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*Title: “It’s in the silence you feel you hear” – Music, Literature, and Melophrasis*

*Therese Wiwe Vilmar*

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#### *ABSTRACT*

The *ekphrasis* dates back to Antiquity and is firmly established as a concept in literary criticism. In 1994 W.J.T. Mitchell defined the modern interpretation of ekphrasis as “the verbal representation of visual representation”. This article discusses a similar intermedial occurrence that is largely overlooked in literary theory: *melophrasis*, which could be defined as the “verbal representation of musical representation”. Using the main arguments of ekphrasis theory, the article engages in a critical dialogue with existing word and music research by Werner Wolf in particular. Instead of focusing on the mediality and formality of music in literature, this article is interested in the reading experience: the musicality evoked by melophrases. The purpose is to suggest an accessible analytical framework for literary scholars, and the article thus suggests two broad melophrastic categories inspired by film music theory and narratology: diegetic (the level of the plot/characters) and non-diegetic (the level of the text/reader). This is demonstrated in two canonical works: a diegetic melophrasis that is the Vinteuil Sonata in Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* (1913-1927), and the non-diegetic fugue chapter ‘Sirens’ in James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922). The article argues that melophrases create aesthetic intermedial reading experiences with a significant musical quality: a feeling of hearing.

#### *I Introduction*

In the musical mayhem of The Ormond Hotel’s concert room, there is a sudden pause. Leopold Bloom finds himself philosophising about the nature of music and reckons: “It’s in the silence you feel you hear”. This occurs in a well-known part of James Joyce’s modernist masterpiece, the novel *Ulysses* (1922) (Joyce, 1994, p. 357). Taken out of its narrative context, Bloom’s line of thought serves perfectly to illustrate the subject of this article: the silent music that appears in (prose) literature. As literary scholars, how do we approach such a phenomenon? How do we grasp the idea of music that can only be experienced through the literary medium, or, you could say, the music without musical signifiers? How do we as readers *feel* we hear – or do we hear at all?

The ‘Sirens’ episode in Joyce’s novel is bursting with descriptions of music that is performed in the fictional concert room. Still, it is the chapter’s formal construction that has been most thoroughly discussed in terms of its musicality. According to Joyce himself, the ‘Sirens’ chapter has been composed as a musical fugue – or “Fuga per canonem” (Gilbert, 1957, p. 240). This is one canonical example of literature being inspired by music. Another example from the same time period and of equal canonical status is Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* (1913-1927). In the part entitled ‘Swann in Love’, a fictional sonata for piano and violin by the fictional composer Vinteuil is described from the perspective of the character called Charles Swann. A little phrase in the Andante movement of the sonata becomes a microcosm of Swann’s love for the woman Odette.

The scholarly study of music in literature connects to the field of word and music studies that was developed in the 1990s in particular. Many scholars and critics have traditionally focused on the relationship between music and poetry. It is easy to see why. Historically, music and poetry have long been referred to as “sister arts”. “[T]he sisters were brought up together and were inseparable in youth” (Brown, 1949, p. 44), as Calvin S. Brown puts it in *Music and Literature – A Comparison of the Arts* originally published in 1948. From an analytical point of view, the rhythm, rhymes, timbre, form, metre etc. in poems translate easily to similar musicological terms. Poetry even serves as librettos in operas or lyrics in pop songs. However, the study of the concert in a novel or a protagonist listening to a song on the radio also takes place in this same field of research – although these intermedial occurrences cannot be approached in the same straightforward manner. One suggestion for a thorough analysis of music in literature is Werner Wolf’s theoretical landmark *The Musicalization of Fiction* from 1999. This serves as an important basis for many further readings of music in fiction. However, by focusing on the mediality and formality of “musicalized fiction”, Wolf’s study also leaves out important aspects such as the musicality of the reading experience. In what follows, I will explore an approach to this diverse phenomenon of music in literature by focusing on the musical idea that is present and readable in the literary texts: the *feeling of hearing*. In a critical dialogue with the existing research and Werner Wolf in particular, I will look at music descriptions in literature through the prism of ekphrasis theory<sup>i</sup> offered by W.J.T. Mitchell (1994), exploring the possibilities of what Rodney Edgecombe in 1993 called *melophrasis* (Edgecombe, 1993). To do this, I need to return to some of the preliminary terminological discussions in the field of word and music studies that – to me – seem to have been left unfinished as the field has developed. Even though the article does not aim to define a strict terminology, I hope to bring these terminological considerations into the present and more culture-oriented contexts of the field. I will demonstrate this through close

readings of excerpts from the above-mentioned modernist works: Proust's 'Swann in Love' and Joyce's 'Sirens' (1922)<sup>ii</sup>. By choosing these texts, I do not intend to contribute to research in the works of Joyce and Proust as such, or to limit my approach to modernist literature or art music. Instead, I wish to discuss and examine the phenomenon of music in literature through two of the most illustrative and well-known examples of that, thus pointing (hopefully) to the importance of the phenomenon. To begin with, however, I will present a rough overview of previous studies of the intersections of music and literature, and then contrast these studies with the idea of ekphrasis – and melophrasis.

## *II The field: reading music through literature*

Even though the two artforms (and fine arts in general) have been discussed and compared since Antiquity<sup>iii</sup>, institutionalised research in music and literature is quite recent. Today, the study of words and music is a diverse and multi-faceted field. Generally speaking, there have been two main theoretical waves: the formalist and the culturalist<sup>iv</sup>. Ever since Brown's comprehensive comparison in 1948, an increasing number of contributions to the field have been made. Most important, perhaps, were the writings of Steven Paul Scher, who analysed the crossings of music and literature from the end of the 1960s to the beginning of the 2000s. Scher established the three categories that are still fundamental today: music and literature, literature in music, and music in literature (Scher, 1982, p. 237). Melophrasis can be placed in the category *music in literature*, and this is the category on which I will focus in what follows. The works of Scher and others<sup>v</sup> led to the founding of The International Association for Word and Music Studies in 1997. In 1999, Werner Wolf contributed to Scher's research with *The Musicalization of Fiction*. In this work, Wolf elaborates a thorough analytical model for analysing what he and Scher call the musico-literary field. These scholars (among many others) are part of the first and generally formalistic wave of word and music studies.

The present wave of word and music studies has rolled in many directions, and the idea of music in literature has been explored vividly in recent years. In particular, the movement of new musicology or cultural musicology<sup>vi</sup> has enabled musico-literary studies to develop from the formalist or positivistic approach to a broader culture-oriented perception of music and literature. For instance, in *Literary Music* from 2006, Stephen Benson makes close readings of music in literature with reference to the "real-life" music in question (Benson, 2006, p. 8). He argues that "each set of verbal fixings of music forms part of a complex discourse by and according to which music is made, received, circulated and valued" (ibid. p. 3). Hence, Benson thus moves away from the question of

musical competence and the traditional analytical discourse in music, and his study includes many kinds of verbal representation of music. Instead of close readings, Gerry Smyth's far-reaching study of "the British music-novel" sets out to map the appearance of music in a number of British novels and the ways in which music expresses human identity (Smyth, 2008). Cameron Fae Bushnell explores a post-colonial perspective on descriptions of music in world literary texts (Bushnell, 2013). Many more scholars have contributed to the field of research with various perspectives and approaches<sup>vii</sup>. One might say that the turn of intermedial research suddenly becomes a new way of looking at "old" mixed media such as the music that appears in plain text.

