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# Joyce's Ineluctable Modality: (Re)Reading the Structure of "Sirens"

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LORRAINE WOOD

The "Sirens" episode of James Joyce's *Ulysses* has been the subject of a large number of studies attempting to decipher the author's complex conflation of music and language. Considering the *fin-de-siècle* fascination with artistic interrelationships and Joyce's own background as an accomplished tenor, his interest in synthesizing the two art forms is not surprising. As early as 1877, the well-known critic Walter Pater had argued in his essay "The School of Giorgione" that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music";<sup>1</sup> similarly, in "Mystery in Literature," Stéphane Mallarmé aligned poetic expression with musical performance that "unfolds . . . through simulated veils,"<sup>2</sup> implying that music, as an abstract art form that resists the assignment of meaning, provides a model for poetry in its ability to *suggest* rather than *define*. Contemporaries of Joyce, including Thomas Mann, Virginia Woolf, and Marcel Proust, were equally fascinated by the intersection of music and literature. But Joyce goes far beyond any of these authors in putting theory into practice. In *Ulysses*, his prose becomes increasingly "musical," culminating in the "Sirens" episode, for which he freely acknowledged music as his model. While the chapter is typically interpreted as one in which *language* is transformed into *music*, I argue that it also represents Joyce's attempt to reconfigure *music* in terms of *language*. Joyce indicates in the "Proteus" episode that language can only be fully understood in terms of both sight and sound; in "Sirens" he frames music in the same terms, asserting that we experience it through the interplay of the visible and the audible. Joyce's radical "performance" in fusing language and music in "Sirens" thus underscores his argument that the perception of music, like that of language, requires a synchronization of simultaneity and sequence.

The structural analogues between language and music in "Sirens" have puzzled scholars since the publication of *Ulysses*. Musical models of every type have been proposed as the solution for deciphering the episode. Perhaps the real key to "Sirens" lies in Joyce's *disavowal* of music; he observed to Georges Borach that after incorporating the "resources and artifices" of music in the chapter, he "[could] no longer listen to it."<sup>3</sup> If he is truly seeking to reframe music in terms of both the audible *and* the visible, *listening* is only half of the equation. Joyce can no longer listen to music because he must also *see* it. Just as a proper interpretation of language necessitates both *seeing* and *hearing* the words, musical perception similarly requires a conflation of spatial and temporal constructs. This concept, I contend, is a more useful paradigm for interpreting the structure of "Sirens" than any specific musical form. As Bloom himself remarks, "Words? Music? No, it's *what's behind*."<sup>4</sup>

Joyce foregrounds our reading of "Sirens" with his discussion of the visible and the audible, which he terms, respectively, *nebeneinander* and *nacheinander*, in the "Proteus" episode of *Ulysses*. While the two principles are juxtaposed as the two different ways we perceive the world around us—*simultaneously* and *sequentially*—they are also synthesized and conflated into a larger unity. Joyce follows the phrase "ineluctable modality of the visible" by its counterpart, the "ineluctable modality of the audible" (3:1, 13), indicating that modality (significantly, also a musical term) is both visible (in terms of grouping letters into words, as in written language) and audible (in terms of setting words into a logical sequence, as in spoken language). Yet, as Joyce points out, each process encompasses the other within it, so that *nebeneinander* and *nacheinander* function as two "ineluctable" halves of one whole: Stephen's feet are in his boots next to one another, a visual perception that he associates with "*sound[ing]* solid," while he describes walking through the shells, an audible process, as "a very short *space* of time through very short times of *space*" (3:17, 12; italics mine). Joyce equates *nebeneinander* with spatial repositioning and the scientific concept of parallax, while he connects *nacheinander* with temporal manipulation and the notion of metempsychosis; significantly, both space (the visible) and time (the audible) are dimensions of music,<sup>5</sup> an iconographic language dependent upon performance *in space over time* for its realization as physical sound. By fusing the visible and the audible, "Sirens" might thus productively be read as a musical manifestation of the theory of language set up earlier in "Proteus."

Joyce himself triggered much of the confusion and subsequent debate over the supposed musical structure of “Sirens” with his cryptic comments. He stated to Georges Borach: “I wrote this chapter with the technical resources of music. It is a fugue with all musical notations: *piano*, *forte*, *rallentando*, and so on. A quintet occurs in it, too, as in *Die Meistersinger*, my favorite Wagnerian opera.”<sup>6</sup> A few weeks later, in a letter to his editor Harriet Weaver, he described the “Sirens” voices as “all the eight regular parts of a *fuga per canonem*.”<sup>7</sup>

Joyce’s acknowledgment of his use of musical techniques in “Sirens” is certainly not surprising, but his designation of the fugue/fuga as his formal model is troubling for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that *fugue* and *fuga per canonem* are two different forms, neither of which has “eight regular parts.” A fugue is typically structured in three or four voices around one principal melodic idea—the *subject*—which is treated imitatively and recurs throughout the piece. While it may be modified slightly (truncated, note values augmented or diminished, transposed into different keys), the character of the subject is *not* significantly altered. A fugue may include a *countersubject* that moves in counterpoint to the subject; most commonly, the countersubject is derived from the musical material of the subject itself—that is, the two are very closely related (as opposed to the two themes of sonata form, which are generally highly contrasting) and are typically stated simultaneously or consecutively in an overlapping fashion. Statements of the subject and countersubject are separated by other musical passages known as *episodes*; while the episodic material is treated much more freely, it too is often related (though less formally) to one or more short motifs taken from the subject or countersubject. The overall structure of the fugue is thus made up of alternating expositions (in which all voices present the subject) and episodes (in which the subject is not present). The term *fuga per canonem*, or “fugue according to rule,” on the other hand, refers not to the eighteenth-century fugue but to the much earlier form known as *canon*,<sup>8</sup> a composition in two or three parts that follows a very strict imitative pattern throughout (much like our modern-day *round*) without countersubjects or episodes.

It is difficult to correlate Joyce’s episode with the formal constraints of either of these fugal models, although numerous critics have tried.<sup>9</sup> The introductory section of “Sirens,” in which fragments of the chapter’s motives/passages are introduced, has no relation to fugal form. While some scholars have characterized this opening sequence as a “prelude” to be paired with the fugue (a practice Bach frequently followed), this

designation, too, is problematic, since traditionally there is only a key relationship, not a motivic one, between a prelude and fugue. In addition, eight-voiced fugues or canons composed on a single subject are virtually unknown historically and would be so complex that any presentation of a "subject" would be completely obscured. One might argue that Bloom and Boylan operate contrapuntally as subject and countersubject, but even this construct is slippery: their "voices" are certainly not derived from each other or closely related (except through Molly), and these "voices" are not presented together, but are separated both by physical distance (except for a very short time in the Ormond) and psychological intent. The only two voices that are closely connected are those of Miss Kennedy and Miss Douce; these two voices *do* appear in close succession, but neither one is important enough to be the "subject" of the episode. William Snyder Jr. applies the term "fugue" much more loosely, suggesting that Boylan's jingles and Pat's taps interweave contrapuntally with the music room chatter, Bloom's writings and reflections, the musical performances, and the street commotion to form Joyce's "prose fugue."<sup>10</sup> In my estimation, this broader interpretation of the term as simply polyphonic texturing, reflecting the network of vertical and horizontal elements comprising a musical score, makes much more sense.

