Hearing, Remembering, Cold Storage, Purism, Evidence, and Attitude Adjustment

By Joseph Dubiel

It seems reasonable to expect music theory to talk about what we hear. Things that we don’t hear have to be talked about, too, of course, if theory is to establish relations between what we hear and the structures, dispositions, and contexts that affect what we hear; but a focus on hearing must be what organizes the discipline (if anything does). And if relations between what we hear and what we don’t hear are to be investigated, then it is probably advantageous to be able to tell the difference.

This is not to suggest that the difference is always going to be fixed. Dominants may be among the things that you hear, while for a beginning student they may only be factors that account for a perception of closure; and for some other listener even this closure may be not quite a percept, but only a factor contributing to a general feeling of comfort with tonal music. This kind of uncertainty about what is audible is not an impediment to theoretical study—it is a subject of study. Flexibility of the boundary between what is heard and what is not is something that music theorists properly cultivate, for ourselves and for the people we try to help.

Sometimes, though, a phenomenon that seems clearly to lie within the scope of music theory does not lend itself to description as an auditory experience: we find ourselves not knowing how to characterize it as something heard, while feeling that we ought to be able to. This state of affairs is disconcerting (or at least I find it so). An instance of it is the topic of this paper. Part of what is disconcerting about this instance is that it is so thoroughly unexotic: it occurs smack in the middle of the standard reper-

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1 Even a highly critical characterization of the discipline like that offered by Fred Everett Maus in “Masculine Discourse in Music Theory” has theory defined by its purporting to be concerned with hearing: “the discourse of mainstream theory, when it is unevocative [of musical experience], . . . seems . . . like a substitute for sensitive, evocative description, an Ersatz even; something that responds, publicly but speciously, to the desire for a shared articulation of musical experience” (Perspectives of New Music 31, no. 2 [Summer 1993]: 276).

2 Mark DeBellis has written usefully about this question in Music as Conceptualization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
toire and is elicited by an analytical strategy that is familiar to the point of
tedium. These very characteristics make it provocative. Not much of what
theorists do escapes disruption if this situation cannot be dealt with.

If we are lucky, some disruption will occur even if it can. My ideas about
how to deal with this problem have less to do with making it go away than
with finding ways to live with it, letting the category of the audible stay ill-
defined and seeing how music theory might adapt. I am going to consider
a situation in which it seems that we must be hearing something but it is
particularly hard to say what, and I will suggest that it is sometimes signifi-
cantly easier and more relevant in such a situation to speak of hearing in a
certain way than of hearing a certain thing. While this possibility first
occurred to me as a tactic for keeping certain musical experiences within
the realm of hearing, as opposed to that of a different kind of mental
activity, I am not sure that my original convictions about the definition of
this realm have survived the experience of working out the idea. Perhaps
there is no need to be anything but agnostic about the distinction between
hearing and not hearing after all.

A little way into the first movement of the Beethoven Violin Concerto,
the peculiar pitch D# intrudes into a placid context. (Example 1 shows the
first theme.) The peculiarity of the pitch plays out in the manner of its
departure: a point is made of its not resolving, and in fact of its not
returning, or being referred to, for a remarkably long time. It is tempting
to say that the piece is trying to see how long it can get away with doing
nothing about D# after its first curious occurrence. 3

Of course this notion of “getting away with” has never been adequately
explained. No one knows exactly—or even approximately—what condi-
tions a piece has to satisfy in order to behave like this, or what failure
would mean. All that this phrase really expresses is the feeling that some-
thing has to be done, that it ought not to be possible simply to drop a
weird note into a piece, do nothing about it, and then carry on as though
everything were just fine. Fortunately we can proceed without knowing
whether any such stricture actually holds, because it must be the case that
responding to this piece involves imagining that one holds, in order to
experience the frisson of hearing the necessity flouted.

