions increases the reader's perception of the epic. Theater uses time in the orator's rhythm and pacing. Silent time, short or long, can contain so much information—building tension or using gesticulations and facial expressions—where mere words are insufficient.

Perhaps most notably, time is an essential component of music which may be best described as a temporal organization of sound. This goes beyond such obvious matters as rhythm and meter, into areas of form and well beyond. The composer Tristan Murail has thoughts regarding music's relationship to time versus time in other arts: "Asking people to listen to a

piece of music takes some of their time…the composer is stealing a little bit from the life of each listener…While watching (a visual arts) exposition, the public maintains control of their time. If they don't like it, they can leave at any point. While with music, the composer's time is necessarily imposed upon the listener."[16] The ways in which composed music interacts with time will be the subject of chapter 2.

Since it is an essential part of our lives, the question 'what is time' ought to be fairly easy to answer. An obvious response will invoke the help of the clock: 'time is an accumulation of moments known as the second.' This definition refers to only one small aspect of all the times that are noted above. A further problem posits: how long is a moment? Where is the dividing line between past, present and future? Does the idea that events of our lives progress on a timeline not suggest that the future is already determined, that time is the process of their unveiling? Unlikely, as our sense of free will is constantly supported by the sheer number of independent, but interrelated variables which opens the door to innumerable potential events in our lives. All of these questions disregard history—what was time before the development of the clock?—not to mention cultures which used variable time-spans, such as the length of time to prepare rice, as a form of measurement.

More importantly, referring to the clock in order to define time is entirely problematic: what, after all, is a second? The definition evolved from abstract theory to a measurable interval to become "the duration of 9 192 631 770 periods of the radiation corresponding to the transition between the two hyperfine levels of the ground state of the cesium 133 atom."[17] The actual meaning of these terms is unimportant here: what matters is that the second, the most basic unit of time, essential to its measurement and common meaning, is quantified in a way that cannot be

[16] Murail "After Thoughts," 5.
[17] Taylor and Thompson, 19.

commonly experienced, let alone understood. Furthermore, though invariance is assumed when contemplating clock-time, we ignore that time *is* variable with the changing gravitational pull. [18] In terms of space, measurement can be experienced with sight: one can *see* length whereas time cannot be perceived with any of the five senses. The 'foot' as a unit of measurement has a further origin in the kinesthetic experience: literally using a bodily appendage to quantify space.

In order to reconcile these difficulties in defining time, I will enlist the help of various disciplines. Sociology will offer further perspective regarding how time affects our lives. I will study a select number of psychological studies which will demonstrate that the cognitive perception of time is influenced by any number of external, environmental factors. Concluding that time is inherently subjective, I will use philosophy, particular the work of Henri Bergson, to discuss experiential time. In order to attach metaphorical meaning to this subjectivity, I will enlist Christian perspectives on time, particularly the temporal qualities of an eternal God, as well as ways in which the day of the Sabbath relates to time on earth.

Sociology and Psychology of Time

Sociologist Barbara Adam contends that "There is no single time, only a multitude of times which interpenetrate and permeate our daily lives. Most of these times are implicit, taken for granted, and seldom brought into relation with each other…"[19] To illustrate this point, she considers the aspect of travelling by airplane. The passenger experiences personal temporal continuity: the flight's duration is experienced as it should. Meanwhile, the clock time may not represent the same duration; when crossing time zones, hours may be gained or lost[20]. The greater the travel, the greater disruption of physical temporalities, notably one's sleeping and

[18] Adam, *Timewatch*, 25.
[19] Ibid., 12.
[20] Adam, *Timewatch,* 12-13.

eating cycles. We might further consider cognitive dissonance resulting from the mechanical innovations of the airplane which transcends a human's physical capability to travel long distances.

There are higher social dimensions to our experience of time. We tend to acknowledge what Adam calls the 'arrow of time' which directs our personal identities in aging. This is to give greater credit to the material aspects of our lives rather than the immaterial memories. By holding fast to linear growth in years, "the fact that nothing in our body, our physical appearance or our knowledge has remained unchanged, we think of ourselves as the same person now as the one that was born many years ago…"[21] Government regulations decide that age is the sole factor that decides one's readiness to drive, or drink alcohol, but common sense tells us that intelligence and wisdom, the intangible experiences of one's life, are a far better indicator.

Philosopher Richard Sorabji recognizes that there is fluidity in the experience of time. Though we may have difficulty voicing a specific definition of the term, we cannot deny its existence. "For one thing, there is something self-defeating about denying (time's) existence; for that very denial requires time in which it may take place…For another thing, any purposive agent must have a rudimentary idea of the difference between the future desired state of affairs and the present actual state; in other words, he must have some crude awareness of time."[22] Referring to Aristotle, Sorabji considers the argument that, because its parts (that is, past, present and future) do not exist independent of each other, that time as an entity cannot be true. What does constitute an instant—one minute, one second? His solution is that an instant never ceases to exist, but is in the constant process of becoming another instant. "Thus, a man of fifty *has* ceased being a child, but it does not follow that there is a particular time at which he ceased, or at which it would be

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[21] Ibid., 18.
[22] Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, 7.

true to say, 'he is ceasing'."[23] We see from this assertion that the fluidity of an instant is dependent on the activity being undertaken. Becoming a fifty-year old adult is a longer instant than is reaching puberty which is still sizably longer than the instant of eating a meal to satisfy one's hunger. In this sense, time is not defined by a number of quantities (such as the second) but a collection of overlapping experiences.

Even something as certainly calendar-based and regular as flight schedules or the operating hours of businesses are not entirely dependent on clock measurement. Adam reminds us that "The scheduling of flights, for example, is governed equally by seasonal variation in demand, by airspace, competition and financial considerations…"[24] A clock or calendar gives a representational form to an idea that is based on other temporal factors, or, to put it another way, clock time manages and simplifies, rather than determines, other temporalities.

All this is to suggest that there is an essential subjective aspect to the perception of time. Creating an intellectual distance from clock time allows for a richer experience of the nuanced temporalities that dictate so much of our lives. Duration may have a set value, but that does not mean that we experience it as such. I like to use the example of a flashing pedestrian 'don't walk' signal. If I am driving and using such a signal to gauge whether I have time to cross an intersection, I may glance at the sign and perceive it to be solid. I see that my light is still green and look again to realize that the pedestrian sign is indeed blinking. The first glance was so short, and I in such a hurry, that my mind interpreted the light to be solid. This fraction of a moment that I saw the sign lit was elongated to an eternity in my own mind.

We might best evoke St. Augustine's famous proclamation: "What, then, is time? I know well enough what it is, provided that nobody asks me; but if I am asked what it is and try to

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[23] Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum,* 8-12. (emphasis in original)
[24] Adam, *Timewatch,* 20.

explain, I am baffled."[25] To truly understand and appreciate time and how our lives interact with time, we must immediately dispel with the notion that time is in any way measureable or objective. In order to accomplish this, I will review the classic experiments of psychologist Robert E. Ornstein to denote the difficulty in associating clock time with experienced time. Psychological literature can only go so far; in order to understand how time relates to our human experiences, not to mention our appreciation of music, I must turn to the work of several philosophers. The problem of time has been approached by countless minds and I will explore the thoughts of a few who will build our understanding of eternity and so that we may then consider how timelessness relates to the experience of music.

Ornstein's work came in the 1960s when a standard, empirical way of looking at the psychology of time was being developed. Noting the problem had been discussed through many philosophers, a scientific approach to time is made difficult as there is no organ by which humans measure or experience time.[26] He identifies four modes of time experience: the shortest interval, the present; duration, the comparison of something longer to relate to the past; perspective on the future; and the perception of simultaneity.[27] Distinguishing between these modes standardizes the points of reference used in discussing time. Perceptions of time logically relate to the psychology of our memory. A past event no longer exists in the present; in remembering, the duration of the event returns to the present moment.

Ornstein then turns to the popular notion of the internal clock.[28] The belief in such a biological mechanism is surely due to the true acknowledgement of biological cycles, notably the process of going from rested and tired. Close to bedtime, we begin to get tired, thus, our bodies

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[25] Augustine, *Confessions of St. Augustine*, 264.
[26] Ornstein, *Experience of Time,* 15-19.
[27] Ibid., 20.
[28] Ornstein, *Experience of Time,* 25-36.

must be aware of the time that has passed since we woke up. However the many factors which can increase or cause us to forget our tiredness prove that such a clock is entirely inconsistent. Psychological studies which coincide with this way of thinking seek to illustrate how 'accurate' our sense of time is by defining an indifference interval, "a kind of 'basic unit' of time experience since it is the point at which 'real' and experiential times coincide."[29] While some studies have isolated 0.7 seconds, this seems to be a result of the experimental conditions rather than a natural and consistent human process. Further studies to relate biological conditions, such as body temperature, to consistent estimation of time prove to be just as inconsistent.

A response to this problem is to consider how cognitive processes affect our perception of time. Memory, for example, works in a three-tiered information processing model: sensory memory, short term/working memory, and long term memory. Short term memory receives information from the senses, holds basic pieces of information for use and retrieves information from long term memory. But the capacity of short term memory is limited, holding about seven pieces of information at a time.

This limitation effects time perception because "the amount of information registered in consciousness would determine the duration experience of a particular interval."[30] The more effort our working memory must exert, the longer a process seems to take. I experienced this the first day working at a fast food restaurant. I was overwhelmed with new tasks and customer expectations, menu information and materials; in my novice haze, that first work day seemed endless. When I became an accomplished worker, all of those tasks became second nature.

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[29] Ibid., 26.
[30] Ibid., 38.

Ornstein ran four controlled tests to study this theory.[31] One was designed to test the increase in stimuli as a cause of increased duration. The following three tested how the complexity of the stimuli affected duration. Of particular interest to us is the third of these experiments, which dealt with complexity of sound events.

Subjects listened to two five minute recordings both of which played the same ten every day sounds (tearing paper, clinking of glasses) played twenty times each and spaced evenly through the span of time. The simple recording presented the same sound consecutively twenty times, before presenting the second twenty times, moving through each category consecutively. To contrast, a complex recording was prepared in which twenty different cycles of the ten categories were presented. In the first cycle, consistency allowed the listener a chance to identify and become familiar with each sound before moving on to the next. In the second, the lack of a regular order made identification of the categories difficult and suggested a much more complex series. Participants then answered questions to indicate their experience of the duration of each recording.

The results of the above experiment showed that the more complex recording was perceived as 1.33 times longer than the simple one, thus supporting the theory. The fourth experiment replicated the third, but using visual images to control for the content of the stimulus. Participants still responded to support the theory, experiencing the random images as 1.362 times longer than the easily coded images. Ornstein also suggests a "habituation" explanation for the results.[32] In this explanation, after continuing to experience the ordered event, the participant can stop responding until the stimulus changes while in the random ordering, one must continue to

[31] Ornstein, *Experience of Time*, 53-72.
[32] Ibid., 69.

expend conscious effort to make up for lack of consistency. In this way, it is length of active attention rather than memory which affects the experience of duration.

This theory has been criticized for its apparent inability to account for the experience of a long duration during "empty time".[33] Returning to my experience as a fast-food employee, consider a busy day versus a slow day: why did the former go by quickly (when bustle of activity should equal more information to process, thus feel slower) and the latter go by slowly (when the idleness should result in a fast perception)? The answer lies in the body's ability to chunk information in order to maximize short term memory. As I became an expert at my job, a busy day was just an opportunity to fall back on simple routine, little taxation of my cognitive abilities were needed. A slow day forced me to be aware of what I was doing (or not doing), thus expanding my sense of time, elongating my experience of the day.

Other more recent psychological literature has continued to address the problem of time. Researchers at the University of California San Diego reviewed literature showing that people tend to fear the maxim 'time is money'.[34] Rather than waiting a long period of time for greater rewards, subjects tend to 'cash in' quickly for immediate, but smaller, rewards. "Because the perception of time is strongly linked to our subjective well-being, the passage of time varies considerably depending on our emotional states. The feeling that time passes slowly seems to be a fair indicator of psychological distress resulting from an inability to focus on meaningful thoughts and to start interesting activities." [35] On the other hand, a team of a French and

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[33] Flaherty, *A Watched Pot*, 14.
[34] Wittmann and Paulus, "Decision Making, Impulsivity and Time."
[35] Ibid. 11.

American researcher proved that the phrase 'time flies when you're having fun,' is indeed accurate.[36]

Experiential Perception of Time

If we compare the ideas brought forth here from Sorabji and Ornstein, we begin to see two different but interrelated approaches to time: one of succession and one of duration. The relationship between these two concepts was the subject of a review by psychologist Paul Fraisse[37] in which he frames the former as a concrete physical reality, the latter a subjective construction: "…successions are the raw material of the physical world…A tree's age is recorded by means of the concentric circles produced as the trunk develops. However, duration is a construct of the human mind. Human eyes perceive succession at first, but duration is linked to the identification of on and off effects, to use the language of physiology."[38] Fraisse is very interested in measuring how closely humans can perceive simultaneity based on their sense of duration. There is something subjective to succession in Sorabji's fluid perception of the instant, but he does this by viewing durations through the lens of succession, rather than the other way around. It is much more difficult to measure and quantify this subjectivity, thus we must turn from the empirical world of psychology into the world of philosophy.

French philosopher Henri Bergson spent a good deal of his career studying how the human mind corresponds to time.[39] Bergson also takes the idea of time as linear movement to task, stating that to do so would be to turn our existence into space, something which can be seen and returned to without question. A yardstick measures space and quantifies all objects by the

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[36] Droit-Valet and Meck, "How Emotions Colour."
[37] Fraisse, "Perception and Estimation of Time," 1-36.
[38] Ibid.,30.
[39] Thus, the title of Suzanne Guerlac's book studying his philosophy, *Thinking in Time*.

same scale again and again. Similarly, conceptualizing events as a point on a timeline is to deny its effective, active reality; a fixed point is static.[40]

If time were related to space, we ought to be able to return to the person we were at a given point in time. If I visited Wyoming when I was seven, I may return to Wyoming when I'm twenty-seven, but the collection of experiences I have accrued over twenty years does not allow me to return as a seven-year-old. In this way, time is a force rather than a "static conception" that would make sense to a psychologist like Ornstein.[41]

In his book *Time and Free Will*: *an Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness,*[42] Bergson considers how thinking in time plays out in our actions. "For him reality is not to be reached by any elaborate construction of thought: it is given in immediate experience as a flux, a continuous process of becoming, to be grasped by intuition, by sympathetic insight."[43] Since our experiences fundamentally change our being, intuition is memory of events in our past. Acting on that past, one need not consider the future but only live in the present.

To illustrate the power of the present, Bergson considers the attractiveness of dreams and hope for the future. "Even if the most coveted of these becomes realized, it will be necessary to give up the others…The idea of the future, pregnant with an infinity of possibilities, is thus more fruitful than the future itself, and this is why we find more charm in hope than in possession, in dreams than in reality."[44] Likewise, an orientation towards the past is dangerous: "Sorrow begins by being nothing more than a facing towards the past, an impoverishment of our sensations and

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[40] Smith, "Continuity, Motion and Energy," 9.
[41] Guerlac, *Thinking in Time*, 2.
[42] French: *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*
[43] Pogson, *Time and Free Will"*, vi.
[44] Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 10.

ideas, as if each of them were not contained entirely in the little which it gives out, as if the future were in some way stopped up."[45]

Thus for Bergson, there is no such thing as pure time, or clock time simply because we can never simplify an experience with duration in the way we can simplify space with measurement.[46] Here we remember the scientific but impossible to experience definition of a second. Instead, he considers the "conception of *real concrete duration* and the specific *feeling* of duration which our consciousness has when it does away with convention and habit and gets back to its natural attitude."[47]

Bergson uses the sixty swings of a pendulum that outline a minute to demonstrate how a multiplicity of experiences can map onto our consciousness simultaneously, rather than in a linear line as with space.[48] To reflect upon all sixty beats at the same time is to exclude the idea that the sixty beats happened in succession to add up to a minute. To give thought to succession would be to focus on each individual swing and ignore the totality. Thus his conclusion:

> "Now if finally, I retain the recollection of the preceding oscillation together with the image of the present oscillation, one of two things will happen. Either I shall set the two images side by side, and we then fall back on our first hypothesis, or I shall perceive one in the other, each permeating the other and organizing themselves like the notes of a tune, so as to form what we shall call a continuous or qualitative multiplicity with no resemblance to number. I shall thus get the image of pure duration; but I shall have entirely got rid of the idea of a homogeneous medium or a measurable quantity." [49]

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[45] Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 11.
[46] Ibid., 90-91.
[47] Pogson, *Time and Free Will*, vii, emphasis in the original.
[48] Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 104-105.
[49] Ibid., 105.

Bergson uses a musical example to illustrate the idea of pure, or real concrete, duration. He asks us to consider a familiar melody where we recognize a series of notes which flow from one to the next. If one note in the middle was held too long, we would recognize it as incorrect, not because of the durational value of the pause, but because of the qualitative change which it brings about. [50] We might represent the two melodies in the following graphs where Melody Two is the altered example of a familiar melody:

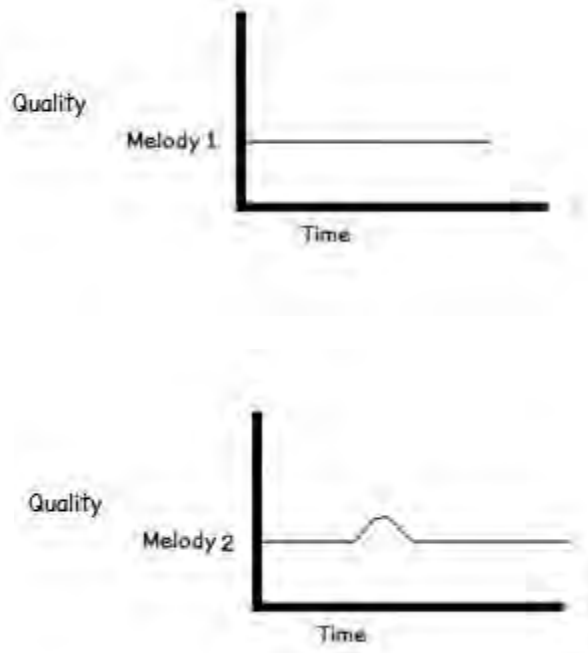

Figure 1.1—illustration by author of Bergson's concept of concrete duration.

If time were analogous to space, both melodies would be represented as straight lines, Melody Two lasting just a little longer. But such a graph does not represent the experience of the lengthened melody, although it is longer. We know in the exact moment of alteration that the melody is different. If time were space, we would only realize the difference after the second has

[50] Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 100-101.

played longer than the first one did; thus, the changed melody must be represented by quality, not only quantity.

This mode of thinking allows one to accept the multiplicity of times that I alluded to at the beginning of this chapter. The example of the melody will have a qualitative difference depending on the listener: how familiar he is with the melody before, or how closely he is listening. Bergson operates in stark contrast to cognitive models of thinking which suppose that I have certain pieces of knowledge, *a* and *b*, and I combine this knowledge to decide upon an action.[51] Cognitive scientists know that our memory is fallible and stores our perception of an experience, rather than an exact replica of an event. As Guerlac says "Bergson, for whom creation (or the movement of evolution) is neither mechanistic nor teleological, envisages life as a contingent process of growth and change, as a positive movement of perpetual differentiation that invents new forms."[52]

Linstead and Mullarkey, in an artistic analysis of his philosophy, illustrate Bergson's concepts by considering the "difference between an hour spent by a condemned prisoner waiting to be executed, an hour spent by a child waiting for the start of their birthday party, an hour spent undergoing interrogation, an hour spent in a traffic jam, an hour walking in the forest, or an hour making love."[53] To science, the duration, the space each of these events takes up, is all the same and the details of how that duration was spent are irrelevant. To the human mind, however, the activity matters first; the duration is just a container which may add or reduce pressure to magnify the situation.

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[51] Guerlac, *Thinking in Time,* 4.
[52] Ibid., 7.
[53] Linstead and Mullarkey, "Time, Creativity and Culture," 6.

Time and Christianity

A study of Bergson's thought is important to broaden our understanding of time, to realize it is about far more than what can be measured with a clock. Appreciating the subjective nature of time will allow us to study the intermingling of time and music (where Bergson's influence will be felt again) with greater clarity. But the aspect of intuition is troubling: we cannot say that the qualitative aspect of time is completely a result of our own experiences. At the very least, the experiences of others naturally influence, limiting or expanding, how our own lives can be led. At most, there is some common time to all people, after all, we do experience the same duration, filled with different acts though it may be. Thus, the assertion by Pogson, the translator of Bergson's volume, that reality is "a continuous process of becoming, to be grasped by intuition…"[54] does not ring completely true. There must be some aspect of commonality. In order to prepare the concept of eschatology for application to Feldman, I would like to suggest the concept of time in Christianity as a unifying force in our temporal experiences.

The spiritual sense of God is a common cultural concept, whether one actively believes in and practices Christianity or not. One's understanding of the God figure can range from a casual acknowledgement of the 'big man upstairs' to a thorough appreciation for a mysterious deity around whom all things are centered. No matter how one looks at him, God must be greater than the world we inhabit to be its creator.[55] Does this quality include his relation to time as it is experienced by humans?

Theologian Alan Padgett explored this question.[56] The concept of God's temporality is immediately tied up in his place of existence, Heaven, where Christianity understands that

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[54] Pogson, *Time and Free Will,* vi.
[55] References to God the creator are not meant to imply new-earth creationism. They only serve as a comparison between the creator-deity (by whatever means) and the created-mortals.
[56] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time*.

humans will join God for eternity. Thus, God must be eternal to occupy Heaven before and after creation. But what is the nature of eternity? It is tempting to think of eternity as a place where there is no time. Human existence reinforces the idea that time has an end: throughout our lives, we experience death, be it the death of plants or animals for food or the death of a loved one. We learn to expect that time has an end. If Heaven is the place we go after death, then Heaven must be without end; its duration must be measureless, endless, and timeless.