Both groups of research in this field offer important understandings for the mechanisms existing between music and literature. However, the long-term division of the field into formalism and culturalism seems to be disappearing gradually. This was recently stated by Hazel Smith: "Post-Benson, I think we can afford to be more relaxed about the formalism-culturalism divide within musico-literary discourse and adopt a multifarious range of approaches" (H. Smith, 2016, p. 5). Hopefully, the waning of the importance of the gap means that when we approach this field as scholars, we might be able to free ourselves from identifying completely with one position or another.

The aim of this article is to try and bridge these two paradigms (the formalist and the aesthetic/cultural) without being forced to choose between them or separating them more than has already been done. I will share the formalist and musicological interest by suggesting an accessible analytical framework for literary scholars based on ekphrasis theory. Unlike the formalistic wave, the endpoint of my analysis is not a strict typology or analytical system, but an exploration of the musical qualities in the melophrases and the aesthetic reading experiences they evoke. What I will very loosely call "a musical idea" might transcend the media of sound or text and create an equally musical experience in both media<sup>viii</sup>: musicality, which Emilie Crapoulet describes as "a travelling concept" (Crapoulet, 2009). Hence, I would like to use and revise the ideas proposed by Wolf in particular. Fundamentally, "musicalized fiction"<sup>ix</sup> as he calls it, appears to be an unproductive way of looking at the field. The idea behind the term is that literature is being musicalized. I will argue that as literary scholars, we might look at it the other way around: as music that becomes or is performed by literature. And this demands another approach.

### *III 'Melophrasis' – a mirror of ekphrasis*

There have of course been numerous suggestions for an analytical framework to music that appears in text. Scher worked with two main categories: "Word music" is the formal level of the text (Scher,

1968, p. 3), and “verbal music” is the level of the content/narrative (ibid. p. 8). Wolf points to the easy confusion between these terminologically similar terms (Wolf, 1999, p. 59) and suggests a much more rigid system which is best illustrated by his “diagram III” of musico-literary intermediality (ibid. p. 70). However impressive and thorough this scheme is, it is also highly difficult to apply in an analysis.<sup>x</sup>

Many later scholars tend to avoid the terminological discussion or settle on a term appropriate for their cause. Music in literature has been described as “literary music” (Benson, 2006), “music novel” (Smyth, 2008), “verbally transmitted musical experience” (Delazari, 2018), “musical ekphrasis” (Al-Nakib, 2005), and so on. To paraphrase Shakespeare, you could say that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Or as Gerry Smyth puts it: “the problems raised outnumber the problems solved by any particular formulation” (Smyth, 2008, p. 9). That being said, I find it absolutely appropriate to include this in the new wave of culturalism. An inappropriate term simply neglects what is at stake in literary music descriptions. To agree upon a fitting term is to acknowledge that the phenomenon is an actual object worth studying.

Consequently, I should like to present Edgecombe’s idea of *melophrasis*. As Edgecombe suggests, the field of word and music studies might benefit from some parallel considerations in the field of word and image studies and the acknowledged theory of ekphrasis. He writes:

Ekphrasis, the verbal transcription of artifacts, soon took on a generic identity of its own, but the equally complex task of transposing abstract sounds into words, though attempted in countless works, has not been accorded an ‘institutional’ form. (Edgecombe, 1993, p. 1)

In *melophrasis*, the preposition *ek* in ekphrasis has been replaced by the noun *melos*, meaning melody (ibid. p. 2). Edgecombe defines this as “any verbal effort to evoke the experience of externally apprehended music” (ibid.) and sees it not only as a phenomenon but as a distinct genre in line with ekphrasis. Today – more than 25 years after Edgecombe’s article was published – it seems that the “institutional form” has yet to be established.

Wolf openly criticises *melophrasis* as it privileges *melos* as music; and with its link to ekphrasis theory, *melophrasis* restricts “musicalized fiction” to an “intermedial ‘thematization’” (Wolf, 1999, p. 5). Etymologically, *melophrasis* is a problematic term, since music is not all about melody, and melody is not all about music<sup>xi</sup>. Nevertheless, in practice *melophrasis* might be more useful than Wolf’s scheme<sup>xii</sup>. It stands out owing to several advantages: *melophrasis* sounds like ekphrasis, thus being associated with this phenomenon and incorporating some essential qualities from this field of study. This forces the literary scholar to explore the phenomenon as an actual

analytical object (or even a genre) equivalent to the ekphrasis, appreciating that the presence of music in text makes it much more than “just” literature. At the same time, it differs significantly from ekphrasis: ekphrasis will always be bound to preunderstandings of word and image studies and thereby create terminological confusion<sup>xiii</sup>. Simply put: melophrasis is an operational term.

While ekphrasis is a detailed description of something visual letting the recipient “see” what is not there, melophrasis describes something auditive to make the recipient “hear” what is unheard. In W.J.T. Mitchell’s ‘Ekphrasis and the Other’ in *Picture Theory* from 1994, he defines ekphrasis as “the verbal representation of visual representation” (Mitchell, 1994, p. 152). Mitchell points to three “moments of realization” (ibid.) in ekphrastic readings. The first is *ekphrastic indifference*, the idea that literature can never reveal an image. The second is *ekphrastic hope*, where “the impossibility of ekphrasis is overcome in imagination or metaphor, when we discover a ‘sense’ in which language can do what so many writers have wanted it to do: ‘to make us see’” (ibid.). Finally, *ekphrastic fear* kicks in when “we sense that the difference between the verbal and visual representation might collapse” (ibid. p. 154). According to Mitchell, ekphrasis is not just a binary opposition between the image (the “other”) and the text. Instead, it exists in a triangular dialectic between the image, the text and the audience:

The ekphrastic poet typically stands in a middle position between the object described or addressed and a listening subject who (if ekphrastic hope is fulfilled) will be made to ‘see’ the object through the medium of the poet’s voice. Ekphrasis is stationed between two ‘othernesses,’ and two forms of (apparently) impossible translation and exchange: (1) the conversion of the visual representation into a verbal representation [...] (2) the reconversion of the verbal representation back into the visual object in the reception of the reader. (ibid.)

In this context, it becomes clear that Wolf takes his standpoint from what might be called *melophrastic indifference*. He works from “two conflicting claims: the suggestion of the existence of musicalized fiction vs. the impossibility of such an enterprise” (Wolf, 1999, p. 4). The semiotic impossibility of experiencing music through literature becomes a basis for Wolf’s study<sup>xiv</sup> and resonates through his analyses as a melophrastic indifference that only seldom glimpses a melophrastic hope. According to Mitchell, ekphrastic hope is to be found in “imagination or metaphor” (Mitchell, 1994, p. 152) and this becomes (through its metaphorical status) the very object of Wolf’s most recurring critique of musicalized fiction: “fiction, after all, cannot simply become music, and the ‘musicalness’ of literature in general has often been misused in the discourse of literary criticism as a merely laudatory term of questionable metaphoricity” (Wolf, 1999, p. 4). Wolf’s agenda seems to involve verifying the possibility of fiction being musical. Instead, we could ask whether

music can be experienced through literature – whether literature can evoke a musical idea in the mind of the reader. According to ekphrasis theory, the metaphorical or imaginative aspect of the phenomenon is exactly why readers can hope as well as fear to catch a snatch of the music sounding silently through texts.

Paraphrased from Mitchell:

The **melophrastic** author typically stands in a middle position between the music described or addressed and a **reading** subject who (if **melophrastic** hope is fulfilled) will be made to ‘**hear**’ the **music** through the medium of **the text**<sup>xv</sup>. **Melophrasis** is stationed between two ‘othernesses,’ and two forms of (apparently) impossible translation and exchange: (1) the conversion of the **musical** representation into a verbal representation [...] (2) the reconversion of the verbal representation back into the **musical** object in the reception of the reader.