In any case, my concern is with our experience of the music between
D#’s departure at the end of m. 10 and its reappearance in m. 65. To the
extent that D#’s first occurrence is problematic—is experienced by us as being

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3 The analysis that follows intersects extensively with that presented in Joseph Dubiel,
“Composer, Theorist, Composer/Theorist,” in Rethinking Music, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark
problematic—we presumably cannot be simply unconcerned with D♯ during the music that follows. Rather there must be some state of mind that we’re in, because we’ve heard D♯ come and go in a way that is not completely satisfactory, from which state we are eventually released when we hear something more satisfactory happen to D♯. It would not seem sufficient to say that we puzzle over D♯ for a moment, move on to other things, and recall D♯ when the piece brings it back. If D♯ really strikes us as disturbing, it would not seem sufficient, either, simply to say that we remember it. It ought to weigh on us continually in some way until it is dealt with.
Is there any way to describe this state of mind as a state of *hearing*? A state of hearing *something*? Or is it a state of another kind—a state of conscious verbal reflection, for example? And if this is so, then are we satisfied for our analytical account of the piece to commit us to a state of mind that is not a state of hearing? Do we have to give such states a regular place in our accounts of listening to music? Does this have any consequences for our conception of our project as theorists?

I take the basic analytical scenario to be a very familiar one. Tovey—whom I think of as representing the conventional wisdom in an intelligent, if undisciplined, form—narrates it with a particular dramatic interpretation. He reads “mystery” into the “astounding” D♯, noting that “Beethoven leaves it unharmonized and carefully avoids moving it in the direction which would explain it away,” until a later phrase “in which the mysterious D♯. . . is now explained away.”4 (Example 2 shows the later passage.) The condition D♯ is left in from m. 10 to m. 65 is one that it wouldn’t be good to leave it in for the entire piece, and even leaving D♯ in that condition for a long time is remarkable. What is problematic is the unexplained state of the D♯; later, D♯ is not just explained, but explained *away.*

Tovey thus seems to be describing a state of rational reflection on a problem (mystery), in search of a solution (explanation)—as though there’s something we need to *know* about D♯ that we can’t know when it happens (like what chord it belongs to that can progress to the dominant) and that we later find out (D♯ diminished-seventh). There is a suggestion, moreover, that until we gain this knowledge we experience D♯’s occurrence as unjustified. Once Beethoven gives us D♯ as part of a chord, apparently, we find comfort in imagining that it could have belonged to that chord on its first occurrence. Exactly when this imagining takes place is a puzzle in itself (and this is a large part of what suggests a substantial admixture of thinking about the music in Tovey’s account of hearing it); but in any case it seems that the “explanatory” passage brings with it some feeling of relief.

The details of Tovey’s text aside, this approach to the piece must seem fairly familiar—a version of a story that we tell about pieces all the time. In

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5 Admittedly the expression “explain away” is a mannerism of Tovey’s, and perhaps should not be overinterpreted; but when he makes the point without this expression, there is still plenty to suggest desired relief from an uncomfortable state: “The mysterious unaccompanied D sharp near the beginning of the Violin Concerto is unharmonized, and flagrantly avoids explanation until a later harmonized passage explains it as an example of sweet reasonableness” (Donald Francis Tovey, “Normality and Freedom in Music,” in *The Main Stream of Music and Other Essays* [New York: Meridian Books, 1959], 197).
Example 2. Beethoven Violin Concerto, mm. 65–73

its bluntest form the story goes like this: D♯ sounds like a wrong note at first, this bothers you, and it stays on your mind until some later event allows you to realize that it wasn’t a wrong note after all. But the story doesn’t have to make such a point of wrongness: if you’re a more urbane sort of analyst, you can say that D♯ has implications far beyond what happens to it at its first appearance, and you experience what happens to it later as the spelling out of these implications. If you’re truly urbane, you might not trouble yourself to regard this elaboration as rectifying any problem: much nicer to regard it as just the gradual exploration of a signal characteristic. But even at this level of refinement, you might feel that something would be wrong with the piece if this exploration didn’t occur—or at least that this exploration counts as praiseworthy finesse, as
the difference between a deep stroke and a cheap shot (an effect "for its
own sake," as people say). What these different stories share is the sense
that a peculiar event early in a piece places some kind of constraint on
what happens later. Between the peculiar early event and the later one
that responds to its peculiarity, we experience some kind of Spannung,
induced by the peculiarity of the earlier event and relaxed by the smoother
fitting of a similar event into a later context.

This Spannung is my main concern. Are stories like this true? How can
you tell? What experience do you have that corresponds to this Spannung?
What is the experience of protracted problematicity? Is this experience
well represented as a need to know something? As a wish to have the
music come back into line with some norm of good behavior that it has
violated? In some other way? Is there a way to represent this experience
that makes clearer how it is part of hearing? Or is the element of extra-
auditory reflection in these descriptions somehow an essential feature of
the experience?