This is a common concept through which the apocalyptic book of Revelation is interpreted. In the classic King James Version, Revelation 10:5-6 says "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever…that there should be time no longer…" In the traditional mode of thinking, time is intimately tied up in the human experience, the opposite of God. The 'end of time' does not mean annihilation where all things cease to exist, but an end to temporal being in order to usher in God's existence which is of course timeless. But this translation ignores the meaning of the original, which places an emphasis on time as a period of waiting. Thus, 'there should be time no longer' announces that there will be no more delay, rather than no more time.[57]

God's relation to timelessness seems to be emphasized throughout the Old Testament as well, where his greatness is often exalted. Isaiah 40:28 says "Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The eternal God, Yahweh, creator of the ends of the earth, does not grow weary or tired. His understanding is unsearchable." This comes after a period of lamenting which questions whether God indeed hears the cries his people, suggesting distance between Heaven and earth—understandable if the two temporal worlds conflicted as time against timelessness. However, the

[57] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 30.

passage does not so much emphasize his lack of temporal existence as "his limitless *extension in time* (everlasting) and in space (ends of the earth)."[58]

Thus, Padgett is skeptical of the idea of an eternal God who has no relationship to time. Indeed, this view of eternity has its logical flaws. How can a God who is without time participate in human existence which is bound by time? The theology of God's relationship to the world is massive, but Christianity in its very simplest form hinges on the concept of God coming to earth as the Son, Jesus. This alone would defy his nature even if we ignore the intricacies of God the Father's involvement in human affairs. Furthermore, if people do join into eternity with God after their time on earth is up, this necessitates a beginning to one's existence in eternity. A timeless world must not have any reference to beginnings and endings.[59]

Padgett is much more interested in the concept of eternity that is "relatively timeless"[60] compared to human temporality. He asserts that God must be involved with time for he changes.[61] Jack Miles studies this concept in his two books *God: A Biography*[62] and *Christ: A Crisis in the Life of God*[63]. In these books he considers the Bible as a narrative of the character God. Inevitably, the biographical story goes from a young creator in the books of Moses, to a torrential figure outlined in the prophets of the Old Testament, to an older, peaceful reconciler in the New Testament. Whether one accepts this drastic critical review of scripture, any Christian theology must admit that God's modes of interacting with humans as changed. Theologian Jürgen Moltmann, whose work will be the subject of chapter four, contends that it is not that God

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[58] Westermann, quoted in Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 26-27. Emphasis added
[59] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 31.
[60] Ibid., 1.
[61] Ibid., 122.
[62] Miles, *God*.
[63] Miles, *Christ*.

changes—or that he is becoming—but that his character is revealed over time to humans—he is in a process of coming.[64] Therefore, he must have a relationship to time.

Humans are, of course, changed by time. We need look at nothing more than the process of aging for evidence. Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 is a sure representation of human time, saying "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die…" The passage goes on to describe matters of life which require time and change. Solomon, the author of this passage carefully says that these purposes are all 'under heaven'. If God is involved in human temporality, is he too changed by time? A positive answer would seriously challenge his claim to omnipotence. The solution brings us closer to understanding Padgett's idea of 'relative timelessness': God, being the creator of everything, Heaven and Earth, also created time. "God changes, indeed, but only in relationship to a changing reality of which he is the creator and Lord…But with respect to his power, for example, God's activity changes in relation to the changing world he sustains…"[65] Time's creator can easily be involved with time, without being changed by it.

In the same way, though eternity is temporal, it is impossible to measure it as absolute time. The second is measured using a precise scientific definition, which is rooted in the laws of nature. Since God created the laws of nature as he created time,[66] there is no way to discover how the scientific measurement of the second can be applied in God's eternity. Even though God may be involved in temporal duration, he is above it as its creator, thus, relatively timeless.

Scripture literally states that God's time is relative to ours.[67] 2 Peter 3:8: "But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand

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[64] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 23.
[65] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time*, 124.
[66] Ibid., 127.
[67] Ibid., 126.

years as one day." A similar sentiment is seen in Psalm 90. One might even consider the story of God giving the law to Moses. Moses went up to Mount Sinai and waited for six days, hearing from the Lord only on the seventh. Forty days and nights followed of God instructing Moses.[68] This instruction was to be the corner-stone of the Jewish faith, thus is well recorded in Exodus, summarized in the next seven chapters; a good amount of language, but not enough to fill forty days and nights! Furthermore, it is said that Moses did not eat or drink through this time—physically impossible for a man, so perhaps the forty days and nights is metaphorical. God so enriched Moses' life that what was a brief period for him was akin to forty days because of the nearness of God's relative timelessness.

If God's temporal existence is relatively timeless compared to ours, and God works within our temporal existence, one must wonder how he can function between them. Padgett offers us two examples to explain this phenomenon. He creates a lengthy scenario where two time streams, *A* and *B*, are occupied by scientists who can communicate to each other. They transport clocks between the worlds at the same time, at the same interval. Clocks from stream *A* do not work correctly in stream *B* and vice versa. As the clocks are transported simultaneously, they should continue to function regardless of where they are. Though each group of scientists concludes that the natural laws of the other stream are incorrect, the bottom line is that nature, which governs absolute time, differs in each stream. "…two objects can be in the same time, without being in the same Measured (absolute) Time."[69]

Padgett also explains the concept of Zero Time Relation. This concept is rooted in the theology "that God is the cause (among other things) of the basic matter/energy of the universe

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[68] Exodus 24:18.
[69] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 17-18.

and of any natural laws." [70] As such, he is also the sustaining force of the universe, all physical properties and resulting actions of all matter. "Were God to annihilate, it would not be through some action…but through the cessation from action."[71] Since any lag in action from God to humans would result in annihilation of creation, "The mere passage of time…has no causal efficacy."[72] A person's perception of God's relative timelessness is irrelevant because any act on his part has a direct, simultaneous impact on life on earth.

All this challenges the linear experience of time that we experience as humans. The theologian Karl Barth referred God's temporal world as "the fullness of time without the defects of succession."[73] In Christian theology, life on earth is marred by the sinful condition humans experienced since Adam. God, being above such time as its creator, is free from this burden. Time, to him, is not the malleable force that it is to us.

The lack of process brings us back to Bergson, specifically the thought attributed by Guerlac that one is in a constant state of becoming, shaped by intuition. It would be tempting to conclude that the argument of God's relative timelessness must necessitate that ours is concrete, absolute time. I would like to suggest that it is not intuition as much as a relationship with a relatively timeless God that frees us from restrictive time. In participating in a spiritual life, we are beginning to participate in God's time (relative timelessness).

Participation in God's time is the focus of the Sabbath, according to Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel.[74] He sees daily life as focused on matters of space in order to gain power, "Yet to have more does not mean to be more."[75] For him, space refers to material goods

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[70] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 19
[71] Aquinas in Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 20.
[72] Padgett, *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time,* 22.
[73] Ibid., 143.
[74] Heschel, *The Sabbath*.
[75] Heschel, *The Sabbath,* 3.

and practices natural to earth. The quest for God cannot be associated with this same kind of thinking, for God is not material. A life grounded in the things of creation causes us to forget that they are just that: created, with no inherent value. True value is to look past things and upon the creator. Thus, one of the Ten Commandments explicitly instructs that no image of God (an idol) be made as part of worship. To do so would be to try to turn God into space; this is against his nature.[76] Likewise, we are not to covet space, but instead, to covet time. God has given us a day, a period of time, which is a glimpse of him.[77]

The point of the Sabbath is to return to holiness, return to time and in doing so, return to God. 'Sabbath rest' is an oft-repeated idea in modern cultures. It is derived from the opening of Genesis, the creation story where we are told that on the seventh day, God himself rested. Resting is an important part of removing oneself from things of the world, but it is not everything. We often overlook that God himself was active on the seventh day; Genesis 2:2-3: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made." Each day of creation was the focus of a particular task. Note that God "ended his work" not on the sixth day, but the seventh where his task was two-fold: rest and blessing and sanctification. Heschel explains that an active concept of rest is intended here, one where the good life is sought. The good life is glimpsed on the Sabbath where we receive a taste of eternity.[78]

It is important to differentiate between active rest and leisurely rest. Sabbath rest does not refer to recreational activities in which one may avoid the fatigue of work. To engage with the

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[76] Heschel, *The Sabbath,* 95.
[77] Ibid., 90-91.
[78] Ibid., 22-23.

world in such a way is to still be governed and controlled by the clock time of others;[79] visiting a restaurant means the customer is subjected to the temporal activities of his waiter. Time is a valuable commodity and the only way to rest richly is to escape the clock completely by removing oneself spiritually from this world.

The creation story in Genesis tells of God's daily creative accomplishment, each one deemed 'good'. The seventh also stands out because it is not marked as 'good', but as 'holy'. According to the Bible, good is nothing without holiness. The material creation of the first six days is good as it is made in God's image, but grounded in space. This being akin to absolute time, which we have come to see is inconsistent with the human experience, we realize that there is more than space. "With our bodies we belong to space; our sight, our souls, soar to eternity, aspires to the holy. The Sabbath…gives us the opportunity to sanctify time, to raise the good to the level of the holy, to behold the holy by abstaining from the profanity."[80] Even the most non-religious mind can see the value in this wisdom: there is too much of a good thing. In order to remain free from the material world of space, we must actively focus on the holiness of time.

Heschel acknowledges that the typical human response is to define time as a series of events. But to do this is to give time meaning only in relation to other events. By cleansing ourselves of the things of space, we allow ourselves to partake in the relative timelessness of God. Part of this has to do with language. We say that 'I occupy space', space which is mine alone. But we do not say 'I occupy time', we pass through time.[81] All of this corresponds with our logical definitions of time and space. Space grounds us in things which are ultimately empty while time opens us up to endless possibilities (eternity). We cannot rid ourselves of materials,

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[79] Jeremy Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time*, 72-73.
[80] Heschel, *The Sabbath,* 75.
[81] Ibid., 99.

but we must understand their value and standing: "We should not speak of the flow or passage of time but of the flow or passage of space through time."[82]

Freeing one's mind from a restrictive concept of time allows a greater appreciation of the world we inhabit. Though our bodies pass through instances (space) from one to the next, this is a poor representation of our conscious experience. This chapter has not explored the relationship between time and memory, which would yield greater details of the human experience. The temporal world of our minds adds to the aesthetic experience of the world: to remember long-past details greater than others more recent, for example. A relatively timeless God has been offered to aid comprehension of the ambiguities, and multiplicities of a concept that seems straightforward. The next chapter will look at time in music. Bergson, Heschel, and an eternal God all relate to a seemingly simple topic.

[82] Heschel, *The Sabbath,* 96.

CHAPTER 2: TIME IN MUSIC

The Psychology of Musical Time

We intuitively understand that music is interrelated with time. Most listeners can easily identify a regular beat, metric pattern and discern a fast tempo against a slow one. One might say that the very definition of music is the process of sound moving through time: where sound waves constitute the vertical aspect of time, their horizontal unfolding is essential to a work's appreciation and comprehension. Composer Olivier Messiaen referred to musicians as 'rhythmicians' and spoke often to music's unique insight into time perception. Recognizing that time permeates all our lives, he says that "Regular time moves towards the future—it never goes backwards. Psychological time, or time of thought, goes in all directions: forward, backwards, cut in pieces, at will."[83] Music, better than a clock, is a way to recognize the reality of psychological time. Thus, it is important to look at ways music achieves this power. It is not simply a matter of rhythm, but also one of form, harmony and thematic development.

A writer on the theology of music, Jeremy Begbie has said that "Music offers a particular form of participation in the world's temporality and…it has a distinctive capacity to limit something of the nature of this temporality and our involvement with it."[84] We can recognize that in reality the time of a piece expands in a linear fashion, that is, the sounds which make up a composition enter our ears one after the other through the duration of a performance. However, our perception of musical time, like the experiential time of our lives, is anything but linear based on our mind's memory and qualitative interpretation of sound.

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[83] Quoted in Taylor "Time and Eternity in Messiaen", 271.
[84] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time*, 6.

Music connects to an important element of being human; an element which differentiates sentient beings from inanimate objects whose innate value is recognized in an instant. Humans, on the other hand, take time to 'be'. This is clear as we are getting to know a new person, or even ourselves: our identity is shaped by experiences that happen over time rather than in an instant. Music demonstrates the human value of taking time to develop and establish an idea or identity.[85] This chapter seeks to explore ways that a composer can use musical elements to affect one's perception of time. At the end, I will bring these techniques together in considering Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin due temps* as a case study on the intersections of musical time and theology.

Psychologists have focused on listener's responses to various aspects of music as the ramifications of these perceptions influence our responses to advertisements, shopping experiences and phone wait-times, not to mention aesthetic appreciation. One study created two pieces of music: one in an 18th-century classical style, one in a contemporary pop style. Nine derivatives of each piece were created through all the permutations of the tonal (major, minor and atonal) and tempo (180, 120 and 60 beats per minute) parameters.[86]

The researchers approached listener responses to pleasure, arousal and surprise. The classical composition in a fast tempo, pared with major or minor tonality led to the most pleasant musical experience for listeners. It is noteworthy that the positive correlation between tempo and pleasure was not consistent with atonality. Fast tempo seems to amplify the dissonance. There was also an increase in arousal in the fast pop selection. Amplification of other musical parameters is the likely influence; in this case, the drum-based dance beats. [87]

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[85] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time*, 86.
[86] Kellaris and Kent, "An Exploratory Investigation".
[87] Ibid., 394.

A European study[88] regarding the connections between musical training and time estimation upholds Ornstein's work regarding the internal clock where he concluded that the amount of information one must process is positively correlated to perception of time. Subjects—half musically trained, half not—listened to either a happy piece or a sad one. Those who were trained in music were more correct in their estimation of the length of the piece. This supports my experience of a busy work-day passing quickly, even though I had greater cognitive processing to accomplish; expertise results in an accurate experience of duration. Researchers were also interested in the relationship between intended emotion and time. Non-musicians perceived the happy selection to take more time and the sad song less. It seems that, lacking appropriate means to analyze the work, non-musicians could only rely on their emotional experience, preferring to assume that the positive piece was more substantial (the maxim 'time flies when you're having fun', being true).

As in the previous chapter, it is difficult to appreciate the aesthetic experience of time by cognitive psychology alone. Musical theorists have become more interested in studying time through analytical, compositional and philosophical lenses since Jonathan Kramer's 1988 book *The Time of Music* which extends the thesis "that time in music can be many different things." [89] It is difficult to prove the temporal behaviors of a piece of music as experienced by a listener. In this regard, Kramer's goal is not to create scientific data but rather "to challenge readers with suggestions about new ways to listen to many kinds of music…"[90] I will attempt a similar goal: to posit philosophical ways of listening to musical time from Kramer and other theorists to pave the way for Feldman.

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[88] Panagiotidi and Samartzi, "Time estimation".
[89] Kramer, *The Time of Music,* xiii.
[90] Ibid., xiii.

A further consideration given by Kramer in analysis of musical time is abundance of, or lack of, content. He enlists the help of Ornstein as well as psychologist Richard A. Block who studied the saying 'a watched pot never boils'. Subjects who were instructed to pay attention to the duration of boiling of a liquid estimated a longer value than those who were directed to only pay attention to the visual. [91] A major component of attention is the volume of information that must be processed. Musically, "a two-minute pop tune will probably seem shorter than a two-minute Webern movement." [92]

Kramer demonstrates this musically by comparing two melodies: one tonal and sequential, the other atonal and highly irregular. Continuing Ornstein's storage-size metaphor, the atonal melody will seem subjectively longer because every beat is filled with information that is different than every other beat. Lacking place-holders, our attention is attuned to every beat, rather than the musical arc of a phrase; the mental effort to find order elongates the experience in our minds. Kramer also brings attention to other sources of information: in this case, dynamics. The tonal melody can be shaped with a regular crescendo and decrescendo to emphasize its sequential nature; this likely aids its comprehensibility. If the dynamic scheme were itself highly irregular, this would work against the sequential element and increase the subjective experience of the same melody. [93]

Linear and Nonlinear Time

Thomas Clifton contends that the flexibility of time is due to the interaction of events and spaces in time. As we have seen in the psychological measurement of experiential time, it is

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[91] Block, George and Reed. "A Watched Pot Sometimes Boils," 46.
[92] Kramer, *The Time of Music*, 337.
[93] Ibid., 334-340.

relatively unhelpful to allow a composition's length to determine its meaning.[94] A two-minute composition that is very fast is a very different experience than one of the same length that is very slow. A similar folly is in the traditional teaching of musical form. "…after you have reduced music to its major structural events…what is missing is any consideration of *when* the events occur."[95] It is simplistic to identify the parts of sonata form without discussing when each part happens in relation to the whole. This harkens back to the problem from Bergson of identifying time with spatial metaphors. A formal analysis reveals the piece as an entire roadmap, but a piece of music cannot be experienced in its totality in one glance. If we take formal analysis literally, it doesn't matter whether the score is read forwards or backwards; aurally, which is the authentic musical experience, we understand that we will hear a very different piece.[96]

One cannot discount theoretical analysis completely. Music does not have explicit, extrinsic significance which is to say, music does not literally state its intentions and meaning as words do. At the same time, it is impossible to assert that music is completely intrinsic, autonomous and without outside references. Countless compositions throughout history which mimic bird calls and word-painting in Renaissance madrigals can attest to this fact. Music cannot assert an action by literal narration but its succession of sounds elicits meaning by relating to the experiences of the listener.[97]

The human mind does make connections across time spans, say, recognizing the return of the opening theme at the beginning of the recapitulation. Kramer likens this activity to right-

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[94] Quoted in Ibid., 5.
[95] Boykan, *Silence and Slow Time,* 2. Emphasis in the original.
[96] Ibid., 18.
[97] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time,*11-13.

brain creative analysis (as opposed to left-brain which counts absolute time).[98] Memory plays an important antagonistic role against our internal clock which we learned in chapter 1 is itself subject to deception. A primary theme may look the same on paper at the beginning of a sonata form exposition and recapitulation, but listening to it is an altogether different experience: the exposition begins without substantial preliminaries; the recapitulation follows amid instability and turbulence of the end of the development. Set in a new context, the same theme can never be experienced verbatim. We must also identify temporal characteristics of the theme to illuminate how it ought to appear again (and a composer's artistry may lead him to deceive these expectations).

I find the opening movement of Beethoven's *Piano Sonata in Ab, Op 110* to be an exquisite play on time. Its exposition might be analyzed with little trouble. The bulk of the development is a simple sequential presentation of the fragmented primary theme, a mere 16 measures long. The primary theme of the recapitulation follows immediately, but it does not appear as it did in the exposition; in fact, more development or recasting of the opening material happens in the recapitulation than in the development section.

Appreciation of this passage is gained by following the experience of sonata form suggested by Charles Rosen.[99] Rather than labeling themes and sections, he posits that sonata form is best experienced as an establishment of the tonic, tonal dissonance as the piece moves from the tonic, and long-term resolution as the tonic is reestablished. In the case of Beethoven Op. 110, the primary theme in the recapitulation does not look at all like the theme in the exposition; the sense of return is only in the return to the home key. Beethoven keeps the tonal dissonance to a minimum and allows the recapitulation to exist in large part in the home key

[98] Kramer, *The Time of Music*, 11. The concept of right-brain/left-brain may be scientifically outdated, but the binary of creative thinking vs. analytical thinking is still helpful.
[99] Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 96-104.

while still developing material in the stability of the tonic. This secure temporal world allows the experience of the piece to be enriched by musical details which, in a more traditional sonata form, would be ignored or forgotten. Although the exposition ends with a perfect cadence in the key of the dominant and suspension of rhythmic activity, the development elides into the recapitulation. It might seem as if the development did not end, but for the return to the home key; by continuing thematic development, the recapitulation evokes a sense of timelessness rather than a simple return home.

In Beethoven's late works we see the seed of the developing variation principle attributed to Brahms and later to Schoenberg which posits that not all musical events are equal, even ones that appear verbatim. This is more congruent with events in life. All points in time are not equal, such as every time one attends a church. The lifelong effect of walking in for a regular service pales in comparison to walking in to get married. The latter inevitably effects every subsequent moment in one's life though the space appears the same.

Kramer utilizes the concepts of linear and nonlinear time to understand the temporal narrative (or lack of narrative) in a work. Though our ears hear linearly, our minds do not remember or experience time as such, as chapter 1 discussed. Linearity in music is defined as "the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise *from earlier events of the piece*."[100] Functional tonality is a quintessential linear procedure. By placing a tonic harmony at the start of a phrase, followed by motion to the subdominant, the composer is limiting the harmonic motion in the following passages. The movement from tonic to subdominant requires a cadence to happen soon after. The entire existence of the tonic chord

[100] Kramer, *The Time of Music*, 20. emphasis added.

changes the listening perspective: "Harmonic events are all defined with respect to the tonic, so that its presence is continuously felt throughout the course of a piece." [101]

Tension and resolution is an integral part of tonality. Sonata form is dependent on the small-scale workings of tonal progressions; modulation from tonic to dominant in the exposition requires parallel stability of the tonic in the recapitulation. Begbie says that tonality "possesses an integral relational order which in its large-scale and small-scale organisation is sensed as directional driving towards rest and closure…" [102] Composers have some leeway in creating surprise and thwarting expectations in tonality, but linear music is typically inevitable music, grounded in the present.