The canon model is even more removed from the voicing of "Sirens." There are no two voices or characters that function as repetitive echoes of each other, so we are left to wonder just *who* is imitating *whom*? As Brad Bucknell points out, a more likely explanation for Joyce's use of the term "fugue/fuga" might come from the word's literal meaning, that of "flight."<sup>11</sup> Considering Joyce's thematic emphasis on flight, particularly in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and his interest in linguistics, this seems a credible alternative.<sup>12</sup>

There are other problems inherent in Joyce's description of "Sirens." Finding a "quintet" in "Sirens" complicates the notion of form even more. A quintet is never associated with a fugue, so it is difficult to imagine how the two forms could coalesce. In addition, who are the five quintet voices? Moreover, Joyce lists *piano*, *forte*, and *rallentando* as the musical "notations" accompanying a fugue. As a knowledgeable musician, Joyce certainly knew that these are dynamic and tempo markings and not "notations," which generally refer to the methods used for transcribing the music itself. As careful as Joyce was in his choice of language, this imprecision is curious and out of character.<sup>13</sup>

Like the fugue, musical paradigms proposed by other critics—that of an opera,<sup>14</sup> a medley, a twelve-tone composition,<sup>15</sup> or a sonata—seem equally improbable and, in some cases, even ludicrous. The most convincing interpretation is that of Zack Bowen, who writes: “Just as the novel can never be tied exclusively to the rigorous formula of the *Odyssey*, the signs of the zodiac, or the Mass, neither can the Sirens chapter be limited to one musical form exclusively.”<sup>16</sup> Considering Joyce’s resistance to the idea of any conclusive, definitive reading of *Ulysses*, it seems likely that he would draw upon a multiplicity of forms in constructing “Sirens.” I contend that Joyce’s descriptions cannot be taken at face value; the incongruities in them are most likely intentional, not the careless work of an undisciplined mind. Joyce is simply playing with us, indiscriminately throwing out musical jargon to perplex and stymie would-be critics and scholars. In the same way that Picasso purportedly claimed that blue was the only color of paint he had when asked why his “blue period” paintings all employed a monochromatic scheme, Joyce refuses to deliver the easy answer—perhaps because there *is* no easy answer. In this same vein, James Conely suggests that we might even view the chapter as “musical parody, including Joyce’s pretensions at duplicating musical structure,” advising that “we shouldn’t take the chapter more seriously than Joyce has it take itself.”<sup>17</sup>

Structurally, the introductory section of “Sirens” is puzzling. Critics have suggested that this is an “overture” introducing all of the main motifs of the forthcoming chapter, and there is certainly some validity to this idea. An operatic or symphonic overture *does* outline the principal themes, but the piece generally also stands alone as an independent unit. In addition, themes are usually presented in their entirety (though not developed as in the rest of the work). In “Sirens,” however, the meaning of the “part” (the introduction) is only created through its relationship to the “whole” (the chapter); as a separate composition, the introduction is nearly incomprehensible because the phrases are not complete or contextualized units.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, individual fragments do not operate like musical incipits (which abbreviate the phrase by playing only the first line) but rather as truncations (and even transformations) of the forthcoming themes. For example, the full text of the first phrase is “Bronze by gold, miss Douce’s head by miss Kennedy’s head, over the crossblind of the Ormond bar heard the viceregal hoofs go by, ringing steel” (11:64–65); this is modified to “Bronze by gold heard the hoofrings, steelyringing” (11:1) in the introduction. In many ways, the opening sequence functions

more successfully as a recursive "coda"; once the reader has deciphered the chapter, the "overture" makes sense.

Yet the introduction's succession of fragments is also necessary foregrounding for reading the rest of the episode. As Karen Lawrence explains, the motifs are somewhat familiar to the reader, operating as "an encoded transcription of sound," in which Joyce attempts to reduce "sound, verbal and nonverbal, to its written equivalent."<sup>19</sup> If Joyce's project is to make music approximate language, this interpretation is perfectly logical; we must both see and hear the words, combining the visual and the aural. For example, in the lines "A husky fifenote blew. Blew. Blue bloom is on the" (11:5–6), the reader can only differentiate between "blew" and "blue" (and even "bloom") by *seeing* the words, since the sound will be the same in each case.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, a phrase like "Goodgod henev erheard inall" (11:29) must be *seen* to appreciate Joyce's rhythmic invention in (re)grouping the words, distorting the spacing, and expressing the cadence. The introduction might thus more usefully be seen as a compendium of musical techniques and devices that will be further developed in the chapter (see the appendix, below).

Joyce's attempts to make *language* approximate *music* in this episode have been extensively studied and collated (see my own efforts in the appendix). Music is unique in its ability to operate within both visual and aural realms. As Andreas Fischer reminds us, it is impossible for us to read words simultaneously—we proceed from left to right, top to bottom on the page. Similarly, when two speakers speak concurrently, we cannot process the different voices. However, music *is* read simultaneously (the vertical and horizontal dimensions of a musical score are processed at the same time) and *can* be effectively understood as the harmony of multiple voices. Language is thus essentially monophonic while music can also be homophonic or polyphonic.<sup>21</sup> One of Joyce's techniques in merging language and music is thus to make language polyphonic. He does this through many of the techniques outlined in the appendix (chords, stretto, interpolations, fragmentation, motivic interweaving), leaving the reader to construct the "harmony" from the multiple voices he/she both *sees* and *hears*. The following passage from "Sirens" serves as an example: "Bravo! Clapclap. Good man, Simon. Clappyclapclap. Encore! Clapclipclap clap. Sound as a bell. Bravo, Simon! Clapclapclap. Encore, enclap, said, cried, clapped all" (11:756–58). There are at least two separate voices operating in these lines: one is shouting "Bravo! Good man, Simon. Encore! Bravo, Simon!" while the other is simultaneously clapping. Joyce interweaves the

two voices and truncates the separate claps into groups of “clappyclap-clap.” As Fischer notes, “enclap” merges the two voices (“encore” and “clap”) together both visually and aurally, forcing language to operate simultaneously as well as sequentially.<sup>22</sup>

Joyce’s effort to make *music* approximate *language* by conflating the audible and the visible is, in many ways, a more complex issue. Significantly, American composer and conductor Otto Luening reported that Joyce was doing musical experiments in 1919 during the time he was writing *Ulysses*. As a demonstration for Luening, one evening Joyce took the famous flute solo “Dance of the Departed Spirit” from Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice* and “began going through the piece, note by note and phrase by phrase, literally transposing it first into word inflections and then into verbal images.”<sup>23</sup> In a very literal way, Joyce was already attempting to turn music into language—an approach that would become central to the writing of “Sirens.”