Really I could be repeating the second of my questions—How can you
tell?—as a refrain after every one of the others. The hardest thing in this
business, I often think, is knowing what to introspect for in order to tell
whether you're having the experience that is supposed to go with some
analytical description of a passage. If one theorist said that the D♯ of m. 10
is not resolved in m. 11, because there is no E in the right register; and
another one said that it is resolved, either by octave transfer or by implica-
tion in the harmony, how would you go about deciding which one you
agreed with? Not by looking for something in the score—both these analy-
ses deal with all the available information, although they give two different
descriptions of it. You'd have to form some idea of what experience was
supposed to go with each of these analyses, and then see which was more
like your experience—or, more open-mindedly, try having both experi-
ences to see which one you enjoyed more. If you're like me, you might not
know exactly how to match these descriptions with different experiences,
and you'd have to ask some more questions, particularly about each
theorist's idea of what the experiences of resolution and non-resolution
are like.

As far as I can see, unless you can tell what experience is supposed to
go with a particular structural description, you don't understand the struc-
tural description. This doesn't absolutely mean that the music has to present
itself to you in the terms of the description; but you do have to know what
experience is supposed to correlate with the description. I'm often amazed
by what analysts get away with on this score: in the name of objectivity, I
suppose, they in fact insulate their analyses from empirical evaluation, by
suppressing mention of the experiences that are the analyses' only con-
ceivable explananda. Anyway, this concern applies to every one of my questions, including the main one, which I might now reformulate as: what auditory experience can I recognize as corresponding to a theoretical ascription of Spannung (or problematic mystery, or unresolvedness in some form) between the D#s in mm. 10 and 12 and those in mm. 65 ff.?

One of the kinds of experiences we rely on all the time, for better or for worse, is the experience of something’s sounding right (or not). I think this is a treacherous idea in a lot of respects (the way it sacrifices specific character for vague acceptability, the way it entails a venerative attitude toward the music we analyze), but we do rely on it. Very possibly, the main thing you asked yourself in order to decide whether you heard D# resolved or not in m. 11 was some form of the question “Does it sound right?”—perhaps “Is it OK to go on from here, or do we still have to do something about this?” This is just the kind of question that makes me think that I don’t know whether D# is resolved or not. D# sounds odd, or something—I don’t know how to say it sounds, but I can’t say that it sounds wrong. It sounds peculiar, and I can believe that its peculiarity has something to do with the absence of the E that would resolve D#; but on the other hand, D# never is resolved in this sense, and life somehow goes on. It’s hard to believe that D# persists, demanding resolution (like a suspension) for fifty-odd measures; and yet it’s hard to believe that all it takes to make D# go away for fifty-odd measures is to ignore it.

You can feel the incongruity particularly strongly, I think, if you try to look for the compositional maxim in this passage. Can a composer really get away with what we say Beethoven is doing here—dropping in a foreign note, leaving it unresolved, and doing nothing about it for fifty-odd measures? So what if it does pay off later—how would that be enough to make it OK on the spot? Mustn’t there be some constraint on how it happens on the spot that we’re overlooking—in particular, some constraint on how the odd note gets left behind? Or can we really just take in the odd event and keep it in cold storage until later, no matter what happens in between?

You can see that my funny feeling about the lack of compositional constraint is of a piece with my funny feeling about the idea of listening that it implies. My problem with the idea that Beethoven does nothing

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about D# for fifty-odd measures is essentially a problem with the idea that I
do nothing with D# for fifty-odd measures except remember it as a problem
(or as having once been a problem). As I keep saying, I'm not sure how
remembering D# as a problem is part of my hearing of these fifty-odd
measures.

This means that what I'm looking for is not necessarily some features of
mm. 13–64 that I can recognize as sustaining D#; rather it's a way of
hearing mm. 13–64 that is in some way recognizably conditioned by D#'s
having occurred. I might expect to find some features of these measures
that reinforce my hearing them in this way, of course; I find it hard to
believe that the effect of the passage depends entirely on my propensity to
carry a torch. But I want to be very careful of this expectation. In some
obvious way the point of the passage is precisely to leave it up to me, by
avoiding anything that I can recognize as a reference to my concern. I
don't want my analysis to undermine this by uncovering hidden refer­
ces to D# (at least, I don't want to set out with the assumption that this is
its task); nothing would be more disappointing than to analyze the fasci­
nating absence of D# as an illusion.