Nonlinear music is then "the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from *principles or tendencies governing an entire piece or section.*" [103] In linear music, factors from the past determines the present; in nonlinear music, the future may happen on its own, or it may be based on the present, but the past never has a deterministic role. In serial music, for example, a composition is not held together by inescapable events made evident earlier in the piece. The tone row is the main source of material. Composers have at one time or another found ways to derive melody, articulation, harmony, rhythm, dynamics and timbre from the tone row. A piece may consist of any number of combinations of the derivations at one time creating diversity rather than limitations. The tone row itself may never be apparent but is instead hinted at as events are generated and unveiled as a piece goes on. We need not hear a tone row, but we hear the implications, the results of these procedures in the composition; however, how the tone row is used at the beginning of the piece need not have any effect in what happens at the end of the piece.

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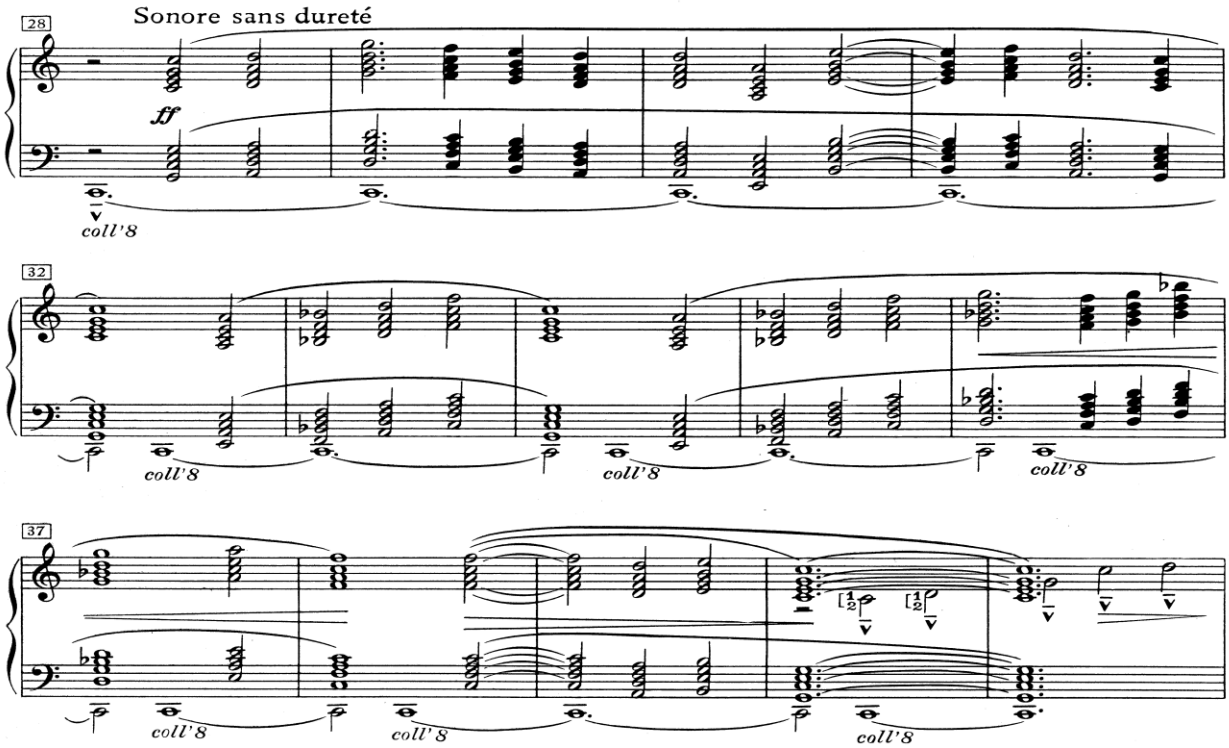
[101] Boykan, *Silence and Slow Time,* 79.
[102] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time,* 38.
[103] Kramer, *The Time of Music*, 20. emphasis added.

Non-linear music is resistant to attempts of road-map analysis. It is even incorrect to use Roman Numeral analysis with a composer such as Debussy, who often uses diatonic chords in a non-tonal way. Consider the grand hymn at the center of La *Cathédrale engloutie* (see figure 2 below). Phrases are clearly heard, each ending with a C-major chord. One could analyze the harmonies with Roman Numerals in terms of C-major (with some difficulty when the Bb enters), but this distracts us from how the chords are meant to function.[104] There is no tonal cadence, save for perhaps the plagal motion in measures 33-34. The chords are not based in tonality but are instead derived by planing. The piece up to this point is built almost entirely on intervals of the major second and perfect fifth, beginning almost completely static and gaining momentum. Debussy is after sonorous power of the diatonic chords, not their function, to fulfill the temporal sweep of this climax.

Example 2.1—*La Cathédrale engloutie, Measures 28-41*



[104] Boykan, *Silence and Slow Time,* 109.

The first book of Debussy's *Preludes* was written in late 1909 through early 1910 and follows the trajectory of inventive harmonic language begun in his early works two decades earlier. If we accept that tonality and linearity go hand in hand, it is important to recognize that Debussy's music is essentially 'atonal', though borrowing heavily from diatonic harmony. Debussy and a host of his contemporaries, including the obvious experiments in atonality by Schoenberg, contributed to a freer, nonlinear sense of time the moment they began to free the perspective of the listener from a dictatorial sense of the tonic.

Composer Charles Wuorinen asserts that the tonal language defines the complexity of the rhythmic content of a piece. [105] Tonal music, where the tones are unequal due to the pull of the tonic, requires consistent and periodic rhythmic phrasing. Atonal music which uses all twelve semitones equally must be ordered in an unequal way. Inequality in one domain must always be balanced by equality in another.

Taking a cue from Stockhausen, Kramer notes that an extreme example of nonlinear music is 'moment time', music that starts as if it were previously ongoing. 'moment form' then is a piece made up of several autonomous moments: "The moments may be *related*…but not *connected* by transition." [106] A piece analyzed by Kramer as a good example of 'moment form' is Messiaen's *Cantéyodjayâ.*[107] A series of sections, only on the rarest occasions repeated or developed, are juxtaposed as if cast in a flexible mobile form.[108] As materials return, they lack the requisite sense of continuity which would give meaning to development.

In these contexts, musical events are heard for their own sake, not for what they might contribute to a larger musical narrative. Details of these moments are magnified for greater

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[105] Wuorinen, *Simple Composition*, 41-44.
[106] Kramer, *The Time of Music*, 50.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid., 167

scrutiny and appreciation. Nonlinear music is more comparable to our memory processes, which reorganizes experiences rather than reconstructing them. Memory combined with listening to the totality allows us to put disconnected events together in our minds, thus 'moment form' develops meaning over the course of the whole, rather than in the moment itself. [109]

Let us return to the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 110. By thwarting the clear distinction between development and recapitulation, between developmental material and return to the primary theme, Beethoven ignores the implications of tonality which manifested in the parallel and often identical exposition and recapitulation opening themes in the sonata forms of Mozart and Haydn. In doing so, he sets the rest of this movement as one long, nonlinear moment. Though clearly related to material earlier in the piece, the development in the recapitulation is not directly determined by events which occurred in the exposition.

One could make the mistake of interpreting 'moment time' as a series of juxtaposed musical events which do not relate to each other, but 'moment time' is perhaps the most evocative of eternity. The equality gained, given that no moment is greater than another, evokes a stasis in the music. Says Stockhausen, "these forms do not aim toward a climax, do not prepare the listener to expect a climax…Every present moment counts, as well as no moment at all…An instant does not need to be just a particle of measured duration." [110] Similarly, eternity is not an absence of time, but an absolutely equality of time, an everlasting present.

Since tonality necessitates growth and progression, it is antithetical to speak of this music as representative of God's eternal character. Tonality may speak to other aspects of God (harmonic resolution as a metaphor for his ability to remove one's burdens, for example) but the

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[109] Kramer, *The Time of Music*, 215-216.
[110] Quoted in Ibid., 201.

"capacity to speak of God comes only when the march of time is forgotten."[111] Messiaen's early music attempted to replicate sonata form but his most mature works are anti-forms which exist in spite of the work's harmonic content. Messiaen's forms "are essentially static forms, not created by the content but simply existing to present it, like an iconostasis."[112]

A dispelling of the march of time is heard in the music of spectral composers. Composer Claudy Malherbe connects Tristan Murail's chamber work *Vues aériennes* to visual artist Claude Monet's series *Cathédrales de Rouen*.[113] In the thirty paintings, Monet captures the same perspective of the cathedral in Rouen, France, over different points of the day. The point is not to paint the cathedral as much as it is to paint the light that interacts with the cathedral. Light is captured as a distinct moment in time which can be dwelt upon eternally. Murail accomplishes the same thing by composing timbral distortions of the same musical material. The artistic merit of this work is not in the direction that musical material takes but in one's dwelling upon the work, and the contrasted views on the same substance it presents, as a whole. In this way, form is derived not from pre-established motion but from the very sound at the basis of the piece.

In considering spectralism, we remember the rhythmic freedom that the breakdown of tonality afforded: "Now there is no 'moving from' and 'proceeding towards'. The metrical beat becomes merely a reference point: it assumes a mechanical function by means of which a structure can be temporally 'spread out'."[114] Rochberg refers to 'space-time' music where the time element belonging to the music is merely one for organization and duration; the musical material moves by its own free will according to its own laws. The aural result is one of eternity.

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[111] Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time*, 17.
[112] Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time*, 16.
[113] Malherbe, "Seeing Light as Color."
[114] Rochberg, *The Aesthetics of Survival*, 105.

When sound as a structural force takes over as a spatial, musical element, the consistency resulting creates a sense of eternal present.

We can see the impact of tonal language when we compare two seemingly incomparable works: the second movement of Haydn's Piano Sonata in A, Hob. XVI:26 and *Par Lui tout a étè fait*, movement 6 from Messiaen's *Vingt Regards*. Both are written in traditional forms, Haydn's a minuet and trio, Messiaen's a fugue, but each is also set as a palindrome. The minuet and trio function individually forwards and backwards, and the da capo generates a large-scale palindrome. The form of each section fulfills the rounded binary expectations of the classical style albeit the length of the phrases is somewhat asymmetrical. One need not be aware of the palindrome effect, but it makes for a nifty compositional device because no other expectations are thwarted.

Messiaen's example is far from a typical fugue, as his harmonic and rhythmic language does not lend itself well to a regular exposition of the subject with either a real or a tonal answer. The fugal subject is not repeated verbatim, but instead is immediately developed. Fragmentation of material plays an important part, and the movement requires the greatest piano virtuosity. The piece is barely recognizable as a fugue. This way, once the fugue returns in reverse, the listener is imbued, at best, with a sense of similarity. Peter Hill refers to an '*anti*climax'; the virtuosity of the passage causes cognitive dissonance against the perception that nothing has been accomplished amid the wash of notes. [115]

It is little wonder why contemporary music—which is largely nonlinear—is difficult to grasp for uninformed audiences. Simple listening attempts to attach narrative to understand music. Narrative is most closely paralleled by music that has a clear movement from one gesture to the next. Linear music also makes tension and resolution abundantly clear on the surface of

[115] Hill "Piano Music I," 93.

the music. Nonlinear music is about self-generating musical material, large-scale or long-term associations and seeks a deeper exploration of meanings. Linearity might be associated with clock time which also deals with inevitable gestures: after one minute has passed, we expect another to follow suit. Following our conclusions of chapter 1, nonlinear music better associates with the subjective reality of the human experience of time. Composer Harrison Birtwistle spoke of this as circular time: "Time is not linear, *though it expresses itself that way*…In the end you understand music through your memory. You go back to the same thing again and again and experience it differently." [116]

This is not to serve as a complete condemnation of linear music that is centered in tonality. Looking at Beethoven's late quartet, Op. 135, Begbie reads a theological implication in the grand gesture in measure 10 which is more an "ending gesture heard in a 'beginning' context." [117] Begbie relates this to the moment of Christ's resurrection which ushered in the 'final days' referred to throughout the New Testament. Jesus' return to earth is a grand gesture which changes everything, hints at the end, whose return will be the end, but is at the beginning of a new era with much more to come. After the abrupt opening of the Beethoven, the listener is grounded in the present for the rest of the piece, having already experienced the future. Heschel's conception of the Sabbath day relates, where eternity is glimpsed on the seventh day of creation where God rested. The gesture of an event may work in conjunction with or in opposition to its order of appearance.

Composers have related the philosophy of Henri Bergson to their musical endeavors. Bergson is sensitive to the true experience of time which relates to the spectral school of composition, interested in "the processes inherent in a single note on levels both local and

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[116] Borthwick, Hart and Monti. "Musical Time and Eschatology," 291. Emphasis added.
[117] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time,* 115.

global…"[118] French-born Philippe Leroux is referred to as a post-spectralist and sees correlations between Bergson's rejection of absolute time and the movement of musical lines: "Bergson also speaks beautifully of continuity and the actual duration of time…The notion of working with a form or figure, that has not been discretized into particles or parameters, aligns with the reflections of Bergson...The key is not the object itself, but its movement."[119]

Music that is focused on sound, as spectralism is, will understandably be divorced from space because any temporal identity can be placed onto it. The opposite is also true: music focused on rhythm will cement the piece in space rather than time because its temporal identity is fixed. Adorno suggested that Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* uses non-Bergsonian time. The famous opening dance scene is replete with regular phrasing, scarred by disorienting off-beat accents. As a result, it is impossible to have any sense of musical growth; the piece is decidedly grounded in real, concrete space, rather than abstract time.[120]

Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*: a Case Study in Music, Theology and Time

In considering the philosophical intersections of theology and time, it is interesting that Begbie, in his book *Theology, Music and Time,* does not address the question of time in Heaven, with God, in relation to music. Messiaen suggests the problem that time is created, not an innate characteristic of God's: "all God's creatures are enclosed in time, and time is one of God's strangest creatures, since it is totally in conflict with his eternal nature, he who is without beginning, without end, without succession."[121] The question is especially important as we begin to consider Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin due temps* (Quartet for the End of Time).

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[118] Nonken, *The Spectral Piano*, 25.
[119] Quoted in Smith, "Continuity, Motion and Energy," 32.
[120] Parker, "Time of Music," 43-76.
[121] Quoted in Shenton, "Observations on Time," 178.

Musicologist Benedict Taylor takes this problem as an opportunity to criticize other writers on Messiaen and Messiaen himself for "attempting to express the inexpressible, representing the unrepresentable, the atemporal (God) through a medium that is essentially concerned with time. In eternity there can be no music."[122]

The Book of Revelation (the scriptural inspiration for Messiaen's *Quatuor*) contradicts Taylor by describing instruments and voices in heaven, used as worship to God. Revelation 5:8b-9 says "the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song…" Taylor is operating under the assumption that time is the opposite of eternity, a logical truth. That there is music in Heaven, as described by scripture, is further theological proof of Padgett's assertion that God is relatively timeless, but still functions in the human temporal world. Thus, it is acceptable to have music—which is predicated on the existence of time—to exist in Heaven.

Messiaen scholars may use the terms 'time' and 'eternity' inconsistently, the salvageable portion of Taylor's critique, but this is not a significant problem if the music is speaking towards a relatively timeless God. The theological pursuit of eternity through music is the subject of one of Messiaen's most famous works. Its musical and theological implications are well covered in the literature, thus a review of the piece serves as worthwhile case study to further my argument of an eschatological reading of Feldman.

The background of the *Quatuor* is well known. Messiaen, interned in a prisoner of war camp by the Nazis in Poland, was recognized as a composer worthy of respect and given provisions and time to write a chamber piece for other instrumentalists in the camp: a violinist, a cellist, a clarinetist joined by Messiaen himself at the piano. This instrumentation, rarely heard before, has since become a common chamber ensemble. Messiaen arranged three preexisting

[122] Taylor, "On Time and Eternity in Messiaen," 261.

movements as needed and wrote five more to premiere all eight in the camp with a theological program based on the aforementioned verses from Revelation 10. [123]

This raises an immediate logical problem. The three preexisting movements (III, V and VIII), the latter two having their instrumentation completely changed, were not written with the theme of the whole work in mind; Messiaen reappropriated the music and created new theological intentions. As my analysis will indicate, the movements still support the theological argument put forth by the work as a whole. This further supports my own activities: theological content can be inherent in the work, derived from musical elements after the fact, based on musical context and an *applied* program.

What is unquestionable is that Messiaen actively pursued time and theology throughout his oeuvre. Messiaen was quoted in 1984, describing his use of Biblical quotation, and descriptive programs as performance practice for his music, saying "These quotations are of the greatest significance; I'd go so far as to say that, if that were not the case, I might just as well pack up…These quotations are inseparable from the origins of…most of the works I've written which have a religious content." [124]

In the preface to *Quatuor*, he does direct the players to seek answers to their interpretive problems in the score, not in the program notes; this may seem like a contradiction of his later quote. Regardless, we are interested here in how the piece is experienced by listeners. Either the audience is intimately aware of the Biblical references which *Quatuor* is shrouded in, or they seek those references out when deciphering the strange music they hear. Regardless of one's spiritual bent, one must take this program into account, just as one allows for certain assumptions

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[123] See chapter 1.
[124] Quoted in Shenton, *Olivier Messiaen's System of Signs*, 44.

such as setting and scenario when watching a play. [125] Music studies the same matters that the Bible does—space, time, transcendence, and meaning—but the answers are reflected in the mind-set of the one studying. [126]

Messiaen lived his life in reverence of God who he knew through his Catholic faith. "God—as different, as distant, as terrible, as motionless, as eternal, and as infinite as He appears to us—came to us and tried to make Himself comprehensible in our language, in our sensations, in our attitudes of mind. That's the most beautiful aspect of the Godhead: the Mystery of the Incarnation, and that's why I'm a Christian." [127] The 'language' references the second part of the trinity: God who came in human form as Jesus Christ. There is an essential mysterious nature to God, more than being relatively timeless, he is not human, he is deity. Humans will never understand his exact nature unless he was to come in a manner where we could see ourselves in him.

Mystery as an aspect of faith might seem illogical, but it is an essential element of Christian doctrine, as Paul said in Romans 8:24 "For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?" It is no wonder that Messiaen would dwell on the mysterious nature of God. Music, whose essential element is earthly, created time, is a medium in which one can dwell on God. The human in oneself can commune with God by the humanness in Jesus. As Messiaen put it, "Christ the man can be represented, not Christ the God…He is not even expressible." [128]

Sander van Maas proposes that Messiaen's reverence of God is best seen in his use of sound-color. As a synesthete, music was not just an aural experience but a visual one. From his

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[125] Quoted in Shenton, *Olivier Messiaen's System of Signs, 66.*
[126] Matheson, "The End of Time," 245.
[127] Quoted in van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music,* 18.
[128] Ibid., 27.

early mature works, such as the *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps*, he had a tendency to ascribe colors to particular chords. His descriptions involved ornate but subtle nuances of active color. van Maas describes this as dazzlement, which "always involves an overwhelming, either of the senses (especially the eye and the ear, including the inner eye and ear, which then implies a form of blinding) or of thought (which implies a form of vertigo) but in most cases both meanings are implied."[129] Since sound-color stimulates the senses beyond what one is capable of experiencing otherwise, it was elevated in Messiaen's thought above even liturgical music, which was firmly space-driven, a function of the church.[130] Dazzlement was not a representation of religious ideas or imagery, but a method of aligning the human mind with the mystery of the deity of God.

With regard to time, we can look to the *Traité de Rythme, de Couleur et d'Ornithologie*, more a manual of musings, pithy statements and philosophies about his musical style than a step-by-step guide to composition. Time is the subject of the first chapter in which Messiaen claims that music cannot exist without time: "a musician is inevitably a rhythmician; if not, he does not merit the title musician…he must refine his sense of rhythm by a more intimate knowledge of experienced duration, by the study of different concepts of time and of different rhythmic styles."[131]

Through the course of this chapter, Messiaen studies time and eternity, the philosophy of duration, the facts of science, superimposed time and time in Henri Bergson.[132] Musicologist Andrew Shenton estimates that Messiaen did not pursue scholarship on time after the 1960s,[133] so it is noteworthy that he comes to conclusions regarding time perception confirmed by Robert

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[129] van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music,* 32.
[130] Ibid., 34.
[131] Quoted in Shenton, "Observations on Time," 174.
[132] Ibid., 175-176. Unfortunately for my purposes, Shenton reports that Messiaen does not expand much on the connections between his music and Bergson's philosophy.
[133] Ibid.,176-177.

Ornstein's style of studies in the late 60s and following. Messiaen asserts that the amount of events in a period effects its perception. In the present, more events feels shorter and few events seems longer (remember my experience as a fast-food worker). In remembering the past, the opposite is true.[134] Composers can utilize this in creating forms. The material at the end of a piece can be construed in vastly different ways depending on the level of activity earlier in the piece.

Messiaen's works are clearly interested in matters of timbre; it was the connection between sound and harmony that so inspired Messiaen's students behind spectral techniques. The *Traité* reveals connections between timbre and time; it is not simply pitch, rhythm and tempo which affect time perception. He considers an identical melody played on the xylophone and separately on the violin. Because of the bright timbre and quick decay of the xylophone, one has a greater sense of the individual attacks which produce the melody compared to the violin, which can produce a smooth legato, minimizing the sensation of attacks. Going back to the principle discussed above, the melody sounds "qualitatively longer" on the xylophone.[135] Just as I stated earlier in this chapter, though two themes appear identical, *where* they reside in the composition changes their temporal identity; likewise, *who* plays a theme affects its temporal identity.

Messiaen further removes music from the controls of space by restricting or eliminating the power of meter. As we learned from Wuorinen, inequality in pitch (tonality) must be balanced by equality of rhythm, thus, tonal music generally fits into traditional meter with strong and weak beats.[136] Rather than cementing his harmonic language in regular and repeating patterns (earth-bound), much of Messiaen's later music disregards meter and is entirely pulse

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[134] Shenton, "Observations on Time," 179.
[135] Ibid., 182.
[136] Although the composer can add layers of temporality by meeting and/or thwarting expectations intrinsic to meter.

based. Even when using time signatures for performer's coordination and convenience, his musical ideas fit into their own sets of groupings and bar lines. Messiaen utilizes articulation to emphasize the 'true' rhythm, which differs from what is seen in the score.[137]

Messiaen saw the composer's role as constructing time in a way that God created earthly time. A composer may spend hours establishing the temporal world of his piece, which may take only a few minutes to perform. Thus, the composer stands relatively timeless compared to his own compositions. The *Quatuor* uses two rhythmic novelties in order to construct a new temporal identity. [138] Many of his mature works utilize the non-retrogradable rhythm, one which reads the same forward and backwards. With this balance, the direction and rate of time's flow is confused in the ear of the listener.