Ekphrastic texts do speak “to, for, or about works of visual art in the way that texts in general speak about anything else” as Mitchell points out (Mitchell, 1994, p. 159). Semiotically, there is no need for a change of signifiers to describe visual works of art. But translating auditive musical sounds into the sign system of literature can actually change the level of signifiers, as we will see in the analysis of ‘Sirens’ below. Melophrasis works semiotically as well as semantically. By moving the workings of ekphrasis to the workings of melophrasis, literature is not “giving voice to a mute art object” (ibid. p. 153) or creating a “still movement” that freezes the temporal text (Krieger, 1967)<sup>xvi</sup>. Instead, melophrasis works the other way around: it gives music signifieds, and creates referentiality.

My two canonical examples of melophrasis are indeed very different. Proust describes in detail a sonata movement that is experienced by the characters, while Joyce has (at least according to many sources) composed ‘Sirens’ on the musical fugue form. The musical idea in Joyce is therefore as present in the chapter’s content as in its form – on the level of signifiers as well as signifieds. Consequently, I must divide the melophrasis into content and form. I suggest two broad (and somewhat intertwining) categories from film music theory to frame my two examples: diegetic and non-diegetic<sup>xvii</sup>, here transposed to the idea of melophrasis:

- 1) **Diegetic melophrasis:** The appearance and experience of a fictional or real piece of music on the level of characters.
- 2) **Non-diegetic melophrasis:** A narrative based on a musical form or musical idea, experienced on the level of the reader but not necessarily in the world of the characters. This draws upon Edgecombe’s category of “structural melophrasis” (Edgecombe, 1993, p. 17) or Wolf’s “formal and structural analogies” (Wolf, 1999, p. 58).



These two categories also correspond to some extent to Scher's categories of verbal music and word music but are (hopefully) not as easily mixed up. I believe that melophrasis and the two categories can be a broad typology that is easy to model around most cases of music in literature. I find the idea of diegetic/non-diegetic useful, as these categories work across disciplines of music/film/literature.

#### *IV A diegetic melophrasis: Marcel Proust's 'Swann in Love'*

scarcely had the little pianist begun to play when, suddenly, after a high note held on through two whole bars, Swann saw it approaching, stealing forth from underneath that resonance, which was prolonged and stretched out over it, like a curtain of sound, to veil the mystery of its birth – and recognized, secret, whispering, articulate, the airy and fragrant phrase that he had loved. (Proust, 1997, p. 248)

My first example is one of the most widely acknowledged pieces of music in literature: The Vinteuil Sonata in *In Search of Lost Time*. In the part 'Swann in Love', a specific sonata affects the character Charles Swann in a significant way. A "little phrase" becomes an emblem for his love for Odette de Crezy, and Swann actually calls it "the national anthem of their love" (ibid. p. 256). To be precise, it is only the Andante movement (the second movement) of the entire sonata that is described in detail. It is in this movement that the phrase appears<sup>xviii</sup>.

'Swann in Love' is a peculiar constellation of a novel in a novel – the narrator (who I call Marcel) tells the story of Swann and Odette as he remembers it being told to him. Swann's experience of the music is therefore mediated through Marcel's narration. As Gerard Genette defined the narratological structure of the novel: "The *Recherche* is fundamentally an autodiegetic narrative, where, as we have seen, the narrator-hero never, as it were, yields the privilege of the narrative function to anyone" (Genette, 1986, p. 247). In 'Overhearing Diegetic Music in Narrative Fiction' (2018), Ivan Delazari writes that "the principal device of verbal music, its pivotal portal to readerly experience, must be focalization" (Delazari, 2018, p. 229). If this narratological approach were added to Mitchell's ekphrastic (and now melophrastic) *ménage à trois* quoted above, readers might ask with Genette's queries: Who sees? And who speaks? (Genette, 1986, p. 186). It seems that according to Mitchell, the ekphrastic poet (the author) sees as well as speaks. Like Delazari, I find a need to add a speaking and/or hearing subject: the focaliser of music that mediates the musical object from the author to the reading subject. Paraphrasing Genette's terms we might ask: Who *hears*? And who speaks? In 'Swann in Love' it is Swann who hears, but Marcel who speaks.

Firstly, it is important to clarify what is understood by the musicological term "sonata"<sup>xix</sup>, as there are two different meanings behind the complex expression: a *sonata cycle* and a *sonata form*. A sonata cycle is a large work composed of three or four movements that are more or less independent

pieces of music with their own themes, keys, structures and tempi. The first movement is usually an Allegro, a fast movement, in the home key of the work. The second is a slower Andante, often in a different key than the first movement. From there, a sonata cycle will usually continue in a faster dance movement called a Trio or a Scherzo. The final movement, called the Presto, will end the sonata cycle in the home key. In ‘Swann in Love’, we encounter a sonata cycle in F Sharp<sup>xx</sup> (Proust, 1997, p. 241), and the little phrase appears, we are told, in the Andante movement (ibid. p. 242).

The *sonata form*, on the other hand, is a classicistic structure for a single movement. The first, second and last movement of a sonata cycle are often structured as sonata forms. A sonata form usually consists of three sections: Exposition, Development, and Recapitulation. The Exposition presents one primary theme in the tonic (the main key of the movement) and a second theme in another key. The different tonalities of the two themes are the bearing dynamic of a sonata form. These two themes are often described as ‘male’ and ‘female’ – an expressive primary theme and a softer second theme. The sonata form continues through the Development, where the thematic material is developed and transposed. And finally, the Recapitulation collects the themes and brings them back to the tonic.

When describing sonata theory, it is obvious that the macro level of the large sonata cycle is mirrored in the micro level of the sonata form. The cycle is divided into movements, and each movement is divided into different sections. The sections develop the thematic material of the movement concerned, but the same themes can also appear throughout the different movements as references to previous movements. A similar kaleidoscopic structure is what is at stake in Proust: the little phrase reflects the love story of Swann and Odette. The Andante represents the entire Vinteuil sonata, and ‘Swann in Love’ is just a small *movement* in the entire *In Search of Lost Time*.

Pursuing my melophrastic hope of “hearing” the fictional Andante, I will read the sonata closely by collecting the descriptions, not chronologically as they appear in the book, but chronically as they might appear in an Andante movement – attempting to read the melophrasis *as music*<sup>xxi</sup>.

In my initial quote from ‘Swann in Love’, we find that the Andante is introduced with some undefined piano, until “a high note held on through two whole bars” (Proust, 1997, p. 248) introduces the little phrase. This high note is “a sustained *tremolo* from the violin part, which, for several bars, was unaccompanied, and filled all the foreground” (ibid. p. 256) as “a series of high notes” (p. 403). This violin part might be the main theme in the Andante. It is a “narrow ribbon of the violin-part, delicate, unyielding, substantial, and governing the whole” (p. 244) that “formed a bristling bodyguard of sound two octaves above” (p. 310) the little phrase “to welcome it before itself expired,

to keep the way open for a moment longer, with all its remaining strength, that the stranger might enter in” (p. 403).