To put this another way, if a compositional constraint does follow from
Beethoven’s D# gambit, it isn’t necessarily a constraint to do something,
something that he would only do because of D#. It might be only a con­
straint to do something that lends itself well to being listened to under a
preoccupation with D#. It’s the principle of deadpan humor: if you say
something funny and maintain a dead pan, you are following up your
funny remark, just as surely as you are if your style is different and you say
“Nudge, nudge” or give yourself a rim shot. It just happens that your
follow-up is to do exactly what you would do if you hadn’t said anything
funny. (If you’re really good, we might not know whether you think you
have.) What makes your not following up your remark a follow-up is the
way we perceive it—what we read into it because we’ve heard your funny
remark (or heard your remark as funny).

Now I can update my main question. When I ask about those D#s
waiting for whatever it is they’re waiting for while they’re waiting for it,
I’m really asking what we’re doing to keep them in mind—and then what,
if anything, the music is doing to encourage us.

Before I go to work on this, I want to say two things about why I think
it’s an important problem. The first is that it represents a very general
problem (as I suggested before). There’s an awful lot of musical analysis
out there that deals with passages essentially like this one: passages in
which a brief but striking event (very often the prominent appearance of a
chromatic pitch) provokes some kind of special attention, concern, anxi-
ety, or expectation, that is said to persist through a span of time during which the event is not referred to, until eventually the event is re-evoked and treated more satisfactorily or normatively—or in any case more elaborately—than it was at first, often with the character of an improvement on the earlier treatment.

I’m tempted to say that this is one of the most important paradigms of musical analysis in our professional culture. In tonal analysis, it’s probably next on the list after chord labeling, form labeling, and Schenker analysis (in some order). This struck me a few years ago, when my colleagues and I were writing an analysis exam at Columbia on the first movement of the second Razumovsky quartet, the E minor, and almost every question that survived a screening for excessive “subjectivity” turned out to be about some ramification of the Fs near the beginning. It struck me especially strongly, because I’d got us to use the quartet by arguing that it didn’t channel discussion this way as strongly as the first piece proposed—the first movement of the Appassionata. Of course the students up for this exam consulted Patricia Carpenter’s paper on the Appassionata, which works mostly by reference to the purported consequences of a chromatic move at the beginning. Rightly or wrongly, something like this has come to represent the most common interpretation of Schoenberg’s dictum that “the real idea of a composition” is “the means by which balance is restored” after “a state of unrest, of imbalance” is produced by tones that make “the meaning” of the beginning tone “doubtful.”

A particularly clear and well-known example of reliance on this model is Edward T. Cone’s “Schubert’s Promissory Note”: not only does this kind of reasoning ground the interpretation of the note in question as promising something; Cone also considers this analytical interpretation to be so uncontroversial that it can serve as the vehicle for a further hermeneutic interpretation that is highly controversial (and meant to be). Cone’s later article “Schubert’s Unfinished Business” generalizes the same analytical approach. (I could also mention his Stravinsky paper, outside the tonal repertory, as depending absolutely on the idea of events left as problem-

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atic over considerable spans of time until later events alleviate what was problematic about them.)

In any case, I think some form of this analytical plot—waiting for a problematic event to be attended to—is in use all the time (in tonal music; elsewhere it may be harder to come up with a reading of some early event as problematic). And yet I can’t tell exactly what anyone thinks listeners do during the waiting period.

My other reason for thinking that this is an important question is more ideological. I feel a strong inclination to try and make the answer come out in a certain way, and I don’t fully understand why this would be justified. As I think you can tell, I very much want to represent my disturbed recollection of D♯ as part of my hearing of the music from which D♯ is absent. I feel the urge to try and make my model of listening entirely about listening, a model in which my consciousness is entirely taken up with sonic images. This would entail getting anything that I want to have in mind into the sonic images I entertain.

This is why I’m working so hard to make my concern about D♯ manifest itself in some way I hear the vast span after D♯. If I can’t find such a hearing, then I’m afraid I leave myself relying on a side track of essentially non-musical recall: “Hmm, that’s odd; I’d better keep it in mind,” followed by what I’ve called a period of cold storage, until I can say “Oh, there it is again.” This doesn’t mean that I doubt the possibility of recalling D♯ without having held it in consciousness all the way along. Of course that can happen. But that’s a model better suited to a detail that’s adequately handled by its immediate context, that later turns out to have more of a story; it doesn’t do justice to the feeling that D♯ needs attention. As I’ve been saying, I want to take the unresolvedness of D♯ seriously; and I take this to mean making it part of the sound I’m hearing, not just something I think by the way while listening to something else.