The second is the double isorhythmic nature of the piano and cello parts in the first movement. Each have their own asymmetrical color and talea, all four of which start at the beginning of the piece; the movement's length would have to be enormous for each to line up again. Messiaen creates a further sense of stasis by virtue of the harmonic rhythm being completely independent of the chordal quality. [139] By hearing just a snippet of this process, the listener has a sense of hearing a slice of eternity.

This observation is not new; what few do is take the analysis a step further. Eternity, being free from time, is also free of change. [140] The isorhythmic elements of this music may combine in different ways, but the rhythmic and harmonic elements of the piano and cello are themselves unchanging. We might say that the piano and cello are relatively timeless (representing Heaven), while the violin and clarinet are both playing bird songs throughout this

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[137] Matheson, "The End of Time,", 240.
[138] Ibid., 238-239.
[139] To utilize a similar gesture with functional tonality would be nonsensical.
[140] Luchese "Olivier Mesisaen's Slow Music," 180-181.

movement: in representing nature, they are earth-bound. The resulting polyphonic texture which is the piece itself exists somewhere between the two, a space where the listener is welcomed to experience the mystery of the divine from a human perspective (in chapter four, I will define this as the place of the 'eschaton'). Further emphasis is in the fact that bird-song itself —as Messiaen would realize more and more throughout his career—is remarkably free from the "temporal constraint" of earthly time, not fitting neatly into regular meter or rhythmic patterns. [141]

The number—eight—and order of movements in *Quatuor* is significant. One could imagine that there is one movement for the six days of creation, one for the day of rest, and the eighth which points us towards eternity.[142] The seventh movement is based upon scripture describing an angel who announces the coming end of time. Corresponding to the Sabbath day, Messiaen's movement relates well to the concept of the Sabbath outlined by Heschel, which is to give people a taste of eternity. The seventh movement revisits the cello melody of the fifth, and explodes the slow material of the second into vociferous ecstasy. This is not a restful movement in the commonly understood Sabbath sense. It is a sublime movement, which seeks "to transcend human measure. It aspires to the divine, or at least to the worldly traces thereof, through an arsenal of grand musical gestures, some of which may be quite violent and repellent to the ear."[143]

Both the fifth and eighth movements are for solo string instrument (cello and violin, respectively) and piano and both movements are reverential songs to Jesus. The fifth is titled "Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus", or "Praise to the Eternity of Jesus"; Messiaen does not place Jesus' eternity at the end of the piece. [144] The finale is "Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus", or

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[141] Kars, "Works of Olivier Messiaen and Catholic Liturgy," 329.
[142] Millers, "Mysticism and Theology," 223-224.
[143] van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music,* 116.
[144] Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time*, 101.

"Praise to the Immortality of Jesus". His faith in an afterlife is shown; eternity is an essentially God-like quality unlike immortality, being the ability to conquer death, requiring the possibility of one dying to be present, which is only a human quality. Jesus, like the opening movement of *Quatuor* straddles the differences between humans and their creator; eternity must precede immortality. Consequently, the preface describes the fifth movement as Christ 'the Word' and the eighth as 'the Word made flesh'. [145]

There are other similarities between these two movements which promotes a theological reading. Both are centered on E-major and both are extremely slow; the fifth marked "Infinitely slow, ecstatic", eighth note at 36, the eighth "Extremely slow and tender, ecstatic", the sixteenth note at 44. Consequently, the long phrases already written by Messiaen on paper are even longer in sound, to the point that one may not perceive the melody as a phrase. The slow tempo is further magnified when considering musical details of neighboring movements. The fifth movement is followed by the *Danse de la fureur, pour les septs trompettes* (Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets), the fastest and most savage movement, full of rhythmic twists. The seventh, which precedes the final 'extremely slow' movement, is full of constant activity, combinations of themes heard earlier in the work, and constant tempo shifts. Just as a slow work day seems infinitely longer than a busy one, the diminished activity in these movements correlates to a sense of infinity.

Messiaen associated high pitches with Heavenly figures as both movements utilize the extreme high range of each instrument. In the case of the fifth movement, the cello line is never notated in bass clef, it remains extremely high throughout. If high pitch mirrors Heaven and the fifth movement speaks to eternity, the melody cannot ascend or descend, it must always be in the

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[145] Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time,* 104. See John 1:1-2 where Jesus is described as the Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."

high range. In the finale, the violin starts in its low-to mid-range through the treble clef but climbs higher and higher until the final, excruciatingly long note, is a high E-harmonic, two octaves above the final space of the treble clef; this resembles Christ's ascendance to Heaven, conquering death.

Although the harmonic content of these movements is largely made up of diatonic triads, sometimes with an added sixth (a favorite gesture of Messiaen's), the harmony is not functional. If it were, the slow tempo might result in an undiscernible harmonic progression. Thus there is an absence of conflict in the harmonic activity and the listener has no expectation of resolution because there is no sense of growth[146]; any dissonance that is written is purely coloristic. Humans, prone to sin in Christian doctrine, cannot be free from conflict, thus these pieces in particular represent music of God, not humans.

All of these factors create the same 'secure temporal world' as Beethoven in the recapitulation of Op. 110. The slow tempo, coloristic harmony and programmatic melody are not focused on direction or linear development. Each movement is a moment, expanded to a self-sustaining musical idea. The fifth and eighth movements are not just beautiful to listen to; creating an aesthetic sense of God, their use of time puts the listener in a place akin to the experience of Heaven.

Just as time shapes our present day experiences and our memories, music, by definition a study in time shapes our thoughts and feelings. Manipulation of every musical element effects time in the piece, so one might consider the composer as an architect of time whose work can convey any number of ideas. The listener's interpretation of the musical temporal world is dependent on the hermeneutical criteria which are stimulated by sound one hears. Messiaen's intentions were to portray theological truths through his music. Though other composers utilize

[146] Luchese, "Olivier Messiaen's Slow Music," 183.

only some aspects of his compositional language, much of my analysis of time and its interpretation in his music can be applied to other composers. As I will show in the final chapter on *For Philip Guston*, eternity and eschatology can be heard so long as one is listening with the necessary philosophical metaphors in place.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYZING THE MUSIC OF MORTON FELDMAN

An Overview of Feldman's Music

Although *For Philip Guston* is one of just a few examples in Feldman's oeuvre that specifically references the world of painting, it is impossible to understand his late works without first understanding his interest in the visual arts, especially paintings by abstract expressionists and Turkish rugs. Feldman maintained close friendships with many New York painters, becoming acquainted with many of them through John Cage. Philip Guston was the closest of these friends for some time until stylistic differences drove them apart. The 'New York School' of art was described as a group "that tries to find out what art is precisely through the process of making art." [147] Feldman was interested in the process many of these painters used, their consideration of paint, light and color, which, incidentally, leads to many parallels between the paintings and Feldman's music.

It is not quite that Feldman wanted to recreate the product of abstract paintings with his own compositions. Feldman saw the visual arts as being more intuitive, saying "Music is not painting, but it can learn from this more perceptive temperament that waits and observes the inherent mystery of its materials, as opposed to the composer's vested interest in his craft." [148] Feldman was less interested in creating and developing material than in observing sound and allowing the sounds to be his guide. "But there was a deity in my life, and that was *sound*. Everything else was after the fact. Process was after the fact." [149] This legitimizes Feldman's own

[147] Bernard. "Feldman's Painters," 175.
[148] Beal "'Time Canvasses,'" 227.
[149] Ashley, "Part of an Interview," 15. Emphasis in original.

claim that he was the "illegitimate son of Webern" (for his sparseness and aspects of symmetry) and the "legitimate son of Varèse" (for his focus on sound itself). [150]

Initially, this statement might seem redundant, after all, is not all music involved with sound? Feldman might say that, yes, all music is perceived as sound, but not all music is guided by sound. The young, iconoclast Boulez made a famous assertion that he was not interested in how a piece sounds but only in how it was made. One might say that Feldman's concern was the opposite: all that mattered was how the piece sounded, constructing it by whatever means necessary. [151]

Consider sonata form: thematic development is fit onto the process of modulation, which is then performed. Only at this point does sound as an entity enter the picture, and at this stage, its qualities are predetermined and sound cannot 'be'. Feldman did not approve of analysis that only stated what a piece of music *was* without recognizing what it *sounded like.* [152] Sounds cannot add up to create rhetorical meaning or innately contain topical associations as is the case with all expressive devices in music from the common practice period; in Feldman, a sound-event is "an individual object infused with context, rather than as a node in a matrix of contextual relationships." [153]

By using the same musical parameters of traditional music, Feldman attempts to minimize the distinction between time and space. "…when traditional musical ideas act toward a goal of creating movement, or continuity, or even discontinuity, our focus leaves the sounds themselves and shifts instead to what those sounds are doing (in space)…" [154] Bergson warned against using space as a substitute for the quality of time but this approach is different. If time

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[150] Quoted in Villars "Introduction," 7.
[151] Goldstein, "Morton Feldman and the Shape of Time," 75.
[152] Feldman "Johannesburg Lecture, 1," 171.
[153] Pace, *Time has Turned into Space*, 6.
[154] Ibid., 40.

and space are synonymous, we are still more capable of appreciating the subjective experience of time, more so than if space (clock time) is substituted for time itself.

Feldman illustrates this by comparing himself to Boulez: "I feel that my music is open. I feel that his music is closed; he's making objects. Part of the mystique is that if it looks like an object, throw it out. There has to be that atmosphere that even if it's an object, it's not an object."[155] Boulez's music sounds abstract but he is always dealing with very concrete and composed objects: namely complex serial permutations of a tone row. The process of these permutations might be correlated to working with the music in space. Although Feldman uses objects, by not choosing them with a specific system and therefore keeping them 'open', space can be equated to the freedom of time.

This was evident in his earliest works in the 1950s where he crafted graphic notation. The score was a literal grid; in the case of *Intersections 3*, three rows indicated a register of the piano. A number in each box indicated the number of note events that should occur in that column, each box read from left to right, indicated one pulse. All other performance parameters were left up to the pianist.

Finding this insufficient, Feldman began to favor some of the compositional control available in traditional notation. Besides his early work in graphic notation, other pieces still allowed performers some freedoms, typically in rhythm. The *Last Pieces* (1959) or *Piano Piece* (1952) gives chords notated spatially without meter or rhythm. Inevitably many performers still turned out some semblance of a regular beat which led to rigorous notational methods of Feldman's later works. *Extensions 3* (1952) is fully notated in terms of pitch and rhythm and

[155] Massi, "Captain Cook's First Voyage," 225.

bears the most resemblance to his late style. Though a short piece, Feldman dwells on certain figures, repeating before moving forward; this would be a hallmark of his final compositions. [156]

All of Feldman's output was an experiment in finding new and better ways to achieve his primary goal of freeing sounds, perhaps from the bounds of linear time as discussed in chapter 2. The use of indeterminate time or pitch in his early pieces was not a matter of guided improvisation, freeing the performer, but an intentional act of freeing sounds from boundaries that it used to be held in.[157] "…in *The viola in my life* underlying almost every viola sound there is a slight crescendo. Now in a free duration you cannot write a crescendo, so the rhythmic proportions were brought about because of the durations of the various types of crescendo." [158] The composer also has precise control over how long the performer and the audience listens to individual sounds, or how sounds are allowed to combine together, that is, texture.

In notating his music more precisely, Feldman was not fixing it in time, but allowing the musical tendencies in his material to come to fruition. His achievements are most successfully executed in his late pieces, including *For Philip Guston*, and Feldman distanced himself from his early experiments in aleatoric compositional techniques, saying in 1972, "When I hear my own aleatory music today in a concert hall, I'm embarrassed, because it's not as 'successful' as the aleatory music of my students. It's simpler, it's different; it's not as interesting." [159]

Feldman's Influences in the Visual Arts

An understanding of the artistic movement known as abstract expressionism can be derived by looking at the individual terms themselves. 'Expressionism' is tied to the German

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[156] Manchur, SICPP 2014 Program Notes.
[157] Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 278.
[158] Griffiths, "Morton Feldman Talks to Paul Griffiths," 47.
[159] Ibid., 49.

school of painting and composition with blunt, forthright manifestations of the most extreme emotions, often dreary, but honest. Berg's exploration of the dark human psyche in *Wozzeck* or the brutal sincerity of Munch's *Der Schrei der Natur* (or 'The Scream') are appropriate points of reference. Whereas German Expressionism dealt with natural likeness, perhaps with exaggerations or colorful accents, Abstract Expressionists utilized vague constructions, and at best, allusions to the real.

Beyond this, it is difficult to makes an argument for unified features amongst artists as diverse as Feldman's friends: Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock and of course, Philip Guston. Pollock's early work, such as *The Moon-Woman Cuts the Circle* (1943) is based on the folklore of Native Americans, whose art Pollock admired. [160] Its symbolism betrays itself as an early work. His later style, utilizing the drip technique, can be seen by 1950 until the end of his life. Feldman himself described this technique as dipping "a stick into a can of paint, then (thrusting) it in a certain way across the canvas…"[161] although other descriptions describe the process as one much more active and maniacal. Working in a hypnotic state, Pollock believed that the movement of this technique connected his own emotions to the physical work.[162] This method was also a way to avoid dealing with preconceived ideas, to allow free abstraction to be the primary creator of the work. [163]

The method will become relevant when Feldman discusses his starting point of *For Philip Guston*. The result of this working method is a complex array of abstract lines, and colors, drawing the viewer into a "non-perspective spatiality,"[164] a term that, as we will see, will adequately describe Feldman's music as well. The intent in Pollock's drip works, and those of

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[160] Hess, *Abstract Expressionism*, 26.
[161] Feldman, "Crippled Symmetry," 148.
[162] Hodge, *Why your Five-Year-Old Could Not Have Done That*, 70.
[163] Bernard, "Feldman's Painters," 190-191.
[164] Hess, *Abstract Expressionism*, 54.

many Abstract Expressionists was not to paint anything specific, but rather to combine two materials (paint and canvas), the painting being the artistic result.[165]

Philip Guston and Feldman became acquainted at a social gathering in the apartment of John Cage in 1950. Cage had introduced Feldman to the painter's work just a few weeks earlier and thirty years later, Feldman still wrote fondly of his memories of that first painting.[166] Their friendship was not lacking in that kind of intensity. "Guston and I would talk for days, not for hours," Feldman said in 1987.[167] But in 1967, Guston moved from New York City to Woodstock, and in 1970 exhibited the new style he had developed during his reclusion. Instead of the abstract aesthetic which so drew he and Feldman together, Guston's new works took the form of figurative cartoons, seeking a communicative clarity prompted by world politics at the time.[168] Feldman, distraught by the shift, had nothing to say to his closest friend and by most accounts, the two never spoke again. The artistic shift was tantamount to a heretical betrayal, in Feldman's eyes, as the basis of their friendship—their art—was more than just an activity. "I was no different than any kind of fanatic. I felt that only an abstract kind of art could exist; only an art like his earlier work, which I thought was sublime…I thought that no other work could exist." [169] On his deathbed in 1980, Guston requested that Feldman say Jewish liturgical prayers at his funeral which the composer honored. He wrote *For Philip Guston* in 1984, clearly an emotional piece, and his writings about the piece (to be discussed in the final chapter) are more personal and 'humanistic' than those about any other work. [170]

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[165] Bernard. "Feldman's Painters," 175-176.
[166] Feldman, "Philip Guston: 1980/The Last Works," 128.
[167] Massi, "Captain Cook's First Voyage," 218.
[168] van Os, "For Philip Guston."
[169] Feldman, "I stopped asking questions," 158.
[170] See Feldman, "I stopped asking questions," 156.

Guston's works that Feldman appreciated were from the 1940s and 1950s, at a time when the subject of his paintings were completely abstract. His brush technique involved thick strokes such that each individual brush stroke was an element in itself, rather than an imperceptible line that contributes to a larger picture. [171] *Red Painting* from 1950 was an important work for all Abstract Expressionists for it was one of the first to abandon linearity and controlled spaces of color. Guston's work mixes hues of red and black with an organic, evolving textural interaction. Its lack of landscape invoked the critique that his work was "the end, the abyss, the point of no return."[172] *For M,* from 1955, is comprised of all horizontal or vertical brush strokes that increase in concentration and color near the center of the picture. [173]

In 1963, Feldman Wrote *Piano Piece (to Philip Guston*) in his middle style of notation with determined chords but indeterminate rhythm. The piece has very few, if any significant associations with the later *For Philip Guston* but illustrates connections between the composer and painter. Feldman later described this as "a piece that's involved very much with touch if you play it" which harkens to other statements by Feldman on the act of composing where "the ephemeral feel of the pencil in my hand" guided his act of composing, just as abstract expressionists were interested in results from the act of painting, not planning. [174] Nearly every touch in this piece is varied. By no means a hurried piece, the pianist's hands must still cover a lot of ground and must always navigate new chordal shapes and spacing. [175]

In a 1957 interview, Guston stated that he was "not concerned with making pictures…but only with the process of creation itself." [176] This lack of regard for what, in the end, was actually

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[171] Ashton, *Yes, but…*, 106-107.
[172] Arnason, *Philip Guston*, 20.
[173] Hess, *Abstract Expressionism*, 74. The date, the initial and Feldman's later use of '*For'* in musical titles would lead one to safely assume the painting *is* for Morton Feldman
[174] Quoted in Bernard, "Feldman's Painters," 199-200.
[175] Ibid., 201-202.
[176] Hunter, "Interview with Sam Hunter," 12.

on the picture, speaks to the interest in abstraction, not representation, for the Abstract Expressionists. This was a means of liberating subjectivity for the audience, to direct the viewer's interpretation as little as possible. [177] In doing so, Guston theorized that he was less a creator, than one who uncovers something already in existence. Feldman felt a distinct draw from the art: "Guston's (works)…do have about them an *inevitability*: that things could only be this way and no other for them to work." [178]

This last point connects us back to Feldman's interest in the Abstract Expressionists. He was most interested in creating with sound what the visual artists did with color and space: "the new painting made me desirous of a sound world more direct, more immediate, more physical than anything that had existed heretofore." [179] The physicality of Pollock's drip method or the forced intentionality of Guston's brush strokes was mirrored in Feldman's fanatical listening as he composed so that his first draft was also the final. [180] He did not revise his works; the concentrated act of composing was all the process he needed, revealing the sounds which the composition needed in their own time.

Another visual inspiration for Feldman with direct applications to his music is his love for Turkish rugs which he collected throughout his life. Both the wool and the dye are prepared by hand thus the design and patterns of every rug are unique to itself. Not only that, each shade of color, because they are made in small batches, is varied through the rug, much like the reds in Guston's *Red Painting* or in a Rothko color field. The makers of these rugs stitch one section

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[177] Ibid.
[178] Feldman, "Philip Guston: 1980/Last Works," 131. Emphasis in the original.
[179] Feldman, "Autobiography," 38.
[180] Orton and Bryars, "Studio International Interview," 70.

then fold it over to create the next without referencing the first. [181] Thus there are patterns of both stitching and color, but they are never the same.

Repetition, Scale, and Sound Objects

The stich and dye in these rugs is an apt illustration for the use of repetition in Feldman's music where brief gestures are repeated but never in the same way. Slight alterations might be rhythmic (varying the time-point of attacks), harmonic (partial or full transposition or the addition of new notes) or re-voicing. Feldman's student Bunita Marcus spoke of this practice similarly to the way Impressionist painters worked with light, or Spectral composers worked with sound: "It's really a shifting of lights. He is giving us this object and letting us see it from one angle and then showing us the same thing again from another angle." [182] Often in Feldman's music, multiple measures are repeated literally with repeat signs. Given the irregular presentation of material, one is not even aware of this exact repetition; it is beyond one's listening memory.[183] From this we can form the definition of an important concept for understanding Feldman's music: the sound object. The sound object is the basic material on which Feldman builds his music; it is a collection of pitches and a specific instrumentation. His composing was the act of notating these found materials, repeating them, but never using them in the same way twice.