Joyce integrates music into “Sirens” in a multiplicity of ways. Bowen notes three in particular: his dependence on sound devices that are principally musical (assonance, phrase repetition, alliteration, onomatopoeia, staccato), his interpolation of Bloom’s thoughts on various aspects of music (origins, definitions, effects, instruments, production), and his “orchestration” of the chapter with specific references (Bowen counts 158) to various musical works. For Bowen, this last category is Joyce’s strongest contribution, for the musical allusions “provid[e] a background of continuous music from which the episode draws its meaning and existence.”<sup>24</sup> Bowen’s extensive analysis of the ways in which these allusions underscore, undercut, suggest, and manipulate both the reader’s thoughts and those of Bloom is impressive;<sup>25</sup> of particular significance are Joyce’s interpolation of “When the Bloom is on the Rye,” “M’appari” from Flotow’s opera *Martha*, “Love’s Old Sweet Song,” “Là ci darem” from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, and “The Croppy Boy.”<sup>26</sup> Because song is literally the contact point between music and language, its importance in the episode cannot be underestimated. As Roland Barthes explains, in song, the voice is in a “dual posture, a dual production—of language and of music.”<sup>27</sup> Considering Joyce’s emphasis on “doubling” in *Ulysses*, this observation takes on additional significance.

While song fragments and allusions are certainly significant in developing the themes in “Sirens,” there are other structural techniques at play as well. Many critics have noted Joyce’s use of Wagnerian *leitmotive* to integrate language into the music of the text. Joyce was well acquainted



with the ideas of Richard Wagner, whose revolutionary theories and innovative music significantly influenced *fin-de-siècle* aesthetics, literature, and thought. Timothy Martin, in his detailed study of the complex relationship between Joyce and Wagner, notes that Joyce often criticized Wagner when others praised him; similarly, Ellmann indicates that Joyce “had no patience with the current adulation of Wagner” and once left the opera hall in disgust after his question “Don’t you find the musical effects of my *Sirens* better than Wagner’s?” was answered with a resounding “No!”<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, Joyce had a particular fondness for Wagner’s opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (the work he references in his comments to Georges Borach) and even performed in its quintet from Act III.<sup>29</sup> Martin argues that Joyce was actually more significantly influenced by Wagner’s writings than his music; while only two of Wagner’s operas had been mounted in Dublin by the time Joyce left in 1904, the composer’s aesthetic thought was widely known. Joyce’s acquaintance with Wagnerian concepts most likely came through his interaction with the French symbolists (whose interest in *Wagnerisme* culminated in the publication of the Parisian *Revue wagnérienne* under Édouard Dujardin between 1885 and 1888) and his connections with Yeats and Ibsen, both of whom greatly admired Wagner. Joyce cited Wagner in his earliest literary works (such as “Drama and Life”) and chose Wagner’s preferred term “drama” to identify his own work. Once Joyce moved to the continent, he frequently attended performances of Wagner’s mature works and quickly acquired copies of the composer’s prose works.<sup>30</sup> Although Joyce’s somewhat conflicted view on Wagner is reflected in his frequent parodies of Wagnerian opera and apparent contempt for literary “Wagnerites,” his lifelong interest in the artistic possibilities of myth and the narrative potential of the *leitmotiv* owes much to the influence of Wagner.<sup>31</sup>

Given Joyce’s extensive exposure to Wagner, it is not surprising that Wagnerian allusions and echoes abound in his works. Martin notes, for instance, that the aesthetic theories of Stephen Dedalus in *Portrait* have much in common with Wagner’s theories from the first volume of his *Prose Works*: the Greek model of artistic perfection, the emphasis on the artist’s “soul,” the idea of a “collective conscience,” and the importance of art as a “social function.”<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Joyce insisted throughout his life that his use of interior monologue in *Ulysses* was inspired by the work of Dujardin,<sup>33</sup> who in turn explained his technique as an effort to “achieve in literature the effect of Wagnerian music” by “translating” the *leitmotiv* into language.<sup>34</sup> Wagner’s notion of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, in which all art

forms are synthesized and reconstructed into a unified “music drama,” clearly foregrounds much of Joyce’s experimentation. Wagner’s desire was to make music—specifically opera—more literary; in his essay *Opera and Drama*, he announced that his avowed purpose was “to prove that by the collaboration of precisely *our* music with dramatic Poetry a heretofore undreamt significance not only can, but *must* be given to Drama.”<sup>35</sup> Wagner constantly struggled over the hierarchy between poetry and music, refusing to assign priority to one “sister art” over the other. Ultimately, however, he advocated the “ascension of the richest music into . . . *that* Poetic art which by this free surrender of Music to her shall first become an all-effectual Dramatic art”<sup>36</sup>—in effect, a fusion of the two elements within the context of drama, with music as the principal vehicle for such harmonization. In light of Wagner’s attempt to merge the two arts, it was a natural corollary for Joyce to move literature in the direction of music; the *leitmotiv* provided one appropriate model for accomplishing this.

While critics have identified various characters with particular motifs in “Sirens” (Bloom’s “Bloowho,” Boylan’s “jingle,” the tuner’s “tap,” Miss Kennedy’s “gold,” and Miss Douce’s “bronze”),<sup>37</sup> Wagner’s conception of a *leitmotiv* is much more subtle and complex. Generally, Wagner’s *leitmotive* are not intended to portray particular characters or objects; most commonly, they are grouped around central themes and used to depict psychological states of mind, reveal knowledge, recall past events, or foreshadow future developments. In addition, the motifs are varied, transformed, and reconstructed to reveal a “subconscious” orchestral drama that may support, undermine, or challenge the “conscious” narrative conveyed by the singers. Most typically, it is the *accumulation* of motives within the context of the musical work that creates its meaning. In its strictest conception, the *leitmotiv* is thus a perfect vehicle for Joyce, whose cumulative allusions and recursive themes derive their power from their repetition, transformation, subtle interplay, and comprehensive scale. While it is beyond the scope of this essay to outline Joyce’s *leitmotive* in detail, one has only to ponder the complexity of meaning behind such phrases as “sweets of sin” and “agenbite of inwit” to understand the pervasive power of such a musical/literary device.

In addition to recurring *leitmotive*, one of the most straightforward ways in which the visible and the audible are brought together in “Sirens” is through Joyce’s emphasis on eyes and ears, the organs associated with sight and hearing. The opening lines of the chapter proper illustrate this:

as the viceroy goes by in his carriage, Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy first *hear* it pass but cannot fully identify it until Miss Douce *sees* the carriage. The passage reads:

Bronze by gold, miss Douce's head by miss Kennedy's head, over the crossblind of the Ormond bar heard the viceregal hoofs go by, ringing steel.

—Is that her? asked miss Kennedy.

Miss Douce said yes, sitting with his ex, pearl grey and *eau de Nil*.

—Exquisite contrast, miss Kennedy said.