Let me borrow some strong words of Benjamin Boretz’s to indicate the direction of my concern (if perhaps also to overshoot slightly: I don’t know if I can defend a position quite as strong as the one he articulates). Referring to literary experience, in a paper called “Experiences with No

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8 Edward T. Cone, “Schubert’s Promissory Note: An Exercise in Musical Hermeneutics,” 
Names," he speaks of "the possibility of immediate and total interpenetration of text and consciousness." He elaborates the two adjectives: "immediate: that is, unmediated by any supervenient content of consciousness; and total: that is, leaving no part of the consciousness of the experiencing being sentient of its own self as other than the content of having the experiential output of the interpenetration of the text and consciousness."9 Let me paraphrase this into musical terms and condense it a little: "interpenetration of piece and consciousness," in which you're unaware of yourself except "as having" this experience of the piece. To put it bluntly, you don't keep a bit of your consciousness aside in order to talk to yourself about what you're experiencing; you just try to be the experience.

I find this an attractive ideal. I think of myself as standing up for it in wanting to describe the Beethoven Violin Concerto the way I do. But I have to admit that I have a reservation about the ideal—about it's being so ideal. I can wonder whether maintaining it doesn't have an element of pointless purism; or if not pointless, at least strained. As I've worked on the Concerto under the guidance of this ideal, I've sometimes found myself feeling that I was insisting that the hearing I was modeling had to be ideal in the respect I'm talking about, that I just couldn't let it not be. I could not altogether shake the fear that I might be shouting to drown out uncertainty.

What I haven't always felt is that I've been recording my experience, as best I could observe it. Not that I've felt I'm falsifying it, either: it's more that I'm not really sure what my experience is. Either I'm not examining it before I make up my mind about some of the characteristics that my representation of it will have to have, or—and this is more to the point—I don't quite know where to look (or listen) to determine whether my experience matches my description. I mean, how do I know whether I'm remembering D♯ in the way I incline to prefer, or in some other way? (This is a very general version of the question I was asking before, about how you know whether D♯ is resolved or not.) Until I know how to look for an experience to go with whatever I say about D♯, I'm stuck feeling that my position on it may be mostly ideological. (Of all the questions I raise in this paper, this is the one I'd most like to have responses to.)

This question leads me back to the business of modeling a sustained concern with D♯. Think ideological; think strained; think doggedly hanging on to a perspective, come what may—what are you thinking? You're thinking Schenker! Our best elaborated model for holding on to a musi-

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cal percept through time—be the percept problematic or not—is a Schenkerian one. In fact, we could say that Schenker’s theory is about making musical percepts last through time: one of its basic ideas is that when two temporally separated events enter into direct relationship, there is some sense in which the earlier of them persists through the intervening time. More precisely, Schenker maintains this of the relationships that he models through Stimmführungsverwandlungen; relationships without this property are motivic. In English we commemorate this sense of temporal extension by talking about “prolongation” (although this pretty clearly isn’t what Schenker means by the German word Prolongation). Sometimes we think of a harmonic problem, like a dissonant or chromatic tone’s being unresolved, as subject to prolongation in this sense; we describe this as a prolongation of the dissonant tone, and we understand it on the model of an ornamented suspension-resolution in fourth-species counterpoint.

For a series of examples that gradually stretch the suspension model from undeniable plausibility to something more debatable (plausible deniability?), let me turn to the beginning of the slow movement of Mozart’s A-major Piano Concerto K488 (shown in example 3). The melody in mm. 1–2 is compounded of two voices moving in parallel sixths, A-G♯-F♯ over C♯-B-A, staggered to form a series of 7–6 suspensions. In no case, of course, does any of these intervals, seventh or sixth, sound simultaneously; all of these intervals are successions in the melody, and we hear the 7–6 pattern by hearing notes across breaks in the two registral lines. We have no trouble retaining each note of the upper line as a new note of the lower line makes it dissonant, and hearing the next note of the upper line as resolving this dissonance.