It is difficult to reconcile traditional western musical organization with the nebulous nature of the sound object. Feldman acknowledged that form in the traditional Western musical canon is a means to imitate the processes of memory. But memory is always an inauthentic experience of reality, thus form is eschewed in his music. Feldman also uses a literary example to understand his compositional process by comparing himself to Samuel Beckett: "He would

[181] Laws, "Morton Feldman's Late Piano Music," 51.
[182] Marcus, "About Craftmanship," 400.
[183] Goldstein, "Morton Feldman and the Shape of Time," 73.

write something in English, translate it into French, then translate that thought back into the English that conveys that thought…I see that every line is really the same thought said in another way." [184] Thus, repetition in Feldman enforces "remembering by reiteration and to aid forgetting of the immediately past by asserting, and reasserting, the new. Hence, repetition, as it functions in Feldman's music, is both an aid to remembering and forgetting." [185]

The rugs also influenced his use of instruments. *Abrash*—the variation of color in the rugs—led Feldman to embrace imperfections of tuning, especially in regards to percussion.[186] Feldman considered that specific instruments called for specific musical material and that the act of composition was the act orchestrating pre-existing sounds. He stated that the concept of his piece *Why Patterns?* (see below), could only work with the piece's instrumentation—piano, flute, glockenspiel. [187] He did not elaborate on why, but the statement is telling: the organizational principles of sound generate the instruments which play them. He further decried the *Klangfarben* technique of Schoenberg and Webern because it created a false sense of the material. He accused their material of flatness, *Klangfarben* being only an illusion to make it more interesting by composing it out with varying instrumentation and register. [188]

This is not to say that Feldman thought of instrumental writing like a typical orchestral composer, or that an orchestration manual sat at his desk while he composed. Quite the opposite: "…it's not that the instruments can't be recognized and distinguished one from another, but rather that their 'horness' or 'violinness' is very far from being the most important thing about them." [189] He was very sensitive to acoustic sound, which his student Tom Johnson described as

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[184] Feldman, "Darmstadt Lecture, 26 July 1984," 194.
[185] Kane "Of Repetition, Habit and Involuntary Memory." No page number in the original.
[186] Williams, "An Interview with Morton Feldman," 155.
[187] Feldman, "Johannesburg Lecture, 2, August 1983," 178.
[188] Feldman, "Appearance is not reality," 216.
[189] Bernard "Feldman's Painters," 197.

the opposite of 'dead' electronic sounds, prevalent in the 1960s in works such as those by Stockhausen. [190] Feldman compared electronic sounds to 'plastic paint' which does not seep into the material on which it is fixed, creating a unity of materials. With instruments, the music can become unified with the sounds he is using while the specific instrumentation fades to the background, becoming unimportant. [191]

Feldman's "sounds" cannot be thought of in a traditional harmonic sense: a collection of fixed pitches which function together in a certain way. Sounds, seen as 'found objects', had an innate timbral quality attached to them which could only be realized by specific instrumentation. By equating orchestration and composition as synonymous activities, Feldman meant that he was notating "sounds uncontaminated by orchestration." [192] The inseparability of these elements refers us to form. Just as the composing out of a tonal progression or a tone row presupposes other aspects of a composition (such as duration when writing the consequent to an antecedent phrase), discovering sound objects necessitates the composer to discard traditional aspects of time in order to discover the "*inner duration* of the sound." [193]

By utilizing always-but-not-quite variations of the same material, Feldman is using memory but with the intention of disorienting it and in doing so, creating a true experience of time. [194] Sound is not an important means of expression if most emotional content of a piece is built by anticipation and expectation; the increasing length of Feldman's late pieces forces one to forget expectations. [195] Whereas form is traditionally a road-map in the musical narrative, the sparseness of Feldman's music thwarts any illusion of form and thus "our disorientation as to the

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[190] Johnson "Remembrance," 36.
[191] Griffiths, "Morton Feldman talks to Paul Griffiths," 48.
[192] Bernard. "Feldman's Painters," 205.
[193] Feldman, "Music and the Picture Plane," 139.
[194] Jurkowski "Aspects of Time," 100-101.
[195] Laws, "Morton Feldman's Late Piano Music," 51.

work's structure, made problematic because of the repetitive harmonies, becomes greatly exacerbated."[196] One cannot ruminate on the form because the details of each sound—its rhythm, harmony and timbre—are brought to the fore with every repetition.

It is for this reason that Feldman chose to speak about the 'scale' of his music, rather than form. "Form is easy—just the division of things into parts. But scale is another matter. You have to have control of the piece—it requires a heightened kind of concentration. Before, my pieces were like objects; now, they're like evolving things." [197] It is incorrect to refer to 'form' when speaking of Turkish rugs; there are no parts with which to construct the whole. Each rug has its own scale, through which its individual details can be appreciated. If the scale (like the canvas of a painting) is stretched, the details of the piece are equally magnified.

Feldman references the sculptor Giacometti who "said he wants to make his sculpture so that if the tiniest fragment was found, it would be complete in itself…" [198] Each sound event need not relate to the next as in a chain of events, it must be complete in its own right. To do that, it must be composed out properly, given enough breadth to be understood completely. A composer must wisely choose the appropriate scale for each piece on which its constituent sound events can live comfortably but not be stretched. One might look at a Turkish rug, or a piece by Feldman, as a new event every time. As one becomes aware of different details of the material, one can focus on new elements every time.

Clearly, Feldman considered his sound objects to be so rich that they required a large scale. When a piece of art is so large, it can become its own world. One must stand in front of a painting in order to discover its details; Feldman's music is the aural equivalent of this visual experience. This suggests that each time you look at a musical time canvas; it can be experienced

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[196] Jurkowski "Aspects of Time," 102.
[197] Quoted in Cox and Warner, *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*, 206.
[198] Gagne and Caras, "*Soundpieces* Interview," 92.

differently, just as the meaning of a painting can change as new details emerge. Feldman also described his music as repositioning furniture in a room; the same materials occupy the same general space, but their relationships to each other, and the practicality of their function, may vary. [199]

The length of works was necessary to aide listeners to stop listening for form. As Feldman heard it, a linear collection of parts can be heard up to an hour (incidentally—about the longest length of any typical non-operatic work in the canon). Beyond an hour, one starts listening to scale. [200] At this point, it is necessary for a listener to pay attention to the details of the sound, rather than analyzing critically for linear development. Length was also requisite in erasing one's listening for process. Feldman was critical of aspects of Steve Reich's music; though he admired many musical ideas, by placing them in a restrictive process, one wasn't honoring the music itself. To end a composition because of process before the musical material lived out its value was to end it early; or to put a morbid spin on it, "The operation's a success but the patient died." [201]

Feldman accomplishes these feats of length through his method of repetition: a slight variation in each iteration emphasizes a different aspect of the same sound. One author suggests the abrash of a rug can be looked at as "slightly differentiated hues of 'identical' colors".[202] The details of that sound—though no more important than the next sound one will hear—become magnified, indeed, become the piece of music itself. At the same time, variations of his chords help to suspend time by erasing "in one's memory what happened before…by erasing the

[199] Dickinson, "Feldman Explains Himself," 20.
[200] Goldstein, "Morton Feldman and the Shape of Time," 74.
[201] Feldman, "Toronto Lecture, April 1982," 147.
[202] Kane "Of Repetition, Habit and Involuntary Memory." No page number in original.

references and where they come from."[203] Although in reality it is consuming only the entirety of one's memory, each sound creates the impression of consuming the entire world. Here we might remember Padgett's Zero-Time Relation; God's actions result in immediate effect on earth. In Feldman's music, the musical material does not emerge gradually by melodic or harmonic development; it simply *is* in an instant.

Abstraction abounds in Feldman's music. Though repetitive, Feldman was more concerned with the decay of sound rather than its attack; Amy Beal suggests that the latter is a nineteenth century notion of music.[204] The classical notion of narrative, linearity described in the previous chapter, requires continuous sound attacks in order to keep time in motion. If narrative is no longer a controlling mechanism and sound becomes the guiding force of the composer, the fewer attacks the better. Decay allows harmony to have life, its true identity revealed through time. Similarly, sonority, timbre and texture are amplified above form and structure, essential elements for coherent narrative, especially as Feldman's music is so bare. [205] As a result, there is little that is functional in Feldman's music. His compositions are 'time canvases': a container on which a musical idea unfolds.

Feldman's late works are full of measures which might appear to be silent, but in his works with piano or percussion, are always filled with resonance because the performer is almost always told to not dampen the sound. This begs the question: where is the music in a Feldman score—in the notes as they are played or in the resonance in the empty measures? Says theorist Dora Hanninen: "…rests indicate not silence but the absence of new input as the preceding figure is absorbed into the resonant ground".[206] Because his works are to be played extremely

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[203] Zimmermann "Conversation between Morton Feldman and Walter Zimmermann," 51-52.
[204] Beal "'Time Canvasses,'" 233.
[205] Laws. "Morton Feldman's Late Piano Music," 50.
[206] Hanninen, *A Theory of Music Analysis*, 332.

quietly in order to minimize attack, one could say that even in works without piano, the sound continues even after the performer ends it, if only in the memory of the listener. Therefore in Feldman, there is no such thing as silence. Since there are infinite pieces of sound information in these rest measures, they seem longer, more musical than areas with actual attacks.

Feldman referred to his process of repetition as 'crippled symmetry' and his article on the subject (also about the piece of the same name) is one of his most quoted sources in analyses of his music.[207] *Why Patterns* imitates the evolving patterns in the stitching of rugs by not requiring coordination of the three parts through most of the piece: "This very close, but never precisely synchronized, notation allows for a more flexible pacing of three very distinct colors…Some of the patterns repeat exactly—others, with slight variations either in their shape or rhythmic placement. At times, a series of different patterns are linked together on a chain and then juxtaposed by simple means."[208] Pianist Louis Goldstein differentiates between patterns and repetition: listeners may be aware that a sound is repeated without being aware of the source pattern governing those repetitions.[209]

The repetition of material promotes greater neutrality, according to Feldman. Regarding a section of his second *String Quartet* which returns throughout the piece, though never in the same way, he says "But if I did it the (same way as) the first time, it would be less acceptable for your ear. As it becomes saturated and saturated, you accept it more and more and more. You're less idealistic."[210] Change is an integral part of time and we experience time when listening to a

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[207] Two Feldman pieces, *Why Patterns* (1978) and *Crippled Symmetry* (1983), explore, in title and in practice, essential aspects of Feldman's style. Even more important for us, these two pieces share the instrumentation of the later *For Philip Guston*: flute(s), piano/celeste, and percussion.
[208] Feldman, "Crippled Symmetry," 139-140.
[209] Louis Goldstein, "Morton Feldman and the Shape of Time," 73.
[210] Feldman, "Darmstadt Lecture 26 July 1984," 206.

performance; as a result, no sound object can be heard the same way twice. It must appear differently because it has been subjected to time.

Lacking hierarchy, one might be tempted to think of Feldman's music as a complete stasis. This is not quite correct for two reasons. One is that regardless of the repetitiveness of Feldman's music, each sound event is never repeated endlessly; it may be heard a few times, contrasted with new material before being heard again or two sounds might pass back and forth. Either way, individual sounds are never the only thing we hear in a short span of time. Secondly, according to Matthew Pace, "in even the most glacially paced scenes we find just enough movement and unpredictability to rule out stasis as a moment-forming technique, while in more active scenes we find that Feldman's imperfect patterns challenge our notions of process." [211]

'Crippled' symmetries refer to patterns which seem symmetrical—with an even number of beats—but whose sense of symmetry is purposefully thrown off. A measure might begin and end with rests of slightly different lengths with a short series of notes in the middle. A repeated asymmetrical meter might begin with a breath then an otherwise even pattern of notes follows. More often, Feldman uses two other devices. An asymmetrical meter with a sound event occurs surrounded by two measures of equal length. Or, the instruments in an ensemble will each play a series of measures (usually about four); each measure within the individual line and within the ensemble (that is, horizontally and vertically) is different until the end of the section, at which point each part adds up to the same number of beats; used extensively in *For Philip Guston*, I will refer to this as a 'meta-measure'. All of these crippled symmetries contribute to thinking in scale rather than form as the lack of organization thwarts our attempts to conceive of hierarchies of structure. Feldman was not interested in a 'what you see is what you get' relationship between the notation and the sound. This connects to the 'silent' measures mentioned above: "We don't

[211] Pace, "Time has Turned into Space," 8.

hear silent measures. And we have this elasticity in the silence. (We are) hearing a kind of breathing." [212]

We might consider Feldman's scale like 'moment form', but unlike a piece by Messiaen or Stockhausen where the form is a series of short moments, a piece by Feldman is like one large, elongated moment. Pace uses the analogy of walking through unfamiliar surroundings in an effort to understand scale:

> Around the time I visited the Getty Museum I had been listening intently to Feldman's second string quartet, a six-hour labyrinth of strange, austere mystery. I started thinking of the quartet as something like this museum, like a sculpture garden, made of different stabile and mobile objects seen from different views. A large wall might look small from far away, but then strolling right up to it it looks huge, due to foreshortening or parallax…Being lost in such a museum or such a piece of music is much different from being lost in a supermarket or a strange city. It is cultivated lostness, a subtle and enchanting dislocation that keeps people coming back to the work, a lostness that stems not just from an unfamiliarity with the objects, but from a defamiliarization from the very processes by which objects are constituted or recognized in the first place. [213]

The extended moment of this lostness is engrossing, seemingly fraught with eternal opportunities for exploration, but one knows that there is more to the world than the present location. Feldman used the analogy of walking through a city where most of the buildings look the same. One is aware that he is not looking at the same building continually: "there is a *suggestion* that what we hear is functional and directional, but we soon realize that this is an illusion…" [214] An abstract painting could appear to be a wash of random colors, unless one begins to look for the subtle artistry in the variation.

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[212] Feldman, "Appearance is not Reality," 222.
[213] Pace, "Time has Turned into Space," 37.
[214] Feldman, "Crippled Symmetry," 128. Emphasis in the original

As a result of the increasing focus on scale, the prominence of every detail, the length of Feldman's late works increased exponentially. His 1982 piece *For John Cage*, for piano and violin, runs about an hour and twenty minutes. At fifty minutes, an extreme length for the standard repertory, Feldman says "it's just getting going…it seems to be that an hour and a half in the whole of someone's lifetime, on such a momentous occasion as a tribute to John Cage, is not too much." [215] Rothko, known for his large color field paintings, stated that "I paint very large pictures…precisely because I want to be very intimate and human." [216] People are, of course, very complex beings and to project a certain authenticity to the entirety of the human experience, size or length must be embraced.

Feldman's method of varied repetition has a human element too. Although we experience one day from the next as the same person, one always collects experiences and learns new things which do invariably change who we are. Time requires change. Feldman speaks of variation as "One thing stays the same and something else changes." [217] While Feldman might adapt one element and have others remain the same, we can recognize the continuity of the gesture; it is different but not new, as a person is from day to day. His method is much more subtle than Lisztian thematic transformation which, if we were to make an analogy to literature, would be Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. A theme from Liszt might be recognizable in the new identity in which it is cast, but it essentially a new, and necessarily (for the narrative) contrasting presentation; the same person but with a completely opposing character.

One aspect of Feldman's compositional technique remained systematic through his last compositions, that being his use of the grid. Early in this chapter, I identified his development of the grid notational system. Even though he abandoned this indeterminate device, the grid

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[215] Gena "H.C.E. (Here Comes Everybody)," 131.
[216] Quoted in Bernard, "Feldman's Painters," 183-184.
[217] Feldman "Appearance is not Reality,", 222.

continued to be in the background of his most meticulously notated works. One can see this in every published score which appears in Feldman's hand, that is, in the only form the piece ever existed in unless it was typeset.

Each of these works has an unchanging number of measures in each system, and each measure is of equal length. Unlike the early pieces in graphic notation, where a fixed space resulted in a fixed duration in performance, each measure in the late system would have a flexible duration. In an essay on Feldman's use of the grid as a 'notational image' of the music, Tom Hall said "This results in a more complex relation between duration and its visual representation, corresponding perhaps with the composer's interest in the 'crippling' of symmetrical relations." [218] The system also relates to the human relationship to experiential time: as demonstrated in previous chapters, though the duration of two events may be equal, many factors contribute to the subjective experience to be very unequal. `

He considered his sounds to be 'found objects'[219] So much of music composition history is one of creating sounds by manipulations of musical elements, pitch, rhythm and instrumentation. "Feldman came to think of the essence of sound as a moldable phenomenon in and of itself and separate from the other elements of music…In his mind, sound, with its density and timbre, could have its own shape, design, and poetic metaphor." [220] Once an object is discovered, Feldman only needed to properly notate it, and leave it alone (although giving a musical idea its proper notational identity requires many variations, see below).

As Bunita Marcus points out, the sound object always comes first, before the grid or any compositional device. [221] After discovering the sound, Feldman can manipulate the grid to fit the

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[218] Hall, "Notational Image, Transformation and the Grid," 19.
[219] Feldman, "Darmstadt Lecture, 26 July 1984," 195.
[220] Goldstein, "Morton Feldman and the Shape of Time," 71.
[221] Marcus, "About Craftmanship," 402-404.

required length of the sound. Thus, if the sound is rather short, the duration of the measures in one system will be equally short. The grid itself expands and contracts but the sound—as it exists in Feldman's mind—is never compromised. With this idea we can better understand how Feldman sees his music not as form but as scale. The physical piece, that is the score, is as long as the number of iterations of the grid. The musical piece, a collection of sound objects, gauges how stretched the total grid will be.

With each page as a grid, Feldman spreads out his sound objects, as illustrated by Walter Zimmerman.[222] Creating a large 16x8 grid where each cell represents one page of score, Zimmerman uses a limited series of graphic symbols to represent the musical material of Feldman's gigantic *String Quartet No. 2*. There is a remarkable consistency in the layout; the first four pages use the exact same material, then the music shifts abruptly for the next two and a third pages. Never does the sound object change within a system.

Although Feldman's meters—themselves often asymmetrical and irrational—change frequently and perhaps appear illogical, Marcus says they are strictly for the purpose of pushing or pulling the sound within the grid: "Each sound is either a relaxed sound or a pushed sound or it is sitting there right on the beat."[223] The goal is to always avoid a regular beat; given that Feldman rarely places more than one or two chords in a measure, this is accomplished rather handily. Said Feldman himself, referring to the musical iteration of his sounds, "when you hear it, you have no idea rhythmically how complicated that is on paper…it looks as though it were rhythm. It's not. It's duration."[224] In further pursuing a sense of crippled symmetry, Feldman

[222] Zimmermann, "Morton Feldman-der Ikonoklast," 22-23.
[223] Marcus, "About Craftmanship," 404.
[224] Zimmermann, "Conversation between Morton Feldman and Walter Zimmermann," 52-53.

would place arbitrary dots on notes to "keep the instruments out of sync in a very simple way without getting involved with too much stuff…"[225]

Though I made a case in the previous chapter for the increasing chromaticism, and eventual atonality in music leading to the breakdown of linear time, Feldman claimed to exist in a whole new realm of harmony. Compared to himself, Schoenberg was no master of harmony, simply for his continued use of a harmonic system in the first place. Feldman, in listening to sounds themselves, was "the master of non-functional harmony. And only a school kid is involved with functional harmony…Harmony died in the early part of the nineteenth century."[226]

As Catherine Laws points out, Feldman's music has patterned systems of harmony which develop in time, but not methodically, creating a "remote familial likeness between musical events-reminiscences rather than solid harmonic connections."[227] To this end, it is not quite appropriate to speak of Feldman's music as being non-linear. Bunita Marcus spoke of "stationary patterns…Time is changing but we are not being pushed forward into something. We are floating with it."[228]

Barbara Monk Feldman, a doctoral student of Feldman and his wife the last months of his life, refers to differences between experiences of time in literary, visual and musical arts. In reading, one can form the syntax and meaning of a sentence, even a paragraph, before one reads the words which state the meaning. Expectation is formed as one reads. Musically, this is present in linear music where the materials draw the listener's ear to a certain expectation. In the visual arts, time can only be referred to—such as referencing a moving action—but is never present; the piece exists, fixed in its entirety. The act on the part of the viewer of looking at the piece creates

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[225] Marcus, "About Craftmanship," 406.
[226] Gena, "H.C.E. (Here Comes Everybody)," 119.
[227] Laws, "Morton Feldman's Late Piano Music," 52-53.
[228] Marcus, "About Craftmanship," 400.

a memory perception of time, experiencing the created meaning. Abstract music also has this two-fold approach to time: "the actual time of the performance, and the time existing in our memory as the piece moves along." [229]

Analyzing Feldman with Traditional Theory

Over the course of this chapter, I have avoided technical analysis of Feldman's music, as many theorists do. It is of course, very difficult to systematically analyze a composer who eschews systematic process in his composition. Traditional ways of analyzing even atonal harmonic chords can go only so far. One notable theorist, Dora Hanninen, has provided a laudable framework in which to apply some systematic analysis of his music. To leave room for the instinctual basis of Feldman's composing, Hanninen has created a "theory (that) is not a methodology, but a multidimensional conceptual space within which one does analysis and thinks about music analytically; its purpose is to *support*, not guide, the analyst's thought process."[230] Essentially, she developed, for the musical theorist, what I am attempting to do for the audience of *For Philip Guston*, to create a metaphor to support listening, rather than to narrate listening.

There are three areas in which Hanninen works: the sonic, the contextual, and the structural. The former invokes sound alone, the middle looks at associations and repetitions and the latter may invoke pre-existing methods of analysis as needed. Her concept of the "associative set" is relevant here as it relates well to Feldman's idea of the sound object. An associative set is a motivic idea which shares enough features over the course of a piece to be considered unified. However, "More general and versatile than the concept of motive, an associative set carries no

[229] Feldman, "Music and the Picture Plane," 137.
[230] Hanninen, *A Theory of Music Analysis*, 4.

presumption that all segments share essential features. Associative sets differ widely in their global properties, such as size and range of variation."[231] Wes York uses a hierarchy of terms, in a language more familiar to western musical analysis, to look at aspects of Feldman from small-scale to large-scale: Gesture-Pattern-Subphrase-Phrase-Subgroup-Group-Subsection-Section-Part.[232]

It is helpful to illuminate aspects of a Feldman piece by tracking associative sets over time. Hanninen does this with Feldman's late piano solo *Palais de Maris* (1986).[233] The opening material of this piece is 3 instances of a measure of 5/8 alternating with a measure of 3/4 before moving onto another associative set. To consider York's terminology, gesture might be the opening measure itself with its four pitches; a pattern might be the combination of the opening measure with one of rest.

The first set returns four more times through the first half of the 25-minute piece and never returns. Each time, the pitch content remains consistent but the register and rhythmic profile is varied. The space in between each iterance grows larger but this is not necessarily for the effect of bringing the sound to the background: as we become more familiar with it, we need not hear it as often.