(11:64–68)

The “contrast” here is not only between the viceroy and his ex, or between Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy, but between *hearing* and *seeing*. These same images recur shortly thereafter as “bronze from anear, by gold from afar, heard steel from anear, hoofs ring from afar, and heard steel-hoofs ringhoof ringsteel” (11:112–13). “Near” and “far” are spatial differentiations most easily perceived visually; similarly, “bronze” and “gold” are colors seen with the eye. “Steel” and “hoofs” are then inserted into the visual context, transforming it to an aural one (steel is heard as it is struck, hoofs ring). Finally, the visible and the audible are conflated as the words “steel,” “ring,” and “hoof” are paired in every possible combination, a design that must be both “heard” (as the text *tells* us) and seen (as the text *shows* us). In a similar passage, we read that “Miss gaze of Kennedy, *heard, not seen, read on*” (11:240; italics mine)—another synthesis of the visual and the aural (a gaze is generally *seen*, not *heard*).

Characters are also described in terms of eyes and ears: Miss Kennedy is identified by her “curving *ear*” that must be “unplugged” (11:83, 136), while Miss Douce is characterized in terms of her “*listening* lips and *eyes*” (11:266) and later by her “brave *eyes*” (11:460). Bronze and gold then ridicule Bloom for his “goggle” and “dark *eye*” (11:460); when Bloom sees himself in the mirror, even he describes himself in terms of “wagging his *ear*” and the “napkinring in his *eye*” (11:647). Cowley, too, is described as “all ears” and “eyes shut” (11:1192–93). Even more striking is Joyce’s juxtaposition of the *blind* tuner, who can only be *heard* “tapping” as he returns to the Ormond to retrieve his tuning fork, and the *deaf* waiter Pat, who can only be *seen* by the clientele. Interestingly, Pat is described

as “open mouth *ear waiting* to wait” (11:718–19); we are then told that “He *heard*, deaf Pat” (11:823) and that “deaf Pat, bald Pat, tipped Pat, *listened*” (11:1029; italics mine). Carl Eichenberger points out that the cane’s “tap” is a palindrome of “Pat,”<sup>38</sup> further connecting the worlds of vision (the blind tuner whom we can only *hear*) and sound (the deaf waiter whom we can only *see*).<sup>39</sup>

The seashell is also important as a metaphor for the fusion of the visible and the audible. Significantly, the first appearance of the shell comes through a reflection in the mirror: “Miss Douce halfstood to see her skin askance in the barmirror gildedlettered where hock and claret glasses shimmered and in their midst a shell” (11:118–20). Boylan, too, first observes the shell in the mirror: “His spellbound eyes went after, after her gliding head as it went down the bar by mirrors, gilded arch for ginger ale, hock and claret glasses shimmering, a spiky shell” (11:420–22).<sup>40</sup> When the shell materializes, Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy hold it to their eyes to “hear,” while Bloom only “sees” it from a distance. However, he hears “more faintly that that they heard, . . . hearing the plash of waves, loudly, a silent roar” (11:935–36)—in other words, he *hears* the ocean in his mind precisely because he can *see* the shell. He observes, “Her ear too is a shell” (11:938), noting the capacity of the ear to imagine its own “music,” to create a music of the mind. The shell returns later when Bloom imagines different types of “instruments”—a “blade of grass, *shell of her hands*, . . . even comb and tissuepaper” (11:1237–38). Significantly, the image also recalls Stephen’s walk along the shore in “Proteus,” where the visible/audible principle was first explored.

In another important passage in “Sirens,” Bloom lays out a sequence of visual and aural images: “Sea, wind, leaves, thunder, waters, cows lowing, the cattlemarket, cocks, hens don’t crow, snakes hissss,” adding, “There’s music everywhere” (11:963–34). Significantly, only some of these can be *seen*, but all of them can be *heard*. However, Bloom follows these remarks with the admonition to “Look: look, look, look, look, look” (11:968), bringing the worlds of sight and hearing together in the creation of “music.” As Bloom prepares to leave the Ormond, we are told that he “seehears lipspeech” (11:1002); here vision and sound merge in a very literal way as the two senses are run together and synthesized into one word.

The visible and the audible are also explored through the opposition between sound and *writing* in “Sirens.” Maud Ellmann argues that as “magicians of the voice, the Sirens stand for the enchantments of the

audible." Bloom must "open an alternative modality" in order to resist them, and he does so through writing (the visible)—symbolized in his attempt to write his name to Martha Clifford.<sup>41</sup> Significantly, Bloom can only accomplish this task with the help of deaf Pat, the one character devoid of the ability to hear. Bloom must sign to communicate with Pat, but when he asks for "a pen and ink" and "a pad to blot," we are told that "he heard, deaf Pat" (11:822–23). When "bald deaf Pat" brings "quite flat pad ink" to Bloom, we read that "it was the *only language* Mr. Dedalus said to Ben" (11:847, 849; italics mine). Although the comment actually refers to Italian as the language Simon heard from the singers of his youth, the implication is that either deaf Pat or writer Bloom are speaking "the only language"—an interesting conflation of sound, sight, and writing. As he completes his letter to Martha, Bloom's "only language" becomes Greek, for he must remember to sign "Henry" (another "false language") with the "Greek ee" to disguise his true identity (11:889). He also "blot[s] over the other so he [Richie Goulding] can't read" (11:901), once again treating writing as a "secret" (hidden, false, disguised) language that must be deciphered on a visual (simultaneous) level. Bloom attempts to isolate the visible as a separate and distinct category, yet the connection between music and writing is implicit; music, like language, uses both acoustic and written signifiers. Music and language can only be effectively perceived by a synthesis of the audible and the visible.

Bloom's efforts to separate sound from sight follow a similar pattern. He reduces music to the "vibrations" and "silent air" that "after you feel you hear" (11:831, 793–94). Sound, for Bloom, is an abstract concept that can be fully deciphered and understood as a function of time (sequentially). He observes: "Want to listen sharp. Hard. Begin all right: then hear chords a bit off: feel lost a bit. . . . *Time* makes the tune" (11:839–41; italics mine). Furthermore, he echoes Pythagoras as he observes that music exists as numerical relationships, musing: "Numbers it is. All music when you come to think. . . . Do anything you like with figures juggling. . . . Musemathematics. And you think you're listening to the etherial" (11:830–35). This is a particularly suggestive passage, since mathematics, like music, is a symbolic "language"—and one commonly associated with music in terms of acoustical ratios and theoretical constructs. Yet unlike music, mathematics requires no audible component for its "translation" or realization. Ironically, in equating music (which Bloom understands here as purely audible) with mathematics (a visual language) and fusing

the two into “musemathematics,” Bloom is unknowingly synthesizing the very elements, sound and sight, that he seeks to separate. In Bloom’s mind, the aural and the visual are two independent modes of perception; Joyce, however, constantly reminds us that in order to fully comprehend music and language, the two strategies must work in harmony.