Then the little phrase approaches “upwards in a flowing tide of sound” (p. 244) while a high note in the violin is still “stretched out over it, like a curtain of sound” (p. 248). Here “infinitely remote, in colour quite different [...] the little phrase appeared” (p. 256) “as in a mountainous country [...] one may distinguish, two hundred feet below, the tiny form of a woman walking in the valley” (p. 310). This phrase might be the second theme: as mentioned above, a more female and much less expressive theme than the main theme, the “tiny form of a woman”. The little “phrase or harmony – he knew not which” (p. 244) appears in “the mass of the piano-part, multiform, coherent, level, and breaking everywhere in melody like the deep blue tumult of the sea, silvered and charmed into a minor key by the moonlight” (ibid.) and shifts to a minor key. The phrase is characterised by “the closeness of the intervals between the five notes which composed it and [...] the constant repetition of two of them” (ibid. p. 408), Swann recognises later on. The movement continues to what might be the exposition: “With a slow and rhythmical movement it led him here, there, everywhere” (ibid. p. 246).

And then, suddenly, having reached a certain point from which he was prepared to follow it, after pausing for a moment, abruptly it changed its direction, and in a fresh movement<sup>xxiii</sup> [...] it bore him off with it towards a vista of joys unknown. Then it vanished. He hoped, with a passionate longing, that he might find it again, a third time. And reappear it did, though without speaking to him more clearly, bringing him, indeed, a pleasure less profound. (ibid.)

The phrase is repeated three times in the Andante movement. It returns again “at the end of the last movement, after a long passage which Mme Verdurin’s pianist always ‘skipped’” (ibid. p. 410). Swann listens to “all the scattered themes which entered into the composition of the phrase” (ibid.) until it appears at the very end of the sonata cycle:

At first the piano complained alone, like a bird deserted by its mate; the violin heard and answered it, as from a neighbouring tree [...] Swann knew that the phrase was going to speak to him once again [...] It reappeared, but this time to remain poised in the air (ibid. p. 411)

After this short reference to previous thematic material in the last movement, the sonata moves on to some other themes: “when the phrase at last was finished, and only its fragmentary echoes floated among the subsequent themes which had already taken its place” (Proust, 1997, p. 412).

To recapitulate: The progress of the sonata seems very much like a sonata form. The main theme is presented in the violin part in a high tremolo switching between different notes. Then the

second theme approaches from an upwards movement in the piano and shifts to a minor key. Here there is a phrase consisting of five tones with close intervals (perhaps even chromatic), two of which are repeated several times. This second theme is repeated and developed three times. Then it disappears during the third movement and reappears in the fourth movement at the end of the cycle. This – to Swann – highly significant phrase appears to be only a part of the second theme in the second movement, played in the piano part and not the more high-pitched and foregrounded violin. This inevitably mirrors his love for Odette, “a woman that did not please me, who was not in my style!” (ibid. p. 446). A typical Proustian paradox: the least noticeable becomes the most important – the very object of desire.

Hopefully, this reading of the Andante movement shows that melophrasis does not have to be restricted to a concentrated fragment, but can permeate long texts. As a reader, however, one meets the sonata in the way it is presented in the novel and not in reconstructions such as this. I work from a reader’s hope of ‘hearing’ the sonata through the fragmented descriptions provided by the musical focaliser. As readers, we experience the metaphorical images of the sonata, the activation of an imaginatively overhearing, just like Delazari suggests (Delazari, 2018, p. 223). But if we dive a bit deeper, how is this narration to be trusted?

First of all, the key is worth noticing. The home key of Vinteuil’s sonata is F Sharp. This key has the maximum possible number of key signatures – six sharps – whereas for example F Sharp minor only has three sharps. In F Sharp major, six out of the seven notes in the scale have been altered, meaning that the pitch of these notes has been raised by one semitone, one half step. To my knowledge there are not many famous sonatas in F Sharp major apart, perhaps, from Beethoven’s Piano Sonata no. 24 in F# Major, Op. 78 (also nicknamed ‘à Thérèse’, which is a title I quite enjoy). The point is that there are not many “real life” sonatas that spring to mind when Vinteuil’s F Sharp sonata is mentioned. The music of Vinteuil is absolute in its literary appearance. This is important, as the very preface of Thomas Schmidt-Beste’s impressive 2010 sonata study defines the sonata as the “epitome of instrumental music”: “Literally translated, a ‘sonata’ is simply a ‘sounding piece’, or, more specifically, a piece written purely for instruments” (Schmidt-Beste, 2011, p. xii). Remarkably, this purest form of instrumental music is the one genre that Proust renders into literature – and without any real-life references to other F Sharp sonatas, it has to be experienced *purely* in its literary form. The most instrumental composition demands a complete verbality in Proust’s work.

With all the alterations, F Sharp major is no more complicated to listen to than “easier” keys such as C major. But there may be a symbolic point in the easy listening of Swann combined with

the difficulty of the key. What Swann hears and Marcel narrates is not what the music contains, and as a focaliser of music he cannot be trusted blindly – or deafly.

The unreliability of Swann as focaliser also becomes clear in the way other listeners perceive the sonata differently than Swann: “[T]he recent publication of Vinteuil’s sonata had caused a great stir among the most advanced school of musicians, but [...] it was still unknown to the general public” (Proust, 1997, p. 250). And to the general public “[i]t appeared to them, when the pianist played his sonata, as though he were striking haphazard from the piano a medley of notes which bore no relation to the musical forms to which they themselves were accustomed” (ibid.). The context of this “recently published work” (ibid. p. 247) is a time of atonal and twelve-tone compositions led by figures like Arnold Schönberg (Burkholder, 2014, p. 814). On the one hand, the sonata seems to appeal to an idea of a classicistic form; while on the other it might express no relations to known forms. Those imaginary sounds that the reader experiences through the ear of Swann are contrasted by the avantgarde nature of the sonata. A mishmash of experiences, like when Swann after a tearful experience of the sonata is met by the Comtesse de Monteriender, who concludes: “‘It’s astonishing! I have never seen anything to beat it ...’ But scrupulous regard for accuracy making her correct her first assertion, she added the reservation ... ‘anything to beat it ... since the table-turning!’” (Proust, 1997, p. 412). One might add to this funny paragraph the point that the Comtesse claims to *see* instead of *hear*.

In *Proust as Musician*, Jean-Jacques Nattiez notices that “the Sonata corresponds to the failed quest of Swann, that of the amateur” (Nattiez, 1989, p. 25). According to Nattiez, *In Search of Lost Time* establishes a hierarchy of the arts from the visual and spatial arts of architecture and painting to the temporal arts of music and literature.

Before arriving at music, we have to proceed via painting. Architecture is at the bottom of the ladder because it is a directly functional art. Painting occupies an intermediate position because it refers to the external world, that is, the world of ideas. It is not surprising, then, that Swann, a critic of painting, should fail, or that the Sonata, in its descriptive phase, should be compared to a painting. (ibid. p. 82)

Swann approaches the sonata from the perspective of an art critic comparing it to colours, visuals and buildings, as well as through bibliographic details. These are some of the “false trail[s]” (ibid. p. 43) that lead Swann away from the truth of the work staged by the narrator Marcel. According to Nattiez, this visual and critical approach of Swann characterises the approach of the amateur, the uninformed critic and not the artist. Nattiez notes that the “true art” for Proust is temporal. The little phrase

is like a microcosm of our relation to the world as inscribed in time and as conditioned by it. In particular, music imitates, in its thematic development, the workings of

involuntary memory, and this analogy is encapsulated in ‘the little phrase’ that returns from one movement to another. (ibid. p. 39)