When the circumstances are more challenging, this kind of perception shades off. What should we say about the D in m. 3? Does it hang through the half cadence of m. 4, to be picked up and resolved in the second phrase (mm. 5–6)? It’s an attractive idea, since the first chord of the second phrase sounds like the initial F♯-minor triad with a sixth displacing its fifth, and since the phrase makes such a lovely fuss over resolving D to C♯. But would we want to go so far out on a limb as to deny that D is displaced at the half cadence? I like leaving this indeterminate, so that whether a pitch is hanging is not a strictly yes-or-no matter. (I like it for

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10 This is the main point of my paper “What Did Schenker Mean By Prolongation?,” read at the conference Critical Perspectives on Schenker: Toward A New Research Paradigm, University of Notre Dame, 20 March 1994; it is also noted in “‘When You Are A Beethoven’: Kinds of Rules in Schenker’s Counterpoint,” Journal of Music Theory 34, no. 2 (1990): 291–340.
Example 3. Mozart Piano Concerto, K. 488, mm. 1–12

this spot especially, because I hear the upper one of the two parallel voices, A–G♯–F♯, faltering as the lower one, C♯–B–A continues G♯–F♯–E♯ to the end of the phrase: the upper voice misses the step between F♯ and D, and doesn’t make it to C♯—so that I can’t tell whether it still means D or simply has fallen silent.)

I presume that we can’t hang on to notes like this forever, though. For instance, I don’t hear the low E♯ of m. 2 hanging until the entry of the orchestra in m. 12, which is when we first get F♯ in its register (from the second bassoon and contrabasses—not even from the piano). This would be too much of a good thing. I don’t know what it would be like to hear this low E♯ as persisting through all the complexities that follow it, which have nothing much to do with E♯.

If I don’t hear this low E♯ as suspended, though, I’m also not satisfied to say simply that it’s transferred up an octave and resolved there in the next measure. Yes, this happens, and it must have something to do with how the passage doesn’t sound wrong; but leaving it at this doesn’t take low E♯ fully seriously as what it is—an isolated low note, with strong voice-leading implications that are not realized. To take E♯ seriously, I have to find a way of listening to the piano solo that makes room for E♯ to be isolated and
unfulfilled. Here's a brief sketch: the character of the solo is that it moves tentatively, one little step at a time, with all its patterns greatly attenuated, and with a lot of one-of-a-kind details sticking out of it, low E♭ being only one of them—high D in m. 10 being another; this is in contrast to the next few sections, which become progressively more patterned, each devoting more of its time to more exact repetition than the last, until an impasse is reached that is broken by modulation to the relative major.¹¹

You can probably see easily enough how this reasoning transfers to D♯ in the Beethoven Violin Concerto. I can't get very far through the fifty-odd measures hearing D♯ as an implied suspension! But as long as I also can't accept that what happens to D♯ in mm. 10–13 really takes care of it—and I don't want to accept this, for reasons I've expatiated on—I need another model for how D♯ "stays in my ear."

Back when I was talking about deadpan humor, I emphasized that the model I'm looking for is more a model of what I'm doing than of what Beethoven is doing. The implied-suspension model is at least partly a model of what I'm doing, of course—who else is keeping those notes in mind?—but it's a model under which what I do is fairly directly motivated and narrowly constrained by what's in the score.

From one point of view, this is a strength of the implied-suspension model: the relative ease with which we can say what configurations of notes might elicit the perception of a suspension. Fourth-species counterpoint specifies the paradigmatic configurations that elicit this perception; and some rules of transformation give us other configurations that also elicit it, even though they are literally not suspensions by the paradigmatic definition. (Such extension of an attribution to configurations other than the paradigmatic ones is what Prolongation is, by the way.) Once the configurations get too far away from the paradigmatic ones, we don’t know how to go about perceiving a suspension in them. Either we can’t understand the claim that a configuration is a suspension, or we understand it as a metaphor, which means that we have to make up our way of understanding it on the spot. (That’s presumably what you’d have to do if I said that D♯ is suspended for fifty-odd measures and you wanted to give the idea a respectful hearing.)

The limitation of the implied-suspension model is that it addresses itself so directly to the content of my perception, and then gives me so few choices: D♯ is consonant; D♯ persists as a dissonance (in fact or in imagina-

¹¹ See the analysis by Marion A. Guck in "Music Loving, Or the Relationship with the Piece," Music Theory Online 2.2 (March 1996), especially paragraphs 24, 28, and 30. A print version of this paper is forthcoming in the Journal of Musicology 15, no. 3 (Summer 1997).
tion); D♯ is resolved. If what I hear doesn’t fit into those categories, then I can’t describe it. And I know that I’m going to be facing a lot of situations in fifty-odd measures when it will seem forced to say that D♯ persists but deflating to say that it’s resolved. What I need is a model that allows me to classify a wide, incompletely predictable, range of perceptions as perceptible symptoms of my concern with D♯—potentially anything at all, provided that I hear it with reference to D♯.