As Mooney points out, the scene at the Ormond centers on “waiting and anticipation”—Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy wait for clients, the men wait for the results of the horse race, Pat “waits while you wait” (11:916), Boylan waits for his tryst with Molly, and Bloom waits for Molly’s assignation to take place. Significantly, the waiting is accompanied by “listening and looking”—the audible and the visible.<sup>42</sup> Bloom’s two relationships are symbolized by these two modes of perception: Martha exists only visually (through the letters on paper), while Molly, at least at the moment, exists only aurally (through Boylan’s jingle). Yet the two (Martha and Molly, visual and aural) come together in the bar through music: Simon’s rendition of “M’appari,” Father Cowley’s version of “Là ci darem,” and Ben Dollard’s performance of “The Croppy Boy.” Bloom concludes: “Yes, joy it must be. Mere fact of music shows you are” (11:970–71). A full understanding (“joy”) can only take place through *music* in a synthesis of sight and sound, visible and audible.

Any structural model used to describe “Sirens” is necessarily problematic or incomplete; the elusive complexity of Joyce’s prose resists formal codification or categorization. While Joyce clearly frames *language* in terms of *music* in the episode, evidenced by the many musical techniques and allusions he includes, he also attempts to reconstruct *music* in terms of *language*. The clue to reading “Sirens,” I maintain, is in the “instruction” Joyce gives us in “Proteus”: true perception requires both the visible and the audible; they cannot be separated, for modality (in language or music) is both *simultaneous* and *sequential*, *nebeneinander* and *nacheinander*, sight and sound. As Joyce himself acknowledged, the techniques and devices, whether fugal, operatic, or literary, are simply “resources and artifices” for exploring the complex dimensions of the interrelationship between music and language.

#### APPENDIX OF MUSICAL DEVICES AND TECHNIQUES USED IN “SIRENS”

Note: Citations refer to chapter and line number(s) in the Gabler edition of *Ulysses*.

### *Motivic Development*

"Miss Kennedy sauntered sadly from bright light, twining a loose hair behind an ear. Sauntering sadly, gold no more, she twisted twined a hair. Sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair behind a curving ear" (11:81–83). If "sauntered sadly" is motive *a*, "twining a loose hair" is *b*, and "behind an ear" is *c* (together comprising phrase 1), phrase 2 consists of *a* varied slightly ("sauntering sadly") and augmented (with "gold no more") and *b* varied slightly ("she twisted twined a hair"); there is no *c* in the second phrase. Phrase 3 combines and *intertwines* motives *a* and *b* ("sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair") and brings back motive *c* with some augmentation (the addition of "curving"), rounding out and completing the original phrase.

"Bald Pat is a waiter hard of hearing, to set ajar the door of the bar. The door of the bar. . . . Pat, waiter, waited, waiting to hear, for he was hard of hear by the door" (11:670–72); "Pat is a waiter hard of his hearing. Pat is a waiter who waits while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. He waits while you wait. Hee hee. A waiter is he. Hee hee hee hee. He waits while you wait. While you wait if you wait he will wait while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. Hoh. Wait while you wait" (11:915–19). In these two related passages, Joyce has combined enharmonics (*He, hee*), fragmentation (*hard of hear*), motivic development with the words *waiter/wait/waited, waiting*, and the phrase *while you wait*, and manipulation of musical/verbal syntax (*while you wait if you wait he will wait while you wait*).

### *Motivic Interweaving*

". . . spluttered out of her mouth her tea, choking in tea and laughter, coughing with choking" (11:166–67). Here one word (note/chord/motive) in each phrase is picked up by the next to unify the whole period (there is an echo quality, but not in a strict repetitive sense). *Tea* is repeated in the second phrase, connecting it with the initial phrase, while *choking* connects the last two phrases.

### *Motivic Transformation*

"Like Cashel Boylo Connor Coylo Tisdall Maurice Tisntdall Farrell" (11:1124–25). When a musical theme is transformed (rather than just fragmented, augmented, or diminished), it is recreated and reconstructed out of fragments of the old into something entirely new (Wagner and Liszt

frequently use this technique). In this example, the names have been dissected and reconstituted to form new names related to, but different from, the originals.

Two more complicated examples follow: "Are you off? *Yrfmstbyes. Blms-tup. O'er ryehigh blue. Ow*" (11:1126–27); "Tipping her tepping her tapping her topping her. Tup. Pores to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel the warm the. Tup. To pour o'er sluices pouring gushes. Flood, gush, flow, joygush, tupthrob" (11:706–9). Several techniques are employed in this last passage, including onomatopoeia; transformation of *tip* into *tep*, *tap*, *top*, and *tup*; fragmentation (*the warm the*); chords (*joygush, tupthrob*); and repetitive alliteration. As the text suggests, Joyce has "tak[en][his] motives" and "twined and turned them" (11:633–34).

### *Repetition*

"The boots to them, them in the bar, them barmaids came. For them unheeding he banged on the counter his tray of chattering china" (11:89–90). Here *them* is repeated in each phrase or motive, in the same way that a particular tone will anchor a phrase or period by its repetition. "To the door of the bar and diningroom came bald Pat, came bothered Pat, came Pat, waiter of Ormond" (11:286–88). Here *came* and *Pat* are both repeated in each segment.

"She smilesmirked supercilious . . . , but, lightward gliding, mild she smiled on Boylan" (11:416–17). This sentence combines a variety of musical techniques. There is the obvious alliterative repetition, the "chord" of *smilesmirked*, and the presentation of *smile* in various forms; more interesting is the echo effect of the "long *i*" repetition in *light*, *glide*, *mild*, and *smiled* used to anchor the phrase.

### *Fragmentation*

"At four she. Winsomely she on Bloohimwhom smiled. Bloo smi qui go. Termoon" (11:309–10). This is a common musical device in which a complete motive is subsequently "fragmented" by dissecting it and using incomplete segments of it to develop or extend a particular section of the piece. In this case the phrases are fragmented (*At four she*) as well as the individual words (*Bloo smi qui*).

Additional examples follow: "Father Cowley blushed to his brilliant purple lobes. He saved the *situa*. Tight *trou*. Brilliant *ide*" (11:483–84); "*Accep*



my poor *litt pres enclose*. Ask her no *answ.*" (11:865–66); "Miss Douce, miss Lydia, did not believe: miss Kennedy, Minda, did not believe: George Lidwell, no: miss Dou did not: the first, the first: gent with the tank: believe, no, no: did not, miss Kenn: Lidlydiawell: the tank" (11:818–20). In this last example, the names are shortened (*Dou*, *Kenn*), but more interestingly, *Lidwell* is chopped in half with *lydia* interpolated into the middle of the word.

### *Augmentation*

"She sipped distastefully her brew, hot tea, a sip, sipped, sweet tea" (11:140). As a time element, augmentation slows down the pace of a passage by extending the note values of a musical motive. Here *brew* is restated sequentially as *hot tea* and then as *sip*, *sipped*, *sweet tea*, each time adding length to the phrase (especially notable with the one-syllable *sip*, *sipped*, *sweet*, which cannot be spoken quickly because of the end consonants).