This reveals a melophrastic fear: the two temporal arts, the two highest in the Proustian hierarchy, are battling to regain Time. In ekphrasis theory, Mitchell exemplifies ekphrastic fear through the decorations of the shield of Achilles in the 18th song of *The Iliad*: the ekphrastic shield might seem like an ornament in the larger story, but the power balance between text and image is brought to a head when it becomes clear that the entire *Iliad* and indeed the entire world is only a fragment in the shield’s decorations (Mitchell, 1994, p. 179). The shield becomes and contains the entire story, and the fear consists in the possible shift of power balance between the text and “the other” – the image. A similar melophrastic fear is at stake in *In Search of Lost Time*: a metaphorical fear that the ‘other’, the musical microcosm, might take over and contain the entire narrative by letting readers ‘hear’. The seemingly ornamental melophrases – and especially “the little phrase” – dominates the entire novel and the quest for time and memory, just as the shield of Achilles contains the quest of *The Iliad*. This melophrasis threatens to make Proust’s work a musical work, to let *music* and not literature be the key to involuntary memories and the decisive way to remember and realise. My reconstruction of the Andante movement was motivated by a melophrastic hope, as I wanted to regain the sonata through its chronological and musicological progress, but in the end it also reveals a melophrastic fear: the inferiority of the literary medium to regain time, the musical dominance, but also the reverse: the absurdity of Swann’s representation of the music, his amateur stand as a focaliser of music. Thanks to Swann’s incompetence, the music (however rich in imagery and metaphors) is reduced to a mere idea – almost a joke. Vinteuil’s sonata and later in the novel Vinteuil’s septet “act as milestones in the Narrator’s discovery of his vocation as a writer, of the nature of the ‘true life’ and of the recovery of Time through the literary work”, as Nattiez puts it (Nattiez, 1989, p. 8). Ultimately, literature is the artform through which the narrator Marcel accesses the absolute truth and regains time, but this is enabled by his experience of music. “[T]he Narrator’s revelation of the artistic absolute would come to him through the medium of a work of music, and [...] this work would be an expansion of the Sonata [the Septet, ed.] which had been the cause of Swann’s failure” (ibid. p. 29). Thus, the melophrastic fear, the threat of the power of temporal diegetic music, the possible insufficiency of the literary medium is always omnipresent in the Proustian search for time.

*V A non-diegetic melophrasis: James Joyce’s ‘Sirens’*

In Proust's novel, the workings of the diegetic melophrasis are mirrored in the non-diegetic structure of the work. These two levels are clearly inseparable. The same is true of one of the best known examples of literature based on a musical form: the chapter 'Sirens' in Joyce's *Ulysses*. Based on bibliographic materials, many scholars have read this chapter as a fugue. A fugue is a baroque musical structure with the main characteristics of being polyphonic, presenting many independent voices at the same time. It consists of subjects (themes) with answers and counterpoints, working with the techniques of imitation, development and repetition.

'Sirens' is an example of what Wolf calls a "formal and structural analogy" (Wolf, 1999, p. 58). When reading the fugal structure in 'Sirens', there is no focaliser of music. An important motivation for reading it as a non-diegetic melophrasis is therefore the bibliographic material<sup>xxiii</sup>. It is in Stuart Gilbert's *James Joyce's Ulysses* from 1930 that 'Sirens' is described as a concert room at 4 pm with the ear as organ, the art as music, and the technique as *fuga per canonem* (Gilbert, 1957, p. 240). Gilbert's knowledge of this stems from face-to-face discussions with Joyce (ibid. p. ix). Therefore, he reads the fugue quite easily. In analysing the fugal form, Gilbert writes 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 songs by Mr Dedalus and Ben Dollard" (ibid. p. 253). This structure has been reproduced in many analyses of the chapter since then<sup>xxiv</sup>.

The melophrastic reading of the chapter can also be motivated by the many references to music in the chapter, as the plot takes place in a concert room brought to the reader through the musical focaliser of Leopold Bloom among others. The music appears diegetic, and the songs performed in the concert room are described in rich detail.<sup>xxv</sup> Nevertheless, the structural level of the chapter is what usually gets most of the attention. It contains a timbre or tonal colour that almost demands that we read structure and "sounds" instead of plot. One example is the recurrent onomatopoeical "Clappy clap clap" or words and phrases that are repeated and distorted throughout the chapter with assonance, alliterations, end rhymes, nonsense words, staccato sentences, and so on. This is what Wolf calls "Word music". For example:

Bravo! Clapclap. Goodman, Simon. Clappyclapclap. Encore! Clapclipclap. Sound as a bell. Bravo, Simon! Clapclopclap. Encore, enclap, said, cried, clapped all, Ben Dollard, Lydia Douce, George Lidwell, Pat, Mina, two gentlemen with two tankards, Cowley, first gent with tank and bronze Miss Douce and gold Miss Mina. (Joyce, 1994 p. 356)

The chapter works between the diegetic music/sound in the concert room and the non-diegetic musical structure of the text. This fragmented and strange chapter simply has to be approached as a text that *demands something else*.

Wolf analyses the chapter with the main aim of criticising the meaningless term “Fuga per canonem” and determining whether this intermedial experiment is actually a literary fugue (Wolf, 1999, pp. 129-130). Nevertheless, he moves on to an analytical mode that might be melophrastic hope and analyses the chapter thoroughly as an “8 part regular fugue” with eight segments and three voices: treble (the sirens: Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy), tenor (Bloom) and bass (the remaining men) (ibid. p. 131). The main theme is desire (ibid. p. 132-133), and the eight regular parts are the introduction, exposition and six developments (ibid. p. 137). Numerous scholars have contributed to this analytical position, verifying the success of the ‘literary fugue’<sup>xxvi</sup>. But where is the reader in all of this? Where is the melophrastic hope of hearing? As in musicology, the interpretation of the form should not be the endpoint of an analysis.

The *word music* of ‘Sirens’ forms non-diegetic connections across the chapter and makes the text much more than just language. Nadya Zimmerman points out in ‘Musical Form as Narrator’ (2002) that Joyce “inverts the relationship between words and music: musical form in ‘Sirens’ becomes the narrator, while words set that narrative into motion” (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 109). The content of ‘Sirens’ is controlled by the formal method of linking the *sounds* (e.g. the timbre of words, alliterations, rhymes etc.) with the *thematic* material – the semiotic with the semantic. Hence, even though prose is a linear medium, Joyce connects simultaneous plotlines in what Zimmerman calls “verbal simultaneity” (ibid. p. 110).

For example, the two Sirens in the bar are connected to Bloom walking in the street through the sound of words *and* the content (my emphasis): “—O! shrieking, Miss Kennedy cried. Will you ever forget his **goggle eye**? Miss Douce chimed in in deep bronze laughter, shouting: —And your other **eye!**” (Joyce, 1994, p. 333). This scene in the bar happens simultaneously with Bloom walking in the street:

Bloowhose **dark eye** read Aaron Figatner’s name. [...] By Bassi’s blessed virgins Bloom’s **dark eyes** went by. Bluerobed, white under, come to me. God they believe she is: or goddess. Those today. **I could not see**. [...] By went **his eyes**. The sweets of sin. Sweet are the sweets. Of sin. (ibid. p. 334).

In both plotlines (bar and street), the eyes and the sight are articulated. This is continued in the bar: “In a giggling peal young goldbronze voices blended, Douce with Kennedy your **other eye**.” (ibid.), elaborated into “—O **greasy eyes!** Imagine being married to a man like that, she cried” (ibid.).