The second associative set of the piece contrasts the first. The three successive semitones which comprise the set are set beside each other and more iterations of the figure occur successively before measures of 3/4 rest. There are connections between this material and the opening. A 5/8 time signature remains, and in the second set, the descending semitone of the right hand matches in pitch the identity of the dyad in the latter half of the first set. In this way, though the material is contrasting, the second sound object is not opposed to the first; by its

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[231] Hanninen, *A Theory of Music Analysis*, 12.
[232] York, "For John Cage," 151.
[233] Hanninen, *A Theory of Music Analysis*, Chapter 8.

similarity, set two pulls the first through time so that our perception is that set a has a longer duration. One might think of the second set as continuing the resonance of the first.

Set one returns at this point but transposed down one octave, and only for two iterations. Besides this, the measures of rest following are growing longer; what started as two measures of 3 beats becomes 4, then 5. This is the type of "breathing" mentioned by Feldman above, and is a method of helping our familiarity with the sound. As it is repeated more often, we are allowed more durational opportunities to probe its content. This extra time also helps us prepare for the third associative set, what Hanninen calls "an unusual example of a local anticontextuality in which three lines of association are available, but none is decisive; all are tempered by sonic disjunctions in register and duration."[234] After inconsistent iterations of sometimes-related material, set one returns thirteen measures later but only once, in the original register, but without a measure of rest to precede it. Locating material which once had its independence, beside 'anticontextual' material limits our memory of the original. Indeed, associative set one does not return now for another 43 measures. Is the experience of this set reality or a false memory?

One might use elements of set class analysis to look at the harmonies Feldman uses for his sets. Hanninen shows that many of the chords throughout the opening section, during which associative set one returns, contains the (012) subset of set one's class (0125). Even when other musical parameters, such as spacing and register and timing, affect our interpretation of a sound, its harmony is often consistent. The voicing of a chord has significant ramifications for one's perception of this consistency: if a dense collection is at one point set in close proximity, one is going to be more aware of the dissonance than if the collection is spread out across octaves. Given that the dampers of the piano are lifted through much of this piece, dissonance in the

[234] Hanninen, *A Theory of Music Analysis*, 337.

resonance can also mask or expose the material which follows. Hanninen also shows that the (025) subset of set one, as well as a trichordal subset of set three returns to jointly create set seven although the notational image looks very different.

By considering these contextual criteria, we begin to have an understanding of how Feldman's sound objects function and morph through a piece, and aid our understanding of scale. She calls this a process of looking at 'Ideas': "sets of one or more contextual criteria that manifest in 'instances.' Tracking how the ideas change from instance to instance gives us a better understanding of recontextualization, or as Hanninen puts it, 'estranged repetition.'"[235] Looking at ideas in this way reveals that we ought to think of "repetition not as the additive re-statement of some musical segment, but as a cumulative extension of a whole at some larger, emergent level of organization."[236]

It is worthwhile then to realize that Feldman's act of variation is not only to bring about all aspects of a sound object as I suggested before, but to understand its place in the whole scale of the composition. Hanninen uses the idea of 'populations' as one thinks of the term in relation to evolutionary biology. The subtle changes of biological identity over a long period of time, natural selection, speak to the true strength of that identity. Instead of reducing a musical idea to a part of the whole, distinct only in that it exists at one time and not another, "Population thinking pays respect to the variety and nuance of the musical surface by approaching it in a non-reductive manner."[237]

It is not unfair to say that the concept of the 'sound object' is rather abstract. That is, after all, Feldman's goal: to present musical material without reference to literal objects or narrative. His intuitive way of composing suggests he simply notates the sound that he hears naturally; in

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[235] Pace, *Time has Turned into Space*, 26.
[236] Ibid., 30.
[237] Ibid.,, 31.

this way, his music bears resemblance to that of the spectralist composers. The work of Dora Hanninen is useful because it suggests that there are still means to methodically analyze Feldman's music. There are concrete connections throughout the work, channels of organization one can use to create meaning from the temporal experience of the piece.

CHAPTER 4: ESCHATOLOGY AND MUSIC

Hanninen does refer to change in understanding the music of Feldman. As listeners, we are inevitably changed by the material as well. As I established before, change and time are intertwined; change, and therefore time, are an intrinsic part of being human. This is a quality separates us from the character of God in Christianity: people are 'made in his image' but we are subjected to time. Feldman's music embraces change and time while balancing these aspects with a music that, due to its length and lack of linearity, feels timeless. Thus, in listening to this music we are stuck somewhere between a timeless God and a time-bound person; York suggests that this music is akin to 'seeing the world in a grain of sand'.[238] In this chapter, I will define this state as the area of the eschaton, a state of hope offered by the theology of eschatology.

The Theology of Eschatology

The twelfth or twenty-first century dilemma, which was posed in the introduction, is the core of the Christian theology of eschatology. Based on the Greek word for last, *eschatos*, this is the theology of last things. But as I will discuss below, it is not so much about the end of time, but rather how the last things affect time in the present. In its simplest form, the theology is about redemption of time, reconciliation between the mortal, temporal existence of humans, and the immortal, eternal existence of God. Eschatology is means by which people living in the present might benefit from communing with a relatively timeless God. Thus, intimately involved with both linear and non-linear time, it makes a worthy metaphor for use when studying music. Eschatology hinges on the Christian expectation that the future of one's soul lies in Heaven, thus I will operate from this assumption. This study of the theology is not meant to impose a belief

[238] York, "For John Cage," 148.

system on the reader or listener; rather, it is intended as a broader metaphor in which one might find musical equivalency.

The common perception of eschatology from popular culture deals with the period of rapture where Jesus will return to bring the righteous to Heaven, leaving those remaining to face peril in the tribulation; much of the present-day mentality on the subject was influenced by the *Left Behind* series of books and movies. This notion is a bastardization of Biblical concepts and a product of American fundamentalism.[239] It affords the believer a sense of "happily ever after", to the detriment of the non-believer, and believers need not care for the state of the world. However, this is contrary to Biblical calls to "love thy neighbor as yourself" and other demands for charity, regardless of the receiver's belief required by countless parables of Jesus' actions in the Gospels.

True Biblical eschatology is derived from the discrepancy between the shortcomings of reality and the possibility of what could be, the 'almost but not yet' sense of fulfillment. "…the object of Christian hope is properly finally a *transcendent* one, looking both upward and forward, beyond the imaginable range of this world's possibilities, to an action of God so drastic and radical that the biblical writers are finally compelled to picture it as a 'new creation,' something of which God alone is capable and which will leave the world as we know it difficult to recognize."[240] Thus, eschatology is intimately involved with time, including but not entirely, the end times. Rather than fear for one's salvation, eschatology is a source of hope in a transformation of today.

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[239] See Craig C. Hill, *In God's Time*, "Appendix: Not Left Behind".
[240] Borthwick, Hart and Monti, "Musical Time and Eschatology," 278.

One of the greatest sources of misunderstanding regarding the rapture and tribulation is prophetic portions of the Bible such as the book of Revelation.[241] Consider 15:5-8: "After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed." Much prophetic literature is intended as a symbolic warning if history were to proceed as it has, but this genre is not meant to suggest literal condemnation. Revelation is not meant to be read separately from the rest of scripture; Christians have other books of the Bible, which offer a fuller narrative of redemption. Even the traditional, author of Revelation, the Apostle John, wrote a Gospel which speaks to grace and justice found in the death and resurrection, the finished work, of Christ. The Revelation of John cannot be read in isolation but must be considered, at the very least, in tandem with the Gospel of John. Although the meaning of 'plagues' in the above section of Revelation may be elusive, it is certainly not a warning towards an imminent, literal plague.

Apocalyptic literature (which Craig C. Hill calls "an uncovering, a revealing of something otherwise unknown."[242]) like the book of Revelation, takes on a new meaning when one realizes that it was written to an audience in hopeless circumstances. According to theologian Richard Bauckham, Revelation "expands (the author's) readers' world, both spatially

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[241] I make this claim based on the assumption that books of the Bible were written in different genres with specific requirements for proper interpretations. This idea of Biblical hermeneutics requires that the text speaks, rather than eliciting the text to meet a preformed conclusion. See "Bible Study Methods" by Dr. Mark Strauss, http://www.biblicaltraining.org/library/essentials-of-hermeneutics/mark-strauss.

[242] Hill, *In God's Time,* 60.

(into heaven) and temporally (into the eschatological future), or, to put it another way, to open their world to divine transcendence."[243] The audience is invited by the imagery to see the here and now differently, from this new transcendental perspective.

1 Corinthians 15:41-44 guarantees that a resurrection parallel to Christ's will occur for believers: "There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Early Christians did not conceive of the body as being separate from the soul. As a result, a resurrection with a new body will not be something to hope in because a return to the body of this life means a return to the mortal body which will die again.[244] Thus, resurrection must include some kind of transformation of the body.

God's greatest gift is that death, the inevitable end of time for our mortal bodies and for our mortal worlds, need not be final. When God says in Isaiah 43:1 "I have called you by name, you are mine," he is referring to the whole person, physical body, soul, and life experiences.[245] Indeed, an individual's worth is greater than the sum of their parts: one is not unique for the fact that one has working organs and bodily systems, an individual is unique for having an ineffable soul: thoughts, ideas, personalities and talents. The difficulties and impurities of this world (what Christianity calls sin) threatens to destroy one or more of the parts, threatening the whole. Resurrection offers the opportunity to free oneself from the danger of these threats to enable

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[243] Quoted in Hart "Imagination for the Kingdom of God," 53.
[244] Hill, *In God's Time*, 5.
[245] As evidenced by the earlier invocation of Jacob (the individual and body), and Israel (the nation and history represented by Jacob's new name, see Genesis 32:38).

eternal life. [246] It is important to clarify here that, although resurrection into Heaven, or eternity, is an important element of eschatology, it is not the thrust of my interest in the theology. I will avoid discussion of what happens to the body or the person upon resurrection, save for how these concepts relate to time for the person who is living today.

It is important to consider that the resurrected Jesus rose in the same body as the one he died in, and interacted with his disciples the same way. [247] We tend to imagine the Christian concept of Heaven as a disembodied place in the clouds where our souls float amongst the angels. However, Jesus' return shows that it is not that an eternal part of Jesus lives on, but having conquered death, the whole body of Jesus is renewed for eternity. But the resurrected Jesus still bore his crucifixion marks. [248] So "the risen Christ is the transfigured form of all that his temporally lived life had made him."[249] The future of our souls is not the most important aspect of Christianity, rather, it is how we live and interact in the present, which has implications for the future.

Focusing on the present leads to the essence of eschatology according to one of its greatest theologians and thinkers, Jürgen Moltmann. The Christian life should not be centered on a decision about whether one will to go to Heaven or Hell because that limits one's appreciation for the present.[250] Moltmann says that "The person who presses forward to the end of life misses life itself" [251], meaning that eschatology is not just about the end, but about how one's perception of the end effects one's experience of 'the during'. Nineteenth century British preacher Charles Spurgeon once interpreted the above passage from 1Corinthians by using an analogy of a seed

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[246] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 75-77.
[247] See Luke:36-53.
[248] See John 20:24-28.
[249] Bauckham, "Eschatology in 'The Coming of God'," 5-7.
[250] A critique of this proposition is the central point of the recent controversial book by Rob Bell, controversy which shifted to whether Bell believes in the existence of Hell. Rob Bell, *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived* (New York: HarperOne, 2011).
[251] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, xi.

growing into a plant with the seed being the mortal human, the plant the resurrected body. Though the materials appear completely different we recognize that the plant grew directly from the seed. [252] The treatment of the seed is of utmost importance; it is no good if the seed is deformed by disease or malnutrition while growing because the plant—though it seems like a whole new entity—will be equally deformed in its own way.

Jesus' disciples feared the end of his kingship at his crucifixion; after all, he was dead, that was *the end*. In his resurrection, Jesus' transformation meant that his end—in the traditional understanding of linear history—was actually his true beginning. In seeing Jesus' resurrection, early Christians saw the future—temporal existence reconciled with the eternal—in the present. [253] His redemptive power could only be fulfilled by his life coming to an end.

Moltmann considers the *Left Behind* concept of eschatology an error because it transposes "eschatology into time, instead of seeing in eschatology a transformation of time itself."[254] There is a sense of hope*lessness* in the former category because, like the fearful disciples upon Jesus' arrest, fearing that his ministry was in vain, it considers the direction of history to be inevitable. Time moves along a timeline and events happen one after another in an action-reaction formula. Transposing (or confusing) eschatology into (or with) time is forgetting that Christian theology is held together by a timeless God who created time, but is not governed by time.

Seeing eschatology as a 'transformation of time' is to acknowledge that time is created and time inflicts change; therefore Jesus who conquered time with his resurrection, offers a transcendence of time to all Christians. The reality of sin and death, which inflicts change on the body and soul, is an essential part of creation from the beginning of time. Sin, death and evil are

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[252] Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's* Sermons, 196-197.
[253] Hill, *In God's Time,* 6.
[254] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 10.

equal components of the original creation, not related causally; therefore, new creation offers the opportunity to remove all of these difficulties equally.

Moltmann considers a difference between 'future history' and the 'future of history'. [255] In the former, future is the subject and the human walk through history illuminates its unveiling. In the latter, history is the subject, and possibilities of the future afford endless categories of futures. The 'future history' of salvation-driven eschatology limits God in the minds of believers. One holding to this concept must wait patiently for the day of salvation, weathering doubts and attacks to the faith. If the purpose of faith is salvation and salvation is not yet come, perhaps one's faith is in vain.

The 'future of history' is concerned with the process of sanctification, of becoming more Christ-like the more that we live. In this way, it is irrelevant precisely what happens in the interim. We can rest assured that time is changing us for the better, but also that in our own resurrection, we will, like Christ, be resurrected incorrupt, glorified, and powerful, to paraphrase the passage from 1Corinthians quoted above. *What* happens when time ends or *when* the end of time occurs is of no consequence to the faith because the end will only mean that the process of sanctification will be completed.

For this reason, a fundamental concept in eschatology is one of a 'new creation'. From an individual's perspective, the old self is incompatible with eternity. Born sinful, we are unworthy of God's glory. Born temporally, we cannot be reconciled with God's eternal nature. Jesus—God in human form—came to earth in order to reconcile both of these disparities: sinless, his death paid the price for all sin. Resurrected, he brought 'the kingdom' to earth such that the earth may be renewed and God's 'will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

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[255] Ibid., 10.

The dual nature of Jesus as fully man, yet fully God, results in two kinds of eschatology as described by Craig C. Hill: realized, "what Christ *has* accomplished" and future, "the victory that is *yet* to come."[256] Realized eschatology is seen in the Gospel of John, in which Jesus speaks endlessly about his own resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit, in essence, how Jesus as the Messiah will deliver his people. Future eschatology is seen in the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus' actions are recorded; the emphasis is on actions which will bring the Kingdom of God to the earth. This aspect promotes the suffering necessary as a temporal being, the former promises hope as an eternal being. As both Jesus' are present in the Bible, they must be compatible, because future orientation emphasizes the human aspect of Jesus while realized orientation emphasizes his deity.

As the Lord's Prayer suggests[257], then, Heaven is not a distinct, separate place in the sky, but the earth itself, shed of its sin and temporality. "What is eschatologically new, itself creates its own continuity, since it does not annihilate the old but gathers it up and creates it anew…The raised Christ is the crucified Christ and no other, but he is the crucified Christ in transfigured form."[258] Without Christ, humans were incapable of being reconciled to God, thus the new does not emerge linearly from the old, but is transformed as a new creation.[259] If eschatology followed a linear trajectory, we never could become new because time moves forward, never backward; progress has no innate value, as demonstrated by the twelfth vs. twenty-first century question with which I began this chapter. Stuck in the old, the words of God spoken in Revelation 21:5 could never be true "Behold, I make all things new".

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[256] Hill, *In God's Time,* 173. Emphasis added. See also 170-195.
[257] The relevant sentence being: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven."
[258] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 29.
[259] Ibid.

There is a consistency between the qualitative experience of time as discussed with Henri Bergson in chapter 1, the qualitative temporal experience of music in chapter 2, and eschatology discussed here: time moves linearly, but we experience it nonlinearly. This is the state of living in the eschaton which is "the presence of eternity in every moment of this present history."[260] If God is powerful so as to be the creator and sustainer of life, then the actual content of future events is irrelevant. What matters most is the transcendental quality available by communing with God—who, relatively timeless himself, is capable of connecting us to all moments in time—not what may or may not happen in the future. Time in the eternal creation will be a collection of all historical times in a "kind of temporal and spatial compresence."[261]

C.S. Lewis addressed the confusing nature of this problem in his book *Mere Christianity*. "…the difficulty comes from thinking that God is progressing along the Time-line like us: the only difference being that He can see ahead and we cannot… But suppose God is outside and above the Time-line. In that case, what we call 'tomorrow' is visible to Him in just the same way as what we call 'today.'"[262] A revision of this analogy would go like this: if humans progress along a timeline which is represented by a single black line across the middle of a single white piece of paper, God is the remaining white paper. All points of the timeline are directly available to him, and there is nothing to stop him from accessing these points. Therefore, "eternity…is not some abstract and timeless simultaneity but 'the power of the future over every historical time.'"[263] Eschatological Christian faith has power in the present as we have the potential to experience the future—God's kingdom—now.

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[260] Ibid., 14.
[261] Bauckham, "Eschatology in 'The Coming of God'," 15.
[262] Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 92.
[263] Hart, "Imagination for the Kingdom of God," 65.

Karl Barth speaks about "the eternal Moment (which) can be compared with no moment in time."[264] We might remember the idea of the musical 'moment form', a piece made up of disconnected, autonomous moments whose temporal qualities is derived from the moment itself. Or, we remember the idea of Feldman's sound objects and 'seeing the world in a grain of sand.' The objective in all of these instances is not to be concerned with the future, with growth and development or direction. The objective is just to *be*, or, to ignore time entirely. In the moment of the eschaton, we need be concerned with time only so far as we recognize that we are still in the straightjacket of time, so long as we live as we are mortal. As a Christian, one is afforded a dual temporal reality, "as at once mortal *and* immortal, as at once transient *and* intransient, as at once temporal *and* eternal."[265]

Moltmann refers to human temporality (or linearity) as transitory time. The opposite of this is aeonic time, the time of eternity in which there is no beginning or end, no reference points for past, present, or future. Thus the question "what did God do before he created the earth?" is irrelevant, because the idea of process (before and after) is antithetical to God's eternal nature. Questioning when aeonic time was created is further irrelevant, because eternity has no 'when', it just *is*.[266] It is noteworthy that in the first creation story in Genesis, the spirit of God is present in the 'heavens and the earth' (1:1-2) until God creates day and night (1:3-5). God, through his spirit, is physically involved with the earth until temporality is created.

One could think of transitory time as one aspect of aeonic time. Living in the dual reality where we can access aeonic time, but are separate from God in our mortal bodies, the Sabbath serves as a reminder of the eschaton as my study of Heschel in chapter 1 informed us. "The

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[264] Quoted in Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 14.
[265] Ibid., 71. Emphasis in the original.
[266] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 281-283.

temporality of earthly creation does not reflect the presence of God—it reflects his absence."[267] This absence was instituted at the very beginning of creation as my above evaluation of Genesis reflects. This speaks to the importance of Jesus as the Christ to bring the eschaton closer, within our reach.

In order to understand how transitory time relates to aeonic time, it is important to define the terms typically used to describe the time we are familiar with. "...future is the sphere of the possible, past the sphere of the real, present the frontier on which the possible is either real-ized or not real-ized." [268] Moltmann's choice of terms is important here: future and past are spheres while the present is a frontier, a separate form of space. This is due to the uncertainty or, past-certainty of future and past respectively. They are not essential to living because the present can be lived without knowledge of the past and the present can be lived regardless of the future. The present is all that is essential, real and happening. This is opposed to *Left Behind* eschatology, where one's present is oriented to the future.

Moltmann admits, given that time does not move in reverse, "*the source from which time springs* must lie in the future."[269] But God, being the source of time as its creator, does not move closer because he lies completely in aeonic time. Moltmann rejects progressivism, the idea that history follows a linear line towards the future. The eschaton is in the future and is transcendent, aimed at redeeming. "It does not develop out of the old, but transforms, re-news the old, creates the old anew." [270] In order to do this, God ushers eternal time in by using future time, but eternal time does not come *from* future time.

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[267] Ibid., 284.
[268] Ibid., 286.
[269] Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 287. Emphasis in the original
[270] Bauckham "Time and Eternity," 157.

The future cannot be the same as the present, but separated by a period of the calendar as progressivism necessitates. Time itself assures us of this because time changes us; I will not be the same person today on Christmas Eve 2014 as I will be on Christmas Eve 2015; nor am I the person today who I thought, on Christmas Eve 2013, that I would become today. Future is the sense of what is possible, the past is the sense of what is real while the present is working out whether the possible is actualized or not. Every present moment has numerous potential futures but not one singular straight line.[271] History appears as a line only in retrospect, upon subjective revision by historical study, which by its nature contracts the complex narrative it is summarizing.

The human mind has a propensity to make the past present through memory and to make the future present through expectation. Thus, limited only by one's knowledge and memory of past and future, all moments of time are potentially present for people as they are for God. Theologian Trevor Hart suggests that in the present, one can use an eschatological imagination to help interpret and to see wider relationships in life, to consider possibilities open in the future while guided by the past.[272] It is all too possible to downplay these limitations, however. Mortal creatures, our memories fallible and subject to change, prone to errors of judgment and estimation, can simply be wrong, distancing ourselves from the kingdom of God. Given wisdom and enlightenment through Jesus, God who came to earth, this fallibility can be corrected by study of the Word, which connects us to true timelessness. This is the essence of Eschatological theology.

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[271] Ibid., 161-167.
[272] Hart, "Imagination for the Kingdom of God," 54.

Eschatology in Music

My goal in the concluding chapter is to offer *For Philip Guston* by Morton Feldman as a non-scriptural means of orientating one within the eschaton. Being not directly Christian in nature, a thorough knowledge of the theology is required so that one's direction is not skewed. Many forms of art are ripe for an eschatological interpretation, and as we will see, I am not the first to apply eschatology to music.