"It. Is. True." (11:872–73); "I. Want. You. To." (11:1096). As if moving to a cadence, here the words (or chords) of a phrase are separated and punctuated. In another example, "Bloom" is stretched out to become "Bloomhimwhom" (11:309).

### *Diminution*

"Yes, Mr Bloom crossed bridge of Yessex. To Martha I must write. Buy paper. Daly's. Girl there civil. Bloom" (11:229–30). Diminution increases the pace of a passage by decreasing the note values of a musical motive. Here the sentence length changes from a seven-word grouping to a single word in rapid sequence. Another example occurs in the following passage: "Wise Bloom eyed on the door a poster, a swaying mermaid smoking mid nice waves. Smoke mermaids, coolest whiff of all. Hair streaming: lovelorn. For some man. For Raoul" (11:299–301).

### *Inversion*

". . . red rose rose slowly sank red rose" (11:1106–7). This generally refers to a mirror image of a phrase. Here *red rose* begins and ends the sentence, with the idea of *rising* being inverted to *sinking* in the middle. The following phrase functions in much the same way: "Tank one believed: miss Kenn when she: that doll he was: she doll: the tank" (11:1170–71)—that

is, *tank* begins and ends the sentence with *miss Kenn* and *doll* equated with *she*, all of which are inverted and repeated in the sentence's peak.

Other examples include the following: "First gentleman told Mina *that was so*. She asked him *was that so*" (11:816); "Like lady, ladylike" (11:336); "inexquisite contrast, contrast *inexquisite*" (11:464). "See me he might" (11:342). In this last case, the expected order of the words (*he might see me*) is reversed.

### *Sequence*

"Shrill, with deep laughter, after, *gold after bronze*, they urged each each to *peal after peal*, ringing in changes, *bronzegold*, *goldbronze*, shrilldeep, to *laughter after laughter*" (11:174–76). This is a device commonly used in fugal composition to elaborate/extend the musical subject itself (or the episode connecting statements of the subject) or to modulate to a new key. Generally, one motive of the subject is consistently repeated at a higher or lower pitch, moving sequentially up or down the scale. In this case the motive is slightly different each time, but its construction (with *after* connecting repeated nouns) works sequentially.

### *Chords*

The preceding example also contains "chords." *Gold* and *bronze* are presented first as separate words and then "played" together in *bronzegold* and *goldbronze*. The same is true of *shrill* and *deep*, which become *shrill-deep*. The same principle is illustrated in the following examples: "Like lady, ladylike" (11:336); "Mr Bloom reached Essex bridge. Yes, Mr Bloom crossed bridge of Yessex" (11:228–29). Here *Essex* and *Yes* are combined in *Yessex*.

### *Interruption of One Musical Phrase by Another, Resulting in Stretto*

"Bidding her neck and hands adieu miss Douce [*with no punctuation to end the phrase*]

—Those things only bring out a rash . . . " (11:123–24). This technique is commonly used in a fugue to close a passage; it "layers" subject and countersubject simultaneously to increase the intensity of the passage.

Another example follows:

"After an interval Mr Dedalus raised his grog and [*no punctuation*]

—That must have been highly diverting, said he" (11:271–72).

### *Enharmonics*

"That is to say she. Neatly she poured slowsyrupy sloe" (11:369). This refers to the use of alternate harmonic "spellings" for the same notes/chords—that is, the notes will *sound* the same, but they will *look* and function differently. Here you have "slow" and "sloe" (with the latter seemingly a conflation of *she* and *slow*); it is also significant that the "enharmonic" word refers to a tempo (a musical notion).

"Light sob of breath Bloom sighed on the silent bluehued flowers" (11:457–58). In this more subtle example, *sighed* becomes the *si* of *silent*, while *Bloo* and *blue* are equated. Other examples include the following: "to Flora's lips did hie. High, a high note" (11:396–97); "He heard Joe Maas sing that one night. . . . Choirboy style. Maas was the boy. Massboy" (11:610–12); "Dolor! O, he dolores! The voice of the mournful chanter called to dolorous prayer" (11:1132–33); "At me. Luring. Ah, alluring" (11:734).

### *Improvisation*

Simon Dedalus admits himself that he is "only vamping, man" (11:448). Of course there is a double reference here, since "vamp" can refer either to a seductive woman or to an improvised musical accompaniment. The very next sentence says "Come on, come on, Ben Dollard called. Begone dull care. Come, Bob" (11:449). In many ways, this *is* a vamp on B, C, D—that is, with the exception of "on," all of the words begin with the letters B, C, or D, but the words themselves are different (*Ben, begone, Bob, come, called, care, Dollard, dull*).

### *Alliteration (Corresponding to Note Repetition)*

"Those things only bring out a rash, replied, reseated" (11:124); "None nought said nothing" (11:224); "of love's leavetaking, life's, love's morn" (11:325–26). In music, alliteration corresponds to beginning a sequence with the same note (a device used to unify multiple fragments), but using that note to generate a different phrase/motive each time (the idea of unity within diversity). The following is another example: "Pat paid for diner's popcorked bottle: and over tumbler, try and popcorked bottle ere he went he whispered, bald and bothered, with miss Douce" (11:317–19).

### *Parenthetical Interpolations (Corresponding to Treble Echoes or Obligatos)*

"Upholding the lid he (who?) gazed in the coffin (coffin?) at the oblique triple (piano!) wires" (11:291–92). Often a high treble echo or obligato will

be used to “comment” on or decorate the musical phrase. The parenthetical insertions function similarly in Joyce’s descriptions.

### *Repeated Bass Notes*

“Yes. Yes. Yes.” (11:221–22). These are used to underscore the harmonic function of a phrase (in Baroque music, the *basso continuo* functions this way). Fischer calls this a kind of “metronome” for the episode.<sup>43</sup>

### *Tempo Variations*

“Two sheets cream vellum paper one reserve two envelopes” (11:295). The passage is slowed here by the use of (mostly) single-syllable words all equally emphasized (as when you have a series of quarter-note chords all played sequentially on the beat). “Here there try there here all try where” (11:739). Again, using all one-syllable words slows the pace of the passage.

“Bald deaf Pat brought quite flat pad ink. Pat set with ink pen quite flat pad. Pat took plate dish knife fork. Pat went” (11:847–48). While a similar tempo effect can be seen in this example, in this case changing the *order* of the words (*Pat brought quite flat pad ink. Pat set with ink pen quite flat pad.*) also changes the meaning of the sentence. In music, syntactic changes correlate with motivic inversion, retrograde, and transformation.