Jumping again to Bloom in the street, the motif continues: “Married to Bloom, to **greaseabloom.**” (ibid. p. 335) and “[b]y Cantwell’s offices roved **Greaseabloom**” (ibid.). Words and plots are combined, creating a parted plotline that is connected through the development of similar material. This effect regulates the meaning on the level of the plot through the level of the structure. It creates a path for us to read without ever allowing readers to lose the fear of getting lost, either.

Another distinctive use of this technique can be found in the constant “Jingle jingle jaunted jingling” (ibid. p. 329). The sound of the bell interrupts the narrative by the continuous proclamation – and imitation – of the door opening. The diegetic bell motif works onomatopoeically on the non-diegetic level of the text. This is adapted throughout the chapter and is also linked to characters and themes. For example, Blazes Boylan is often described through the bell sound (here just a few examples – my emphasis throughout this paragraph): “With patience Lenehan waited for Boylan with impatience, for **jingle jaunty** blazes boy.” (p. 339), and “[j]ingle jaunted by the curb and stopped” (p. 340). Later it continues: “By Bachelor’s walk **jogjaunty jingled** Blazes Boylan” (p. 347). The bell motif is thematically linked to a little trick where one of the sirens plays a bell attached to her garter (Klitgård Povlsen, 2015, pp. 142-143) watched eagerly by the men at the bar: “*Sonnez! [...] La cloche!*” (Joyce, 1994 p. 343). In this line of association, the French “cloche” on the siren’s garter is combined with the English “clock”: “Clock whirred. [...] Clock clacked.” (p. 342). The clock in the bar is connected to Boylan paying with a coin at the bar, and towards the end of the chapter, Boylan’s “jog jig jogged” bell-like walking is linked to “dandy Boylan socks skyblue **clocks**” (p. 364). This links within a few sentences to “a loud proud knocker, with a **cock** carracarracarra cock. Cockcock” (ibid.). There is only one letter distinguishing “clock” from “cock”, so the connection is complete between Boylan, bell, clock and cock. The clock motif is thus reworked throughout the chapter with the constant reminder of “4 o’clock”: the time when Boylan has his date with Bloom’s wife, Molly. This also embraces the larger themes of desire and sexuality in the chapter, from the siren’s garter to Boylan’s quest for Molly, and is in the end grotesquely emphasised through the insistent “Cockcock”.

A horn motif is similarly evident in the ‘Sirens’ chapter, where several horns appear diegetically such as “seahorn” and wood winds. When Lenehan says to Boylan: “—Got the horn or what?” (ibid. p. 344), the horn motif is linked to the musical as well as the sexual theme: Boylan is in a hurry to visit Molly. This phrase follows Boylan out of the bar: “impatience, ardentbold. Horn. Have you the? Horn. Have you the? Haw haw horn.” (p. 347). The whole chapter itself actually ends

with a kind of horn, or almost a direct opposite sort of horn, as Bloom breaks wind illustrated by a grand onomatopoeia:

No-one behind. She's passed. *Then and not till then*. Tram. Kran kran, kran. Good oppor. Coming. Krاندlkrankran. I'm sure it's the burgund. Yes. One, two. *Let my epitaph be*. Karaaaaaaa. *Written. I have*. Ppprrffrrppff. *Done*. (ibid. p. 376)

The end of 'Sirens' – the iconic fart – makes Wolf reach the conclusion that: "In a musicalized text which 'culminates' in such a bathetic and disharmonious final 'chord' the question may indeed be raised in how far the entire enterprise of musico-literary intermediality is to be taken seriously." (Wolf, 1999, pp. 145-146). Wolf suggests that Joyce's interpretation of a fugue is merely "hot air", if I may paraphrase this freely. Perhaps Joyce meant that by ending with such an ironic statement. On the other hand, one might say that Joyce lets everything become music:

Instruments. A blade of grass, shell of her hands, then blow. Even comb and tissuepaper you can knock a tune out of. Molly in her shift in Lombard street west, hair down. I suppose each kind of trade made its own, don't you see? Hunter with a horn. Haw. Have you the? *Cloche. Sonnez la!* Shepherd his pipe. Policeman a whistle. Locks and keys! Sweep! Four o'clock's all's well! Sleep! (Joyce, 1994, p. 374)

Even comb and tissuepaper you can knock a tune out of. Even horns, a blue-eyed Bloom, doorbells, clocks, cocks, and the breaking of a wind can serve as musical, sounding references, binding together a difficult narrative.

The most important characteristic of a fugue is this polyphony of voices and themes, answering and counterpointing each other. This is also the most central consideration by Wolf in reading 'Sirens': the difficulty in rendering the polyphonic music into linear language (Wolf, 1999, p. 134). Literature consists of signs in temporal order. But the physical limits of the medium and the (im)possibility of creating a literary fugue is not the important point here, either. It is a melophrastic indifference to focus on medial boundaries instead of the transcendent message. Techniques like that of sounds and themes in the examples above are ways to make different lines of plot *seem* and *feel* simultaneous. It might be difficult to hold on to the polyphone character of the fugue when it is mediated from sound to text, but its fundamental imitating expression, the repetitions, the independent voices, and the development of similar themes are effects that literature indeed *has*.

This leads me on to the melophrastic fear. In 'Sirens' there is a substantial melophrastic fear at stake on a very obvious level, because the musicality of language actually threatens to take over the narrative in such a way that it cannot be read or understood. The narrative threatens to be all music, but at the same time it makes literature semiotically inadequate when representing a polyphonic fugue. This fear is not a fear of the emblematic "other" taking dominance, but instead the fear of

language itself collapsing in the meeting with the “other”. Apparently, the nature of the melophrastic fear shifts according to the nature of the work – melophrastic fear does not have a stable definition.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Wolfgang Iser’s reader-response theory of the literary *blanks* might help us examine the melophrastic fear and the aesthetic effects of ‘Sirens’. In his ‘Interaction Between Text and Reader’, the aesthetic object only appears between the intention of the text and the intention of the reader – the text itself is not a literary work until it meets its receiver (Iser, 2006, p. 391). The work exists between two poles: the artistic, which is the writer’s intention, and the aesthetic, which is generated by the reader (ibid.). According to Iser, the process of reading is to fill out the “blanks” that are the structural gaps in the narrative to create an invisible structure in the story (ibid. p. 393). He stresses that

[i]f we are to grasp the unseen structure that regulates but does not formulate the connection or even the meaning, we must bear in mind the various forms in which the textual segments are presented to the reader’s viewpoint in the reading process. (ibid)

Melophrasis is really a blank where *something else* is at stake – a blank that we can fill out as readers with the music that comes to mind. At the same time, ‘Sirens’ is so full of blanks that it becomes difficult to read. These artistically intentional blanks and the word music at the non-diegetic level of the text affect the reading of the plot and create at the same time an aesthetic experience for the reader. As Bloom reflects in the middle of the concert room: “Words? Music? No: it’s what’s behind” (Joyce, 1994, p. 354). In ‘Sirens’, readers must allow themselves to be overwhelmed and rely on the blanks to structure the experience of a polyphonic structure and to experience what a fugue actually can do – repeat, imitate and develop a theme in different voices. The experience of a fugue and the musical idea of a fugue is remediated to literature to push the limits of literature and the competence of the reader. The non-diegetic melophrasis does not have to follow a strictly composed form, as long as it gives an aesthetic feeling of the form at stake. Therefore, I stress the aesthetic pole of “feeling of hearing” and not the artistic pole, as Wolf, Gilbert, and even Zimmerman do when they try to nail down the correct form and verify it. As readers, we cannot physically hear the music, but we can feel it, follow it, and let ourselves be guided by its aesthetic expression.