Theologian Richard Bauckham applied an eschatological interpretation to the painting of Monet, whose work I studied briefly in chapter 2 in reference to the music of spectral composers. Bauckham considers a painting as a singular 'thick' moment; this rich present contains an incredible amount of information and often an entire narrative, which the viewer can choose to access in its entirety or in part. In the *Cathédrales de Rouen* or the *Nymphéas* (Water Lilies) series and in many of the later works, Monet seeks to capture the impression of a moment, rather than a literal representation of a scene. While we recognize the scene from our world, what we see is a world transformed. His work captures the transient nature of a fleeting moment permanently, thus the subject of his painting is not a narrative, and does not reference the past or the future and as such the time captured in the painting is expansive.[273] Monet's work is inherently atheistic, "But viewed in light of the expectation of eschatological transformation, they nourish the anticipatory consciousness and the eschatological imagination."[274]

An article by a composer and two theologians in the Jeremy Begbie volume *Resonant Witness* is to this date the greatest source of thought on the connection between music and eschatology.[275] They begin their discussion by considering traditional art which literally or figuratively paints the boundaries of the earth. A landscape is a clear demarcation of what is real

[273] Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," 214-224.
[274] Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," 226.
[275] Ibid., 271-294.

from what is spiritual. The musical parallel would be linear tonality which progresses in a limited, deterministic way. Modernistic art often looks beyond the boundaries of the earth; abstraction allows for the spiritual elements of our lives to be visible.[276] As I demonstrated with the first movement of Beethoven's Op. 110, it is possible for composers to meet the requirements of harmonic progressions, such as in sonata form, but still allow room for a non-linear sense of time. But abstract music, like that of Morton Feldman, affords even greater removal from the bounds of time.

These authors are sympathetic to the theology of Moltmann. His work can be summed up by considering the Christian view of history, with beginning and end, which does not mean a literal temporal end, but "a point of transition from one stage of creaturely existence to another, and one in which the world finds its actual fulfillment through redemptive transformation (death, and resurrection into a new creation)."[277] Christian worldview must negate the idea that we progress towards a final end point, because that necessitates that all the tools needed for redemption of this world exists in our time, in our place. Progressivism excludes the need for a redemptive Messiah, which the human propensity towards sin, death and decay clearly contradicts. I demonstrated the insufficiency of progressivism at the beginning of this chapter with the twelfth or twenty-first century dilemma.

Again, the musical parallel is tonality which is at its core, the musical manifestation of progressivism. Requiring phrases orientated towards the goal of a cadence and the finality of all phrases towards a final cadence, the idea of resolution to the 'home key' in sonata form, fits in the concept of progressivism, but not in Christianity. The authors point to Mahler as a composer who uses diatonic harmony without falling into the trap of tonal progressivism by his use of

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[276] Ibid., 272.
[277] Ibid., 276-277.

secondary parameters of closure instead of cadences. Considering the third movement of his Symphony No. 4, Mahler ends the movement in the key of the dominant, following an authentic cadence in the home key. Not lacking in the experience of finality, Mahler uses other means to create a sense of closure: duration (repeating a chord for longer and longer values until it is accepted that nothing is going to happen after it), timbre (stripping away layers to a greater purity) and the softening of dynamics. This gives the listener a sense that the movement is over, has reached its goal, but it also points towards something greater beyond itself.[278] If one were to analyze the score, he would realize that the sense of finality should not feel final for the music did not follow tonal procedures. Thus in a Bergsonian sense, one cannot confuse the concept of space (in this case, the physical score) with the temporal experience (the performance).

This is the notion of the eschaton in music: being tied to the world of time, but subjectively free of its restrictions. We couple this with the eschatological notion that finality (death) need not be an ending, but rather should be considered in conjunction with the notion of continuing into perfection (born again into a new creation). [279] In my final chapter, I will explore this notion in terms of Morton Feldman's *For Philip Guston* which I will argue can literally be experienced as eschatological music.

Throughout this document, I have traced different music based on its ties to temporal space. Beethoven and Mahler have been presented as composers who used traditional harmony, form, melody and texture, but thwarted expectations of linearity to create music which alluded to the divine. Messiaen used many of the same musical elements but escaped tonality altogether in order to point to the divine. Finally, Feldman, whose music is derived from abstract sound objects, will be presented as music which is heard eschatology.

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[278] Borthwick, Hart and Monti, "Musical Time and Eschatology," 279-80.
[279] Ibid., 281.

CHAPTER 5: *FOR PHILIP GUSTON* AS ESCHATOLOGICAL MUSIC

Compositional Background

It is my opinion that Morton Feldman speaks of no piece with more emotion and human empathy than his own *For Philip Guston*. This is understandable, given their close friendship and subsequent estrangement until Guston's death. Three transcripts of introductions to performances that were given by Feldman exist and in two of them he speaks candidly of their separation over stylistic differences. "Where for twenty years I was always excited—he meant more to me than anything in the world—and I was always responsive…and then he went to Italy, came back, something happened, his work started to change. And when I went in (to see his new work) and he asked me, 'Well, what do you think?', I was silent for a half a minute and in that half a minute I lost his friendship."[280]

Noting that he typically names a piece only after it is written, this title came because Guston was at the forefront of his mind while he was composing. Feldman reflected on his frustration about "postmodernism and things like that which were always indicated by style, not by facility. And I was getting a little upset about that-the whole idea of just identifying things stylistically and not really thinking too much about what goes into it."[281] Regretful that he was guilty of this misidentification himself by disapproving of Guston's stylistic shift, this piece was written straddling two approaches: "Varying degrees of representation treated abstractly, and abstraction treated as varying degrees of representation."[282]

At an earlier performance, Feldman spoke of this idea in a different way. Impelled by a Guston scholar a few years after his death, Feldman rationalized the artist's stylistic shift by

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[280] Feldman, "I stopped asking Questions," 156.
[281] Feldman, "For Philip Guston," 197.
[282] Feldman, "Morton Feldman Introduction."

suggesting that Guston "stopped asking questions". This provoked the composition of *For Philip Guston* where he did not worry about stylistic requirements or expectations, "I didn't want to start with any preconception of what I (was) supposed to be doing."[283] The suggestion here is that Feldman always started with, if nothing else, the conception that art had to be abstract. His rift with Guston was, at its base, about Guston's shift to representational art.

At the premiere, Feldman spoke of the piece as beginning with himself and John Cage looking at the first Guston painting Feldman looked at. The moment is represented by a 'motive': C-G-Ab-Eb, or respelt and reordered: CAGE. This is the representative idea that is treated abstractly and Feldman stated that he did not have an expectation when writing this piece how CAGE would develop.

At the introduction to the February 1986 performance, Feldman referred to *For Philip Guston* as a "short four hours".[284] This is contrasted with another late piece of his which is a long hour-and-ten-minutes. I believe what Feldman means with these statements is that the material of a composition determines the perception of time that the audience has. Returning to Ornstein's principles seen in chapter one, the more information or the less organized it is, the longer an experience seems to feel. Thus, a long hour-long piece would have very little repetition, a lot of new material, and little return such that the mind cannot efficiently organize the material it is hearing.

For Philip Guston cannot be described in this way. It is very repetitive; both in the typical way that Feldman explores sound objects, but also because a large-scale AA^1 form can be seen through the work. Although I am making certain sacrifices in the progression of events, I would describe the first section as containing the following sequences of material: CAGE—

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[283] Feldman, "I stopped asking Questions," 158.
[284] Feldman, "For Philip Guston," 200.

Chorale—Modal, as well as frequent return to CAGE, and other 'cleansing' materials between each. The A^1 section begins without the primary CAGE iteration, but largely follows through the same sequence of events as A, but never verbatim; the modal section, for instance, takes on a much greater importance at the end of the piece. I will explore more specifics of this music throughout the rest of the chapter; suffice to say now that considering this is a four hour piece, there is great economy of material, allowing one to perceive it as 'short'.

The AA^1 form may be a way to reference aeonic time. Moltmann suggests that the change of seasons on the earth is an aspect of aeonic time.[285] The seasons change without beginning or an end, meaning, the calendar date dedicated to a new season is arbitrary compared to the gradual experience of the change of seasons. One season is made up of the same materials as any other, a set number of twenty-four hour days, but on the whole, each season feels completely different from the others. In that vein, the A section and the A^1 are two distinct seasons made up of the same materials, suggesting that the piece neither begins or ends, but is cyclical.

Due to Feldman's emotional way of speaking about this piece and the person of Philip Guston, I believe it is important to draw attention to the redemptive process Feldman might have been going through. Written after Guston's death, it is one of two significant odes that Feldman wrote posthumously for his friend.[286] *For Philip Guston* stands out in Feldman's oeuvre for its immense length, and the ending, featuring a scalar melody (two rare things in any Feldman work) is incredibly emotional and nostalgic. This is one reason that the piece offers itself for an eschatological reading: Feldman uses the piece to find restoration with his dead friend. Jesus offers a temporal restoration between a relatively timeless God and his creation, even though

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[285] Moltmann, *The Coming of God,* 295.
[286] The other is prose introduction to a Guston Exhibit, "Philp Guston: 1980/The Last Works" in *Give my Regards to Eighth Street*, 128-132. Feldman explains here how he came to terms with Guston's shift of style.

Jewish scripture foretold a Messiah who was militaristic in nature; instead, they found a healing, peaceful redeemer. [287]

Yet musical qualities tie Feldman to the eschatological music espoused by Borthwick et al. Mahler's music can be considered eschatological for its use of 'secondary parameters of closure' to 'point to something greater beyond itself', thus the listener is 'here', but made aware that there is a 'there', another temporal reality. I would like to suggest that in Feldman's music, the listener is transported to the 'there'. Lacking any discernible beat or meter, one is freed from the progressive nature of time, as they are by harmony that does not relate functionally. The always-never-the-same mode of repetition employed by Feldman can be read as the process of sanctification where the person does not change and grow, but is in a state of becoming closer to their true, transient nature. Just as eternity is not a 'when', Feldman's music, by focusing on sound and deriving all other musical parameters from that instead of development, is not of this world; both just 'are'.

The eschaton is the completion and fulfillment of life, but it is simultaneously the opposite of progress. This contradiction is lessened by remembering my discussion of C.S. Lewis in Chapter 4, where all points in time are equally available to a timeless God. Moltmann says of the eschaton: "We arrive at the completion not by traversing the longitudinal lines of history to their end, but by erecting everywhere in history the perpendicular line." [288] So, the music of the eschaton is bound by time but it still without change.

Feldman does not change his material so much as he presents limited sound objects which have no need of development and change and gives us new ways to hear it. His student Bunita Marcus said that "the idea of a sound (object) became more one of stationary patterns and

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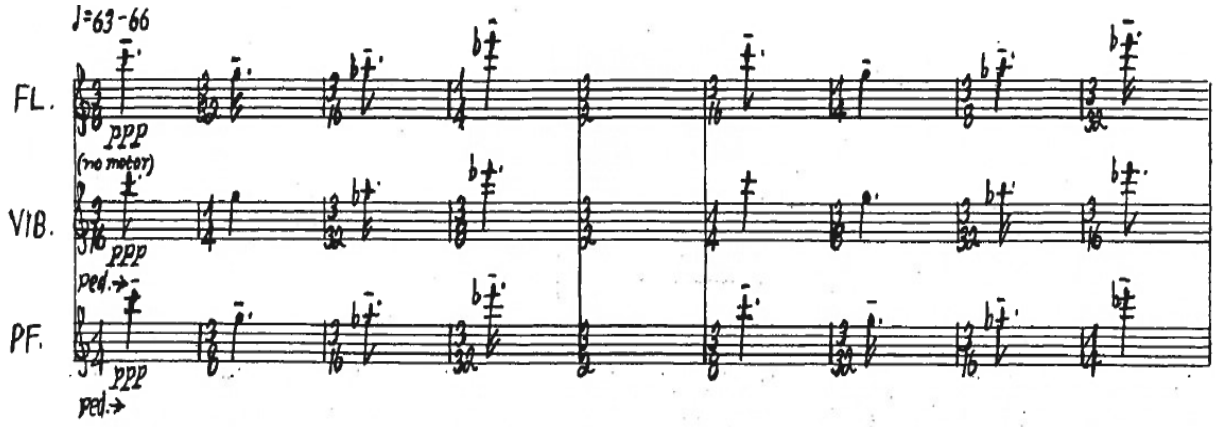
[287] Hill, *In God's Time,*143-145.
[288] Moltmann, *The Coming of God,* 16.

seeing the detail…in other words: we don't feel this is directional. Time is changing but we are not being pushed forward into something. We are floating in it."[289] Eschatology is focused on a sanctification of the world; Feldman is focused on a sanctification of sound. His music is both within and outside of time.

Analysis of *For Philip Guston*

I would like to begin my analysis by considering the CAGE motive which opens the piece:

Example 5.1— *For Philip Guston,* Page 1, System 1[290]



One notices several important stylistic features of Feldman here. All parts are marked *ppp* and the tempo is derived from a steady, slow quarter note. Both the vibraphone and the piano are undampened and will continue so throughout the work. We also see the grid in action: every single system is comprised of 9 equally spaced measures. Finally, we note the rhythmic

[289] Marcus, "About Craftmanship," 400.
[290] All excerpts reprinted with permission from Universal Edition. Morton Feldman „For Philip Guston|für Flöte, Schlagzeug und Klavier" © Copyright 1985 by Universal Edition (London) Ltd., London/UE 17967.

organization: in the first four measures, though stacked vertically, none of the instruments perform in the same time signature. However, within these four measures, each instrument plays one permutation of the following time signatures (organized here from longest durational value to shortest): 3/8, 1/4, 3/16, 3/32. By the end of every four measures, each instrument has performed the exact same duration, and a solid bar line across the staff indicates the end of a meta-measure.

I referred to the CAGE "motive" earlier, but would like to clarify here that I do not consider this a motive as such. In traditional musical nomenclature, a motive carries associations of thematic organization and development, neither of which is present in Feldman's music. Although he referred to literary representations of his and Guston's relationship, represented by CAGE, I believe this is more in its continued return throughout the work, not its functioning as a recognizable musical idea. It is one thing to hear a hunting call as a specific topic in the music of Mozart; it is another thing to try to hear a collection of four notes, where melody, rhythm and harmony is obscured by changing time, textures and dissonances, as a specific reference to a person. Just like symbolism in prophetic literature, it is difficult to take this material too literally since possible literary relationships are obscured by elements of Feldman's musical language.

I believe CAGE is best referred to by the term most used in chapter 3: it is a sound object. Thus, even though displayed in the score as a succession of pitches which move from C to G to Ab to Eb, because of the rhythmic complexity in practice, it is not heard as such. I would suggest that this is not a collection of four individual pitches, but a simultaneous sound which progresses web-like from one note to the next; we are hearing a single complex sound arranged horizontally into time.

The idea of resonance is very important in Feldman's work. Remembering the undampened piano and percussion in the above passage, I quote Dora Hanninen again: "…rests indicate not silence but the absence of new input as the preceding figure is absorbed into the resonant ground".[291] After the first meta-measure, there are six quarter notes of rest before the CAGE object returns. If the music is truly in the empty measures, as that is where we hear the resonance moving of its own accord through time, then each meta-measure might be seen as a pickup or a grace note where the object is heard horizontally.

In the empty measure, we hear the sound object as one entity; that the flute sound is finite, therefore heard only in the pickup, is just one aspect of the object's orchestration. Barbara Monk Feldman contends that due to the flute's dampening, it stands opposed to the other two instruments and is in fact the foreground sound as our ears are drawn to it for the concrete ending of its notes. As such, two levels of time are ongoing: the eternal undampened percussion instruments, and the corporeal flute. [292]

There is an eschatological element to resonance. Though there is no new 'input', there is still sound. Though there is no semblance of a beat, there is still sound which is shifting and morphing. Memory plays a part in listening to resonance: "The mind stores the past tone and sets it next to the present one; it is only natural for the mind to continue the process into the future, anticipating what will be, and then (confusingly) ascribe to the tone itself the dynamic quality of anticipation." [293] But in a harmonic and rhythmic language like Feldman's where it is difficult to anticipate something specific, lacking continuity, we might begin to anticipate eternity. After all, given the lack of dampening, it can be said that sounds from the keyboard and percussion instruments have no discernible end; they continue into another realm. Since empty measures of

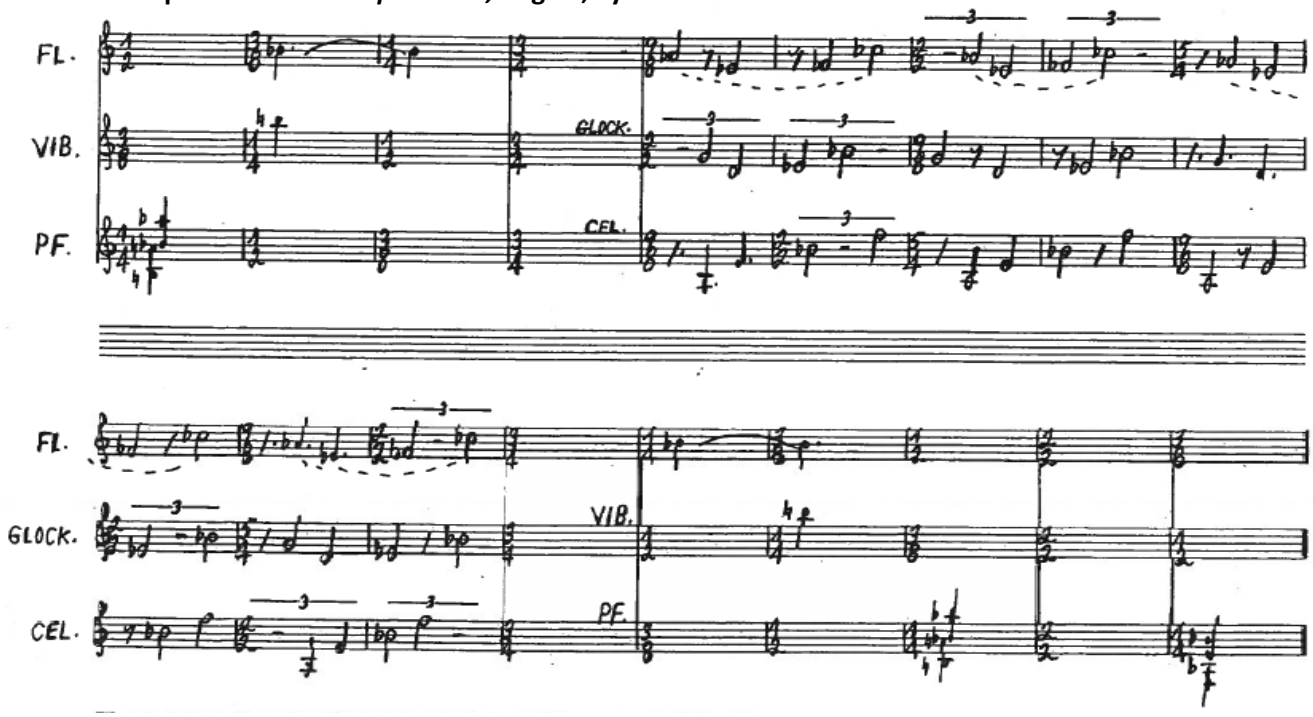
[291] Hanninen, *A Theory of Music Analysis*, 332.
[292] Feldman, "Music and the Picture Plane", 147.
[293] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time*, 53.

resonance lack input and a beat, but still consist of music, we have a way of pointing to God interacting with the earth. His presence can be felt through eschatological thinking regardless of his incompatibility with the temporal world.

Over the course of the first page, we see a progressive morphing of this first sound object. After the first four meta-measures, the empty measure gets progressively longer—six, seven, eight, then ten beats—before getting shorter after the next three meta-measures—nine, eight, then seven beats. Feldman is controlling the 'breathing' of the object, allowing more or less time for the object to morph through. By the fourth meta-measure, notes are dropped from the piano, then the flute is transposed down a tritone, and the pianist moves to celeste and at the bottom of the page, the flutist adopts a 'lazier' rhythm, playing the same pitches, but with ties over the bar-lines. We get a sense of the grid here, hearing one sound object but a myriad of ways. Using the four systems of the first page, the sound object is 'stretched' over the grid seven times, each iteration slightly different from the last; over time, we hear it differently (the changes actually being composed in by Feldman). Onto the second page, the orchestration is changing within meta-measures: percussionist moving between vibraphone and glockenspiel and the pianist between piano and celeste.

On the second page, the texture is sparser but there is no breathing between the meta-measures. Thinner, the sound needs less time to be heard. The material loses a sense of CAGE and instead becomes blockier, each instrument contributing to a sense of asynchronized blocked chords rather than a linear collection of notes. By the fifth page, third system, CAGE reappears but in a new manner:

Example 5.2— *For Philip Guston,* Page 5, Systems 3 and 4



Through one long meta-measure, we see the flute and glockenspiel performing a slow rendition of CAGE while no longer in unison, but playing a semitone apart. The celeste meanwhile performs a 'rocket' theme. There is a greater, richer sense of timbre in this iteration. Given the rhythmic displacement, the glockenspiel (which sounds an octave higher than written) and the flute do not sound like they are separated by a major seventh. I believe the rhythmic variety gives the listener a hint of almost-but-not-quite an octave, traces of microtonality.