### *Cadences*

“Bloom” (11:102), “Jingle” (11:212), “Dry” (11:258). In all of these cases, one word is set alone as a complete paragraph, ending or beginning a sequence of thought. Another example follows: “Big Benaben Dollard. Big Benben. Big Benben” (11:1154), which Gilbert characterizes as a dominant seventh to tonic cadence.<sup>44</sup>

### *Question and Answer*

- “What’s this her name was? A buxom lassy. Marion . . . ?  
 —Tweedy.  
 —Yes. Is she alive?  
 —And kicking.  
 —She was a daughter of . . .  
 —Daughter of the regiment.” (11:502–7)

In music, this technique is used much like it is with language. The first half of a phrase (the question) is given to one “choir” or group of instruments, and is then completed or answered by another choir or group of instruments.

### *Onomatopoeia*

There are lots of examples of this technique within the episode, including the following: "Jiggedy jingle jaunty jaunty" (11:579) (and all the variations of *jingle*); "Imperthnthn thnthnthn" (11:100); "Clappyclapclap. . . . Clapclipclap clap. . . . Clapclopclap" (11:756–57); "snakes hissss" (11:964); "a cock carracarracarra cock. Cockcock" (11:987–88); "Tap. Tap. Tap. Tap. Tap." (11:1218).

### *"Musical" Language*

In some cases, the "musical" words refer to nonmusical objects or situations; in others, the words have double meanings so that the phrases can be read in more than one way. Examples include the following: "She *tapped a measure* of gold whisky" (11:215–16); "Must be a great *tonic* in the air down there" (11:219–20); "Miss Kennedy with manners *transposed* the teatray down" (11:92); "it went down the *bar* by mirrors" (11:421); "Over their voices Dollard *bassooned* attack" (11:528); "Well, of course that's what gives him the *base barreltone*" (11:559); "George Lidwell, suave, solicited, held a *lydiahand*" (11:567); "The *keys*, obedient, *rose higher*, told, faltered, confessed, confused" (11:603); "Still *harping* on his daughter" (11:644); "in cry of passion *dominant* to love to return with *deepening* yet with *rising chords of harmony*" (11:735–37); "Richie, admiring, *descanted* on that man's glorious voice" (11:778); "Barton James of number one *Harmony* avenue" (11:878–79); "Bored Bloom *tambourined* gently with I am just reflecting fingers on flat pad Pat brought" (11:863–64); "*Play* on her. *Lip blow*. Body of white woman, a *flute* alive" (11:1088–89); "Our native *Doric*" (11:991).

"Brasses braying asses through uptrunks. Doublebasses helpless, gashes in their sides. Woodwinds mooing cows. Semigrand open crocodile music hath jaws. Woodwind like Goodwin's name" (11:1053–55). Here personification is used to describe musical instruments.

### *Trills*

". . . *wavyavyeavyheavyeavyevyevyhair*" (11:809); "*Diddleiddle addleaddle ooddleooddle*" (11:984). A trill is a rapid, repetitive undulation between two or more notes.

### *Segue Transitions*

In music, this occurs when there is no break between movements or sections of a piece. Joyce uses this technique in running individual words

together into one expression, as in “Outtohelloutofthat” (11:804) or “whatdoyoucallthem” (11:675). A more sophisticated treatment occurs in the following passage: “he ate Bloom ate they ate. Bloom with Goulding, married in silence, ate” (11:522–23). Did *he* eat *Bloom*, did *they* eat, or did *they* eat *Bloom*? The structure of the passage makes it ambiguous, just as a segue progression blurs structural outlines in a piece.

### *Wrong Notes*

“... the muse unsqueaked a ray of hop*k*” (11:712). Here the word morphs from *hope* to *hopk*.

### *Fermata*

“... endlessnessnessness. . . . .” (11:750). This occurs when a note is held longer than its designated value at the end of a phrase or period.

### *Cantabile Melodic Phrases*

These are often found in opera arias as the singer soars to a climax by way of a beautiful melody constructed of long, cantabile phrases. The metaphor is presented here in terms of a bird’s flight: “It soared, a bird, it held its flight, a swift pure cry, soar silver orb it leaped serene, speeding, sustained, to come, don’t spin it out too long long breath he breath long life, soaring high, high resplendent, aflame, crowned, high in the effulgence symbolic, high, of the ethereal bosom, high, of the high vast irradiation everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessnessness. . . . .” (11:745–50). The repetition of *long*, *breath*, and *high* throughout this passage emphasizes the vocal (singing) quality of the prose. In addition, “spinning it out too long” is exactly what the singer does in such a climactic passage.

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## NOTES

1. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 86. Joyce reportedly said once to Arthur Power, “Judging from modern trends, it seems that all the arts are tending towards the abstraction of music; and what I am writing at present [his *Work in Progress*] is entirely governed by that purpose,” quoted in Timothy Martin, “Joyce, Wagner, and Literary Wagnerism,” in *Picking Up Airs: Hearing the Music in Joyce’s Text*, ed. Ruth H. Bauerle (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 119.

2. Stéphane Mallarmé, "Mystery in Literature," trans. Malcolm Bowie, in *Mallarmé in Prose*, ed. Mary Ann Caws (New York: New Directions, 2001), 48.

3. Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, new rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 459.

4. James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), 11:703 (italics mine). Quotations from *Ulysses* are hereafter cited in the text by chapter and line number(s).

5. As Susan Mooney notes, although we traditionally think of (musical) sound as temporal, it also occurs spatially. She observes: "Our perception of sound depends on positions and barriers, walls and doors, empty spaces and vibrating instruments, discord and simultaneity. The relay and echo of sound depends on space across which sound waves flow and ebb." "Bronze by Gold by Bloom: Echo, the Invocatory Drive, and the 'Auteur' in 'Sirens,'" in *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce*, ed. Sebastian D. G. Knowles (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 229. Of course, the identification of space with the visible and time with the audible is, in some ways, a simplification, since one can encounter "empty" space (the *absence* of the visible) and "silent" sound (the *absence* of the audible).

6. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 459.

7. *Ibid.*, 462.

8. Alfred Mann, J. Kenneth Wilson, and Peter Urquhart, "Canon," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

9. Stuart Gilbert insists that "the *Subject*, is obviously the Sirens' song; the *Answer*, Mr. Bloom's entry and monologue; Boylan is the *Counter-Subject*. The *Episodes* or *Divertimenti* are the songs by Mr. Dedalus and Ben Dollard." He adds that the listener "should be aware of it [the fugue] as a sequence of chords." *James Joyce's Ulysses* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), 253. In my estimation, there is nothing "obvious" (or even logical) about this explanation. The "answer" is traditionally the second half of the subject, there are no "divertimenti" in a fugue, fugal form is certainly *not* built on chordal sequences (the horizontal lines drive the piece), and the song of the Sirens is a significant allusion but hardly the main "subject" of the episode. In addition, Gilbert only outlines five of the "eight regular parts." More recently, Nadya Zimmerman argues that Joyce combines elements of both fugal and canonical models to create an eight-voice fuga of literary prose that replicates the musical quality of simultaneity for the reader. "Musical Form as Narrator: The Fugue of the Sirens in James Joyce's *Ulysses*," *Journal of Modern Literature* 26, no. 1 (Fall 2002): 108–18. While her efforts in graphing the polyphonic interweaving of the eight voices in terms of a musical score provide some useful insights, Joyce's adherence to such a strict form seems unlikely; in addition, eight voices is simply not typical of either fugue or canon.