#### *VI Conclusion: A melophrastic approach*

In Proust’s work, “the absolute is located beyond the scope of the intellect”, Nattiez claims (Nattiez, 1989, p. 61). So, what have I done by trying to analyse the Vinteuil sonata and Joyce’s fugue? Am I not just one more critic, one more amateur, one more Swann following false trails? One more blue-eyed Bloom?

It is no longer possible to believe that meanings reside exclusively ‘in’ a text. As readers we construct meanings; similarly, the writer has invested them in his discourse; but they are not necessarily the same [...] the creative processes have indeed resulted in an *object*, and this object is indeed what we read. (ibid. p. 90)

The process that Nattiez points to is quite similar to that of Iser’s aesthetic and artistic pole. And like Wolf and Gilbert, Nattiez highlights the artistic pole, the writer’s “discourse”. The aim of this article has been to prioritize the aesthetic pole, the *reader’s* discourse, and to emphasise a feeling of hearing: a melophrastic hope of constructing what Nattiez calls a *musical object*.

When Wolf points out that “[i]ntermediality research by definition integrates two scholarly fields, whereas scholars in the majority of cases (and in my case, too) are experts in one field only and mere amateurs in the second one” (Wolf, 1999, p. 6) it is a reader-response consideration. Wolf cannot aesthetically ‘fulfil’ the musicality that is fed into the text from the writer’s artistic pole. The question of whether a melophrasis can be “successful” or “competent” is an ongoing (and melophrastically indifferent) discussion concerning music in literature. The reader and the author are supposedly amateurs in the world of music, so the question of competence is fair. Nevertheless, the musical experience on the aesthetic level of the text depends on how the reader approaches the melophrasis. The concern for competence is redundant, because to read with a melophrastic hope is to appreciate the dialectic between the intention of the writer and the reader, as Iser suggests: not just the musical intention of Proust or Joyce, but the experience that it evokes – the hope of a feeling of hearing through the blanks that literature cannot fill out with musical sounds. It is no false trace to ask what is “avantgarde”, “airy”, “whispering” or “purple” to my ears. To ask how I as reader hear an F Sharp, the sound of a bell, or a comb and tissuepaper. To ask how *I* feel I hear.

I have tried to demonstrate that melophrases are real, aesthetic objects of a certain musicality experienced through the referentiality of language. The diegetic music in ‘Swann in Love’ works primarily through references and metaphoric descriptions. The piano that complains alone like a bird and the violin that answers as from a nearby tree are good examples of the picturesque descriptions of sound. Wolf calls this “imaginary content analogies” (ibid p. 63), and emphasises precisely that they “supply what is tendentially absent in music: a referential content” (ibid.). Diegetic melophrases does not attempt to imitate music or change literature’s own signifiers. As with ekphrasis, diegetic melophrases are indeed merely descriptive. In non-diegetic melophrasis, however, the signifiers are affected by the musical idea. It became clear in the ‘Sirens’ analysis that the imitative and polyphonic style of the fugue affects the words and structure of the text. The musical experience, on the other hand, is created by linking semantic and referential content (e.g. eyes, bells and horns) in this musical

structure. Melophrases does not give voice to any mute object. Instead, the referential content of language seems to create a musical reading path on a diegetic as well as the non-diegetic level.

Even though I have only presented these ideas in two works of Modernism, I hope that it is obvious to scholars of literature that this is a scalable approach, and that the remarkable phenomenon of music in literature (melophrasis) can be encountered in all kinds of literature. Hence, through this analysis of the field and two of the most famous melophrastic occurrences, I suggest that literary scholars may consider the following two things when encountering any melophrasis in any literary text:

- 1) Put away the melophrastic indifference. The impossibility of musicalizing a text to which Wolf points is not a useful approach. Instead of viewing melophrases as “musicalized fiction”, they can be understood as distributions of a musical idea in a new medium – a rephrasing (or even remediation). Therefore, to make room for melophrastic hope and fear is to acknowledge that melophrasis is an object worthy of analysis.
- 2) It seems productive to distinguish between the level of the content (diegetic) and the level of the form (non-diegetic) just as many word and music scholars do.

The fruitfulness of such an analysis depends on a persistent interest in the aesthetic and musical reading experience evoked – instead of the artistic intention or the medial boundaries. In other words, literature is a privileged window into the workings and experiences of music through ourselves as readers as well as through the fictional characters that are the focalisers of music. A melophrasis can be a performance of a musical world in its own right, a silence in which we as readers feel we hear. “Swann was not mistaken in believing that the phrase of the sonata did, really, exist” (Proust, 1997, p. 409). And neither are we, the readers – amateurs or not.

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## AUTHOR DETAILS

**Therese Wiwe Vilmar** (twv@cc.au.dk) born June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1994 is a PhD Fellow at Aarhus University at the Department of Aesthetics & Culture. Her project is entitled “Listening Spaces in Literature: Literary Music Descriptions as Phenomenological Music Analysis”. She holds an MA degree in Comparative Literature and a BA degree in Comparative Literature and Musicology from Aarhus University.

## NOTES

<sup>i</sup> The representation in literature of a work of visual art.

<sup>ii</sup> Mach Smith’s *Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition* also compares these two works as “the two greatest prose epics of the era” (M. Smith, 1995, p. 247), both “novels that aspire to the conditions of music” (ibid. p. 249) in a context of ekphrasis theory.

<sup>iii</sup> A brilliant overview can be found in Paul Oskar Kristeller’s *The Modern System of the Arts* (1951).

<sup>iv</sup> I present this division as a kind of common knowledge. For instance, it is articulated distinctively in Hazel Smith’s literature review of *The Contemporary Literature-Music Relationship* from 2016 pp. 3-7.

<sup>v</sup> For instance Werner Wolf, Walter Bernhart and Lawrence Kramer.

<sup>vi</sup> The study of the culture of music that many scholars in the field of word and music studies turn to. See (for instance) Lawrence Kramer *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800-1900* (1990). Lawrence Kramer has long been a figure that combines the formalities of words and music with a cultural interest, for instance in *Musical Meaning* from 2002.

<sup>vii</sup> See e.g. Eric Prieto *Listening In* (2002), *Phrase and Subject* edited by Delia da Sousa Correa (2006), and *The Musical Novel* (2014) by Emily Petermann.

<sup>viii</sup> This might correspond somewhat to W.J.T. Mitchell’s “idea of imagery” in *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, first published in 1986, where he seeks “to avoid the temptation of thinking about images in terms of images” (Mitchell, 1987, p. 13). Instead, Mitchell studies patterns in the ways people *talk* about images. In the same way, I hope that this “idea of musicality” can avoid talking of music in terms of music.

<sup>ix</sup> A term borrowed from Aldous Huxley’s novel *Point Counter Point*, published in 1928.

<sup>x</sup> For example, it would be easy to conclude that his two main categories of music in literature (“thematization (‘telling’)” and “imitation (‘showing’)” (Wolf, 1999, p. 70)) correspond somewhat to Scher’s two categories on the level of content and form respectively. But this is not the case. Scher’s categories have been split in Wolf’s study into “specific reference to a musical genre or composition (including ‘verbal music’)”, “imaginary content analogies”, “formal and structural analogies”, and “word music”.

<sup>xi</sup> In Aristotle’s *Poetics*, for instance, *melos* is one of six aspects of poetry. Northrop Frye also investigates poetic *melos* in the essay collection *Sound and Poetry* (1957).