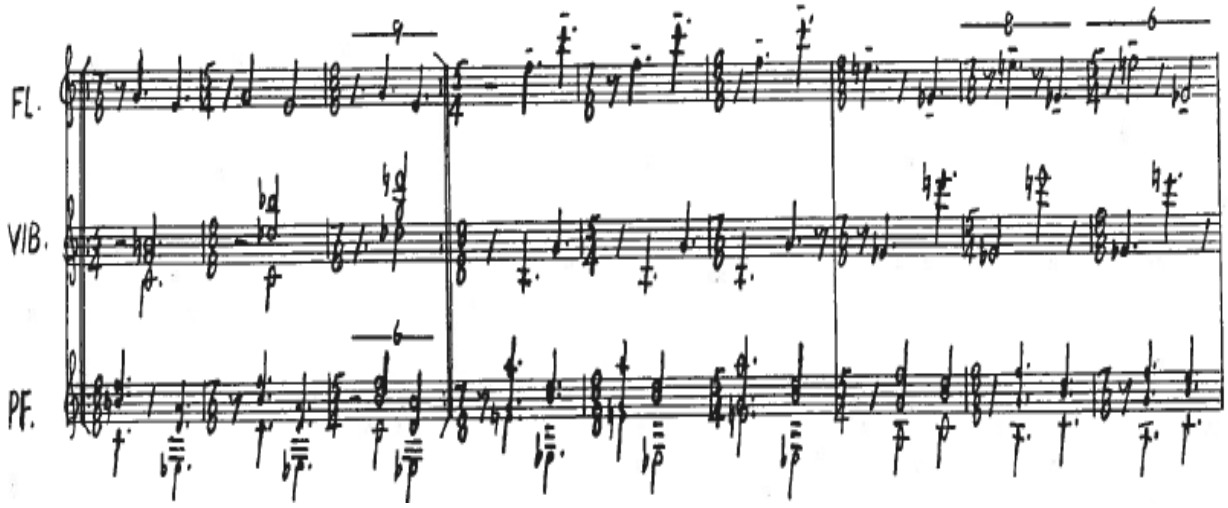
It is important here to analyze the intervallic content of these materials. CAGE consists of two perfect 5ths, separated by 4 semitones (i.e. C-G and Ab-Eb; C-Ab = 4 semitones). The 'rocket' in the celeste is also composed of two perfect fifths, which are separated by only 1 semitone. Thus even though the materials seem disparate, they are related by intervallic references. At the same time, this iteration of CAGE is only vaguely reminiscent of the opening of the piece. Slow and languid, the rhythmic complexity made more apparent by the dissonance,

and a contrasting instrumental part minimizes the connections between this iteration of the object and the opening.

I would like to suggest that this is the true form of the CAGE sound object. Throughout the rest of the piece, nine more iterations, it is heard only in this way. As a result, by the time we hear CAGE in its true form, we reinterpret the opening as *not* the beginning; we joined the piece in progress. Every reappearance of CAGE throughout the A section (and mirrored by almost the same spacing in the A^1 section[294]) is spread out further and further, as associative sets did in Hanninen's analysis of *Palais de Maris*. As each iteration spreads over time and the object is further cemented in our memory, perhaps we begin to hear it extend beyond the empty 'breathing' measures. Just as Christ's resurrection transposes time into eschatology, giving hope to the present even in his absence, the CAGE object reverberates overtop of the other material in the piece.

The second section I referred to was the Chorale, which refers to a textural similarity to choral writing: sustained, blocked chords:

Example 5.3—*For Philip Guston,* Page 12, System 1



[294] The true version of the CAGE object is heard: Page 5, System 3; Pg. 9, Sys. 1; Pg. 23, Sys. 4; Pg. 28, Sys 1; Pg 28, Sys. 4; Pg. 56, Sys. 1; Pg. 59, Sys. 1, Pg. 69, Sys. 4; Pg. 72, Sys. 1; Pg. 72, Sys. 4.

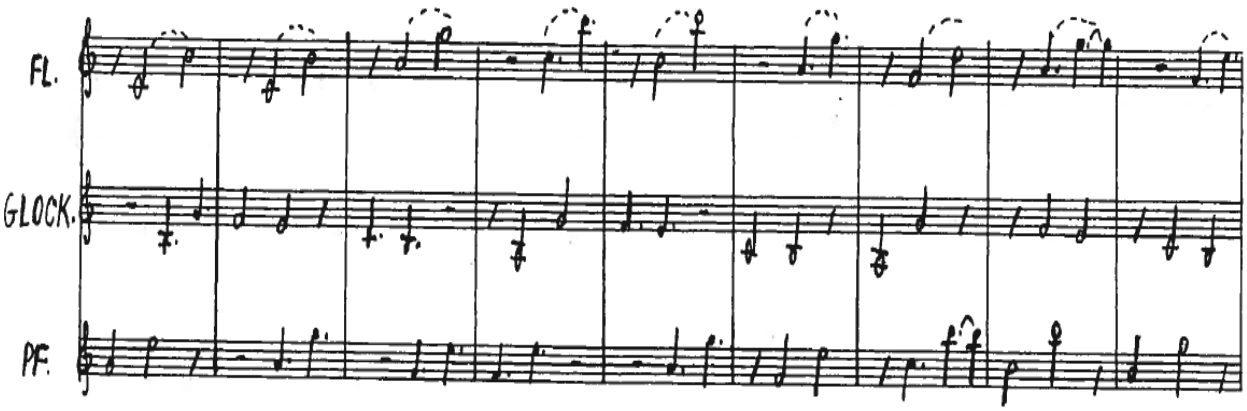
Each section morphs from one to the next such that there is no clear beginning or end to each. Blocked chords are heard as early as page 2 and begin to gain momentum but are often thwarted by monophonic passages, or CAGE. Thus, by the time the chorale texture takes over from pages 10-17 inclusively, the listener only understands that it has taken over, that time has conclusively moved on, after the fact. This too has a parallel in Christianity: the power and purpose Christ's reign on earth only became truly apparent after his death and resurrection. His disciples were often confused by Jesus' actions on earth but his mysterious nature could be explained after the fact. [295]

To understand how one section morphs into the next it is helpful to see how the modal section emerges. Going as far back as page 24, in the midst of the Chorale, we see an increasing number of ascending major and minor sevenths, here, particularly in the flute line. Occasionally these sevenths are heard within one meta-measure while other times it is over the long-term: the flute repeats one note in one meta-measure and repeats a seventh above it in the next measure. At the bottom of page 28, the piano chords are derived from chromatic clusters but displaced by register, thus, rich in seventh subsets. For much of page 29 and onto 30, this same procedure is used but between the three performers repeating just one pitch. Although the chorale later gains prominence again (on page 33), the importance of the seventh has been established, even though nothing came of it. By page 47 (and again on page 52), where all instruments are performing interlocking, ascending sevenths, the texture and direction of intervallic movement is comfortable in the listener's mind.

The modal section emerges clearly on page 52, 3rd system:

[295] See Mark 9: 30-32, John 13: 21-29.

Example 5.4—*For Philip Guston,* Page 52, System 3



The interlocking sevenths continue in the flute and piano, while a ringing scalar melody emerges from the glockenspiel. Rarely is a clear, uninterrupted scale heard in Feldman's music, but it is undeniable here: a natural-minor scale, always missing fourth scale degree. In the A section, the scale emerges discretely from the seventh texture by beginning from an ascending a minor seventh itself.

It is also noteworthy that the passage is completely diatonic: there are no accidentals in this system or the next. The material preceding this section, in retrospect, is decreasing in chromaticism, perhaps purging the harmonic language of dissension. Each of the sevenths is derived from notes of the melody; all notes of the diatonic scale are present except for D. The resulting sound, though still dissonant due to the accompanying sevenths, is very pure. Rhythmically, the passage is much less complex. All three instrumentalists are playing in the same time signature, and although each repetition of the modal scale occurs with a varied time-point organization, one has more of a sense of a stable meter than in any other part of the piece. There is also a clear direction to the descent of the scale; one can accurately anticipate the next pitch.

The intervallic material of the modal melody is intimately related to elements of the CAGE sound object heard throughout the piece. CAGE itself is set class (0158) and the rocket theme which accompanies is set class (0156). Both of these materials can be combined to create five of the six pitches of the modal melody. Only the second pitch, G is missing, yet these three musical ideas appear nothing alike.

Eschatological theology aids the mindset that "What is new…does not *emerge* from the old; it makes the old obsolete. It is not simply the old in new form. It is also a new creation." [296] We again remember here the idea that time in the eternal creation will be a collection of all historical times. Even though our mortal existence is opposed to heavenly existence, we will exist in the new creation in our same bodies, but those same bodies will be renewed. The CAGE object appears to have no relation to the modal section; they are of the same material. This relates to Feldman's later realization regarding Guston's stylistic shift in 1970, the same artist drew them, asking different (or as the case may be, no) questions. This is the same mentality Feldman sought in writing this piece.

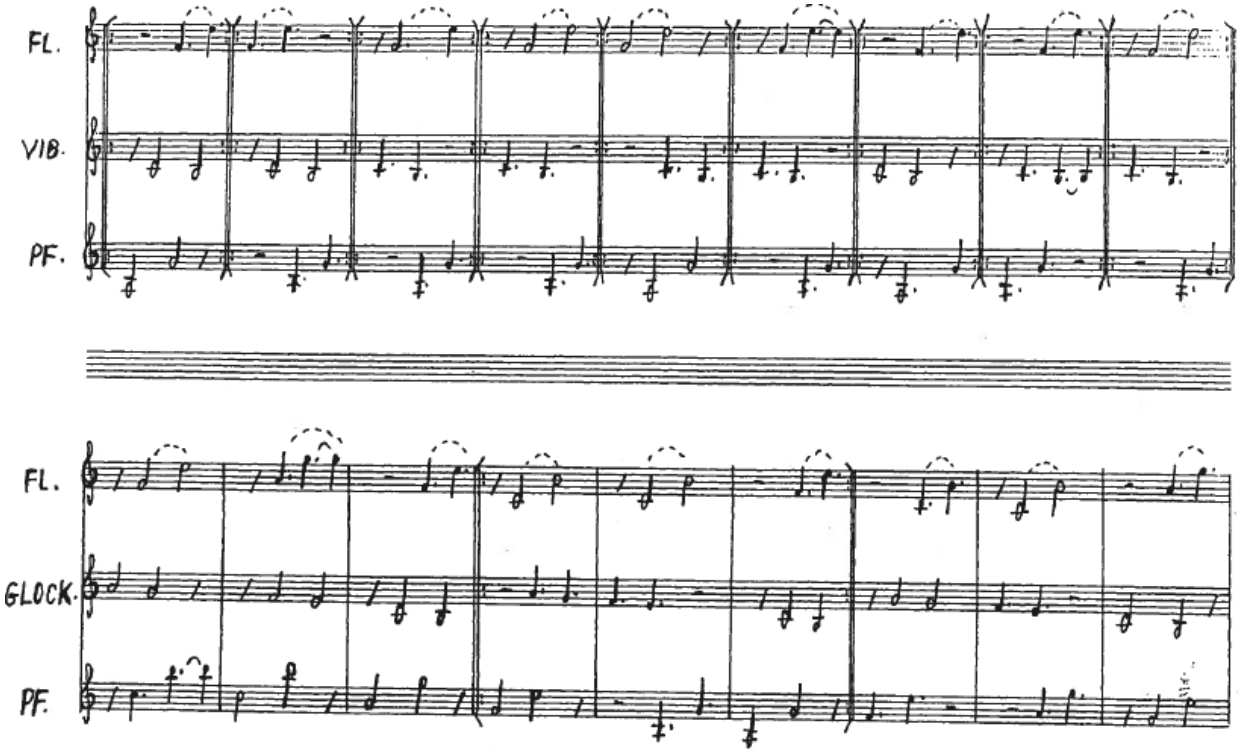
The modal sound object lasts for only two systems in the A section. The melody is played only by the glockenspiel and the flute and piano maintain their accompanying sevenths. 'Cleansing' materials follow: each instrument has a unique but insipid presentation—consider the flute, which repeats the same pitch in half notes—which occurs as a solo. At the top of page 54, the same material which transitioned the opening appearance of CAGE to its true realization, returns (indeed, CAGE is heard for the first time in a long time at the top of page 56).

I am much more interested in the presentation of the modal section at the end of the piece. Approached largely by the same sequence of events as in the A section, the modal section goes on significantly longer. Immediately before the melody begins, the flute and piano are

[296] Moltmann, *The Coming of God,* 27. Emphasis in the original.

already set in the interlocking sevenths while the vibraphone anticipates the end of the melody, reiterating the descending semitone from C to B. The instrumentation is important: the melody will be heard on the glockenspiel, but the anticipation is increased by hearing a snippet of the melody in the background, on the wrong instrument.

Example 5.5—*For Philip Guston,* Page 98, Systems 1 and 2



There is one significant difference from the A section: the first note is written an octave higher, thus the melody is purely a descent, without the initial minor seventh leap. More than an octave transposition, there are significant implications to this change. In the A section, the first note of each melody completed the preceding scalar descent, thus each is an enclosed unit. At the end, each scalar descent is incomplete which, like secondary parameters of closure in Mahler, points towards something beyond itself.

The modal music is much longer at the end. After thirteen renditions of the scale (through the end of page 98; here I am counting out each repeat sign), the glockenspiel returns to the tentative, descending semitone which directly preceded the scale. Thus, the scale, whose incompleteness has been emphasized, is suddenly anticipated again; sure enough, it appears another thirteen times on page 99. The next page begins with the flute anticipating the semitone, but the glockenspiel takes the melody for the same number of iterations.

On page 101, the celeste and flute both take one try at the anticipatory semitone. Here Feldman changes the material drastically. The third system begins with an empty measure: after so much anticipation and incomplete scales, we have nothing but the echoing resonance. The piano gives a dissonant chord, shocking after pages of all diatonic white notes, then it plays the modal melody at the same pitch as the glockenspiel before. Alto flute and chimes accompany with sevenths but suddenly the purity of this harmony is obscured by chromaticism, no longer are all of the materials unified with the CAGE sound object. Each instrument continues to present the same modal melody, non-transposed, while the other two instruments accompany with chromaticism, growing from broken sevenths to solid chords. Only in the very final system is the modal melody completely absent: the flute plays broken sevenths (non-chromatic) overtop the same chromatic chords as a further remnant of the modal music. Commenting on a performance of *For Philip Guston*, music critic Alex Ross said, "At the end of his cosmic journey, Mahler discovered great shining columns of sound, trumpets and banners, the gates of heaven. At the outer limit of a late 20th-century universe, Feldman found an ancient music box playing mournful scales. The world ends not with a bang, not with a whimper, but a sigh." [297]

It is important to point out the obvious use of Feldman's grid on these final pages. Pages 98-100 are functionally the exact same sound object stretched over one page, and then repeated.

[297] Ross, "Feldman's *Guston.*"

Even though the material is never exactly the same—each part will have a slightly different rhythm or the sevenths appear in a different order—the music is still the same. We are looking at the same object from varying perspective and Feldman recomposes it such that every aspect of the musical material can be processed.

Conclusion

My first performance of this piece was a last minute event—a few weeks notice; last minute, at least relative to the extreme length of the piece. Thus learning it on my own over six days, then rehearsing in the trio over four days did not afford me much time to understand much of how the piece was constructed. I did not realize the significance of the CAGE object, nor did the modal melody stand out to me as anything special at the end of the first half. It did at the end: the first scalar descent in the glockenspiel in Example 5.5 was a moment of extreme emotion while I was performing. I spent the week over which rehearsals were held visiting two of my closest and oldest friends, the three of us spread across the United States, it was rare to see each other individually, never mind all together. The final modal section brought about a great sense of nostalgia and emotion over my friends.

In the months that followed, I continued to explore *For Philip Guston*, and began to analyze it more in the most preliminary preparations for this document. Noticing the musical details of this music that contrasts with the rest of the piece, and that the modal moment happens twice, yet that it affected me considerably only once, stood out to me as a significant point. It was a year later that I first read Borthwick, Hart and Monti's article on musical eschatology and made the realization that my initial feelings regarding this moment could be explained by combining my personal Christian faith with musical temporal analysis. As I became more

sensitive to how the temporal aspects of a piece affect the listener's sense of reality, I realized that religion also functions as a hermeneutic through which we perceive the world. As scholars turn to increasingly multi-disciplinary approaches to music, it seemed clear that many of my initial, emotional intuitions regarding this piece paralleled my spiritual sense of the world. I could find greater depth in the music of Morton Feldman by considering it in the same way that I explore my faith.

It has been my contention that *For Philip Guston*, for the redemptive background of its composition, but also its musical materials, represents music of living in the eschaton. Much of the music of this piece authentically thwarts an experience of time progressing. How then to consider the modal music, which by scalar quality and near-rhythmic regularity, references linear music? I would like to use the theologian Trevor Hart's illustration of climbing a mountain: while ascending, one can see the top, but not the entire path to the top, only what is directly ahead. From the top, having walked up, one can see everything, the whole world, and sense the entire path too because having a view of the top allows one to imagine the path just walked.[298] *For Philip Guston* is the view from the top of the mountain. In this analogy, much of it is clearly music of eternity; the modal music is a chance to look back at temporal reality. In the A section, the modal melody is but a glimpse of the mortal world. The second time, the melody is incomplete, each iteration is an opportunity to be both grounded in reality but to look beyond to the new creation, led by eschatological hope.

Begbie contends that the representation of human participation in the eschaton is poorly represented in both tonal music (which resolves and completes all progress at the end) and in atonal music like that of Schoenberg which is suspicious of any sense of resolution.[299] He

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[298] Hart, "Imagination for the Kingdom of God," 61.
[299] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time,* 124-125.

suggests that English composer John Tavener's orthodox chant-inspired music appears to be a better representation of eternity but it must satisfy three questions to fully negate time. These questions are worth considering to establish if Feldman's music can indeed be interpreted as music of the eschaton: 1) Does the music acknowledge that we only understand God's eternity through his engagement with our time in Christ? 2) Is the dirtiness and ugliness of our world acknowledged? 3) Is the crucifixion—"the way in which God's eternity has been opened up"—acknowledged? A further criticism of Tavener—and a requirement for music to be eschatological—is that his textures tend to be rather simple, chant-derived as they are. The imagery of Revelation suggests that the texture of an eschatological world is anything but simple—pure and redeemed, but not simple.[300]

Though much of Feldman's music might fail the first question, *For Philip Guston* might draw on the character of Christ in the use of both non-linear music (representing Christ's divinity) and nearly-linear music in the modal ending (representing Jesus' human side). Feldman's chords can reflect the 'dirtiness and ugliness' of the fallen world in that they draw entirely on dissonance. Again, the modal music serves as a contrast to this stark dissonance, giving one a sense of the polarity between consonance and dissonance, especially as chromaticism creeps back into the texture in the final two pages. I believe that the final requirement is satisfied by considering Feldman's personal background of this piece. The crucifixion is the quintessential redemptive act; by acknowledging this aspect of the work, but considering it in a wider context of eschatological theology, we satisfy the third of Begbie's requirements.

All that is left to consider is the question posed in my title through a theological lens: why must the piece be so long? If my estimation that this piece can represent the eschaton is

[300] Ibid., 145-146.

correct, the easy answer would simply be that it must be longer than normal in an attempt to correspond to eternity. Sitting through an entire performance of this piece might *feel* like eternity. Indeed, the modal melody packs a punch when it emerges at the end, after some two-hundred minutes of music. But Feldman said at the premiere that one need not hear the whole thing.[301] I partially answered this problem in chapter 3, suggesting that length was necessary to stop the listener from listening for form but instead to turn to scale. Increasing length shifts the attention from progressivism and onto the sound object in the moment. If one hears just a portion of the piece, then that is the best answer I can give.

In this piece we have the reconciliation between Guston and Feldman, heard in CAGE and the complimentary nature of the old (modal music) with the new (non-linear). To truly understand the personal reconciliation, we must hear the long and slow progression from CAGE, through the chorale, to the modal conclusion, with countless cleansing moments along the way. This way, our memory slowly cements the music in time, without paying attention to time. If Feldman ended *For Philip Guston* with the first half, my analysis would not work because the A section is too final; the modal melody is too complete in its first iteration. In order to prepare it again to point to something beyond itself, which does happen in the A^1 section—to some *time* of reconciliation, a time of hope where the old will be made new—the course must be traversed again. The A section suggests a conflict; the A^1 section suggests hope for a solution.

At the heart of the matter, I believe, is the relationship between Morton Feldman and Philip Guston. Moltmann points out that throughout the Bible, glory in the past is used to promote glimpse of what is yet to come: "In the images of the new Exodus, the new settlement, the new covenant, the new Jerusalem, what is new is presented as a return of what has been lost and as a renewal of what is past. But the images of the new Exodus and the new Jerusalem

[301] Feldman, "Morton Feldman Introduction."

always hold within themselves more than was ever contained in the old…"[302] By not asking questions, Feldman produced a work where the opening gesture reverberates through the rest of the piece, figuratively through resonance, and literally by its connections to almost all other materials. Yet by the end, having come so far, the opening is not what it was before, it is in fact something greater, something more transcendental.

Returning to the eschatological conundrum—twelfth or twentieth century—which I stated in the introduction, we can realize that the answer is not one or the other, it is both. All points in time are available for renewal, as all points in time are available to a timeless God. Feldman wrote *For Philip Guston* by adapting the same mindset he believed Guston produced his last works. Out of the old, creating something new. Cleansed and renewed, the lengthy journey offered more music than the beginning could have appeared to offer.

By taking on my eschatological metaphor, if one does hear the entire piece and has some semblance of the structure, of how CAGE has been superimposed onto the larger scale, and how the modal music comes out of what came before, there is a different experience of eternity than just length itself. The modal ending, referencing old creation, cannot be eternal itself yet there is no reconciliation without the modal ending; new creation necessitates the preexistence of creation. New creation—most of the piece—is surely eternal, but presents none of the nostalgia of the old. *For Philip Guston* must have both; it must be so long to prepare us to enter the space of eternity, to wipe the slate clean. The extended ending is a fixation on Christ—human and God, and the root of eschatological hope for an eternal future.

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[302] Moltmann, *The Coming of God,* 28.

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