10. William Snyder Jr., "Tap Tap. Jingle. Tap. Form Is Content in 'The Sirens,'" *ANQ* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 26–27.

11. Brad Bucknell, *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics: Pater, Pound, Joyce, and Stein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 123. Bucknell also notes

that the synthesis of “flight” and “rule” inherent in the term “fugue” point to “a decidedly *intellectual* process of composition” (130), an idea that would certainly have appealed to Joyce.

12. In his short story “The Dead,” Joyce similarly equates fine music (in this case, the strong, firm tones of Miss Julia’s *Arrayed for the Bridal*) with “swift and secure flight.” “The Dead,” in *Dubliners: Text, Criticism, and Notes*, ed. Robert Scholes and A. Walton Litz (New York: Penguin, 1996), 193.

13. James Conely largely agrees with my discussion of the problems inherent in designating “Sirens” as a fugue; however, he attributes part of the problem to “Joyce’s [in]ability to understand and apply musical structure.” “Sounding the Sirens Again: An Evaluation of Musical Structure in the Sirens Chapter of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*,” *Ars Lyrica* 7 (1993): 108. This seems unlikely to me in view of Joyce’s extensive musical background.

14. Zack Bowen convincingly debunks this notion in *Bloom’s Old Sweet Song: Essays on Joyce and Music* (Gainesville: Florida University Press, 1995), 26–27.

15. David Herman suggests that the structure of “Sirens” might effectively be read in relation to the “devices of polyphony and the mechanism of fugal structure developed by Schönberg” in his twelve-tone system. “‘Sirens’ After Schönberg,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (Summer 1994): 482. However, as Bucknell (*Literary Modernism*, 128) notes, Schönberg’s first published twelve-tone work was his *Five Piano Pieces*, which came out in 1923, one year after *Ulysses* was published. Consequently, although Herman draws some useful analogies between the combinatory strategies of Joyce and Schönberg in reconciling space and time, the specific structural parallels are less convincing.

16. Bowen, *Bloom’s Old Sweet Song*, 27. Bowen suggests the *musical* as a possible model for “Sirens,” noting the high concentration of 158 references to forty-seven different musical works within the chapter. While some of these are actually performed in the Ormond bar, others are simply alluded to by the narrator or Bloom. The “Sirens” musical might thus include “its overture and its songs performed literally or symbolically by the principal couple, Bloom and Molly, against the male chorus in the back room; the minor characters, Misses Douce and Kennedy; and Blazes Boylan” (29). Since the musical is by its very nature a conglomerate form, this makes some sense.

17. Conely, “Sounding the Sirens Again,” 115.

18. Bucknell notes, however, that since all of the phrases in the introduction end with periods (or exclamation or question marks), there *is* a certain sense of “completion or closure” to each phrase. *Literary Modernism*, 140.

19. Karen Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style in Ulysses* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), 91.

20. Carl Eichenberger notes that in the chapter introduction, “sounds function primarily in their power to deceive or mislead, as in the Homeric Siren Song.” “‘Words? Music? No: It’s What’s Behind’: Verbal and Physical Transformations in ‘Sirens,’” in *International Perspectives on James Joyce*, ed. Gottlieb Gaiser (New York: Whitston Publishing, 1986), 59. The homonyms are thus significant thematically.



21. Andreas Fischer, "Strange Words, Strange Music: The Verbal Music of 'Sirens,'" in *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce*, ed. Sebastian D. G. Knowles (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 246. My designation of language as "essentially monophonic" is not meant to imply that language excludes any possibility of harmony or simultaneous voicing. Certainly the operation of poetic language on multiple levels through overtones, allusions, echoes, and subtexts might be equated with homophony or musical harmonics.

22. Fischer, "Strange Words, Strange Music," 252. It is also possible that the "clip-clap" and "clapclap" are the sounds from Boylan's horse in the distance, constituting a third voice in the scene.

23. Otto Luening, *The Odyssey of an American Composer: The Autobiography of Otto Luening* (New York: Scribner's, 1980), 197.

24. Bowen, *Bloom's Old Sweet Song*, 29.

25. See chapter 2, "The Bronzegold Sirensong: A Musical Analysis of the Sirens Episode in Joyce's *Ulysses*," of Bowen's *Bloom's Old Sweet Song* for a complete and illuminating discussion on this topic.

26. *Ibid.*, 31–65.

27. Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," in *Image–Music–Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 181.

28. Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and Literary Wagnerism," 105. See Martin's article for a discussion of similarities between "Sirens" and Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*; Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 382, 460.

29. Martin, 105–6.

30. *Ibid.*, 109–11. Martin notes that when Joyce left Trieste in 1920, his library included fifteen books by or about Wagner and numerous others making significant reference to Wagner.

31. William Blissett, "James Joyce in the Smithy of His Soul," in *James Joyce Today: Essays on the Major Works*, ed. Thomas F. Staley (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), 96–134. In this extensive study of Wagner's influence in Joyce's works, Blissett traces Joyce's continually shifting opinion of Wagner over the course of his life.

32. *Ibid.*, 115.

33. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 126. Joyce acquired a copy of Dujardin's novel *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (1888) on a trip to Tours, France, in 1903.

34. William Blissett, "George Moore and Literary Wagnerism," *Comparative Literature* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1961): 59. In 1931, Dujardin published *Le monologue intérieure, son apparition, ses origines, sa place dans l'oeuvre de James Joyce*, in which he looked backward from Joyce to Wagner. Blissett, "James Joyce in the Smithy of His Soul," 113–14.

35. Richard Wagner, *Opera and Drama*, trans. William Ashton Ellis, reprint ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 20.

36. Richard Wagner, *The Art-Work of the Future and Other Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis, reprint ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 154.

37. Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and Literary Wagnerism," 108.

38. Eichenberger, "'Words? Music? No: It's What's Behind,'" 63.

39. Fischer notes that Joyce gives Pat an "ingenious verbal soundtrack" despite his seeming inability to hear or speak (he does not actually say anything in "Sirens"): "Pat is a waiter who waits while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. He waits while you wait. Hee hee. A waiter is he. Hee hee hee hee. He waits while you wait. While you wait if you wait he will wait while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. Hoh" (11:916–19). "Strange Words, Strange Music," 257.

40. Mooney suggests that the shell essentially functions as an "aural mirror," embodying both the visible and the audible in one object. "Bronze by Gold by Bloom," 234.

41. Maud Ellmann, "To Sing or to Sign," in *James Joyce: The Centennial Symposium*, ed. Morris Beja et al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 66.

42. Mooney, "Bronze by Gold by Bloom," 231.

43. Fischer, "Strange Words, Strange Music," 253.

44. Gilbert, *James Joyce's Ulysses*, 256.