<sup>xii</sup> A point I have also observed during teaching: Students seem keen to think of ekphrasis and melophrasis as similar kinds of intermedial relations.

<sup>xiii</sup> Later scholars have argued for a broader understanding of ekphrasis, especially after Claus Clüver expanded the definition in ‘The *Musicedicht*: Notes on an Ekphrastic Genre’ in the first publication of the word and music studies book series (1997). Siglind Bruhn writes about ‘Musical Ekphrasis’ (2020) and analyses two different ekphrases: music representing poetry, and music representing paintings (Bruhn, 2020, p. 346). Mai Al-Nakib, on the other hand, analyses “musical ekphrasis” as music descriptions in novels (Al-Nakib, 2005). From this, two points become clear. Firstly, that ekphrasis is a widely used and useful tool for a broad understanding of different kinds of media represented through other kinds of media – including music in literature. Secondly, that for precisely this reason, ekphrasis can be easily confused, as musical ekphrasis can mean both literature/art representing music (Al-Nakib) and the very opposite: music representing literature/art (Bruhn).



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<sup>xiv</sup> It is not my purpose to compare the medial, semiotic or aesthetic qualities of music and language, as they have already been scrutinized in much research such as the above-mentioned works by e.g. Brown and Wolf, and by critics like Theodor W. Adorno (e.g. in ‘Music, Language, and Composition’).

<sup>xv</sup> I have left out the “poet’s voice” here, as voice in narratological terms has many connotations. I will return to this issue below.

<sup>xvi</sup> Ekphrasis is, roughly speaking, a stand against G.E. Lessing’s famous *Laokoon* (1766). Lessing divided poetry and painting/sculpture “as two friendly, reasonable neighbours” (Lessing, 2002, p. 92) and established the idea of poetry being temporal, shaped by “action”, and painting being spatial, shaped by “bodies” (ibid. p. 81). Murray Krieger argued against Lessing in 1967 and claims that the phenomenon of ekphrasis is capable of freezing a poem and becoming a “still movement” of literature, creating spatiality and stillness in a temporal artform (Krieger, 1967, p. 107).

<sup>xvii</sup> The terms diegetic and non-diegetic/extra-diegetic have their origin in narratology studies by Gerard Genette in *Narrative Discourse*, first published in French in 1972, although Genette uses the term “extra-diegetic”. It was introduced to film music theory by Claudia Gorbman in *Unheard Melodies* (Gorbman, 1987), among others. See also Michel Chion’s *Audio-Vision* (Chion, 1994). In his article ‘Diegetic/Nondiegetic: A Theoretical Model’ from 2009, David Neumeyer presents a comprehensive yet accessible overview of the concept in a newer context, justifying the model’s value and relevance today (Neumeyer, 2009).

<sup>xviii</sup> Obviously, music in Proust’s novel and the Vinteuil Sonata in particular have been analysed a great number of times from different perspectives. Dorothy Adelson studies the origins of the Vinteuil sonata and the “little phrase” through bibliographic material (1942). Cormac Newark and Ingrid Wassenaar take a more critical stand in ‘Proust and music: The anxiety of competence’ (1997). See also J. Ann Duncan’s ‘Imaginary Artists in ‘A la Recherche du Temps Perdu’ (1969), Lawrence R. Schehr’s ‘Proust’s Musical Inversions’ (1982), and Julian Johnson’s chapter on ‘Music’ in *Marcel Proust in Context* (2013). Still, as previously mentioned, I do not wish to enter into a dialogue with Proust scholarship, but merely use the novel as a great and famous example of melophrasis.

<sup>xix</sup> This is, of course, a rather simplified explanation of sonata theory. In musicology, the discussion and history of the sonata is much more complex. See (for instance) Thomas Schmidt-Beste’s *The Sonata* (2011) or Burkholder, Grout, Palischa et al. *A History of Western Music* pp. 505-508 (2014, 9<sup>th</sup> edition).

<sup>xx</sup> In the new Danish translation, the sonata is presented as F Sharp minor: “Monsieur Swann kender måske ikke den sonate i fismol vi har opdaget” (Proust, 2014, p. 33), says Monsieur Verdurin. “Fismol” means F Sharp minor. In the French original, however, M. Verdurin says: “M. Swann ne connaît peut-être pas la sonate en fa dièse que nous avons découverte” (Proust, 1919, pp. 27-28). Here “fa dièse” means F Sharp, while fa dièse mineur means F Sharp minor. This is an important difference, as the main key defines all the other movements of the sonata. I will elaborate on the F Sharp key later on.

<sup>xxi</sup> With the Russian formalists one might say that I present the *fabula* of the Sonata instead of its *sjuzhet* – the story, instead of the discourse.

<sup>xxii</sup> To understand the structure of the sonata, this translation is important. The English “movement” refers in musicology exclusively to the different movements of a sonata cycle. The French original of ‘Un amour de Swann’ reads “Et tout d’un coup, au point où elle était arrivée et d’où il se préparait à la suivre, après une pause d’un instant, brusquement elle changeait de direction, et d’un mouvement nouveau, plus rapide, menu, mélancolique, incessant et doux, elle l’entraînait avec elle vers des perspectives inconnues.” (Proust, 1919, p. 32). Here, “mouvement nouveau” can refer to a movement but also to the tempo or rhythm of the music. If we see this “mouvement nouveau” as a change in tempo, it makes sense in the way that music flows from a “slow and rhythmical movement” to a different tempo. This way, we stay in the Andante movement through a development section. But the point could also be made that this marks the shift from the Andante to the Trio movement. As this description of the sonata is from a flashback in which Swann remembers the time when he first heard the sonata, the entire sonata was performed for Swann, instead of just the Andante movement at the Verdurin’s. However, the shift from one movement to another would usually require a longer pause and more closure of the Andante movement than is described here. In this article, I translate “mouvement nouveau” into a new time, rhythm or tempo, not a new movement.

<sup>xxiii</sup> This phenomenon has been studied by Marcin Stawiarski, who writes about “musicalized paratextuality” (2010). He regards literary paratexts with musical references as performative acts. The ‘Sirens’ as peritext is in itself musical with its reference to Homer’s *The Odyssey*, but the most important aspects are the epitexts telling readers that this chapter is composed as a sort of fugue.

<sup>xxiv</sup> See e.g. Anthony Burgess’ study of *Joysprick* (1973), where he agrees with the structure proposed by Gilbert (Burgess, 1973, pp. 84-85).

<sup>xxv</sup> Zack Bowen offers an extensive mapping of this in *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce* from 1974 – a valuable contribution to scholars interested in the role of music in the writings of Joyce.

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<sup>xxvi</sup> Either a failure or a “successful attempt”, as Scher for instance says (Scher, 1968, p. 7). On the other hand, he does also deem “such a musical analogy” to be “forced or grotesque” (ibid.). Alan Shockley’s *Music in the Words: Musical Form and Counterpoint in the Twentieth-Century Novel* (2009) is critical of the existing fugal readings of the ‘Sirens’ episode. He lines up with Wolf’s “much more successful” (Shockley, 2009, p. 61) analysis, but concludes: “Joyce writes no fugue, nor is there any evidence that he expected to succeed in writing one. What he does do with *Ulysses* [...] is forever change our understanding of how a novel should work, and how close to a musical development prose can become” (ibid. p. 73).

<sup>xxvii</sup> Nor does Mitchell’s ekphrastic fear: it shifts throughout his analyses as a fear of medial “otherness”, a fear of the dominance of an emblematic image, a fear of literature’s insufficiency as medium, a fear of the downgrade of image to literature, and so on.