So here’s my radical suggestion: I’ll just go ahead and talk about being concerned with D♯—that is, characterize my hearing by this concern, rather than by any particular percept that this concern engenders. I’ll just say that for a while after I hear D♯ and find it problematic, I scan whatever comes along for any characteristics it might have that I can imagine as pertinent to the issue of D♯. I set no prior stipulations on what I might find pertinent; in fact my intention is to be as opportunistic as possible in this respect. If I do this, you might say that I’m focusing my modeling efforts on specifying an attitude that I take toward whatever comes along, rather than on specifying what particular entities and relationships I will find in what comes along.

The attitude I’m describing is something very much like preoccupation. When you’re preoccupied, you scan whatever you encounter for its relevance to what preoccupies you. Chances are, you notice something that you might not have noticed otherwise; you notice whatever you notice in a particular way, as it relates to what preoccupies you. What seems salient to you is determined in significant part by your preoccupation.

What might this mean in m. 11 of the Violin Concerto? After the D♯s of m. 10, and in response to them, I hear E missing from the register of D♯. This means that I hear the interval from D♯ to C♯ as peculiar. It’s neither the voice-leading interval that would explain D♯ nor a harmonic interval—so that in some important sense it’s not a real succession, even though it has all the “physical” attributes of a descending major second. (It might be a diminished third, of course, descending from E♭ rather than D♯; but since this hearing would take such a beating in the next two measures anyway I’m going to give it short shrift.) Hearing E missing also means that I hear the whole chord as lying “too low,” which is something I might not bother to notice about it otherwise. The chord’s low registral position is there to notice, certainly, as is its contrast with the range of the woodwinds, as, for that matter, is the roughness and laboriousness of the low strings’ strokes, as contrasted with those of the violins or the timpani. Even the chord’s loudness may be part of it. All these characteristics are there to notice—but perhaps I put them together in this way and invest in the combination because I’ve got so much reason to notice the top note of
the chord as lower than some other note that it might have been (not to say should have been).

It's obvious what this attitude leads to in the next two measures. My preoccupation with D♯ is reinforced by its repetition; and this time when I scan the following chord for E, I hear its upper voices as lying "too high." Perhaps I hear the top voice specifically as much too high—that is, high by more than the upper voice of m. 11 was too low by: by more than one position in the chord. Certainly I hear this chord as escaping from D♯ as the previous chord did not—by absolute range, and more particularly by position in the space defined by the D-major triad. What I mean by this is that the opening wind tune is about descending from A, and particularly from A neighbored by B, and about not getting down through E to close on D. In this context, a note down in the area of D, even a D♯, sounds low in the space; and so, certainly, does a C♯—and especially a C♯ that I hear as too low to be an E. This being the case, I hear the B in m. 13 as escaping the "gravity" of the three measures before.

I am borne out in this perception in mm. 14–15, as the violins, descending from B, begin to show a melodic affinity with the woodwinds of the opening that, up to this moment, I have never considered them to have (they're even in parallel thirds). And the sonority from which they descend is a lot like the winds' sonority in m. 7, with B and G over A. In retrospect, I can hear the upper voices in m. 13 as "accented" by their larger-than-precedented leap out of the range of D♯ and C♯, and I can hear this impulse as playing itself out through the descent of mm. 14–15.

The rhythm that the strings have taken from the drums is playing itself out, too, during these measures, in the low strings' afterbeats. By the time the first violins reach E in m. 16, a lot of the divisions between the music before m. 10 and the music since then have closed. On the largest scale, the voice-leading and registral, and even motivic, synthesis accomplished between m. 13 and m. 16 allows me to hear all the music from the beginning of the movement to the cadence I expect soon as a Satz—rather than as a closed period in the winds followed by who knows what in the strings, which is what it was sounding like for a few measures.

On a smaller scale, of course, measure 16 finally gives me the E that would resolve D♯. This E even belongs to the triad that, on first blush, I might have thought D♯ most strongly suggested that it would belong to, namely II. Actually I don't find the II triad in itself quite so moving as I find the succession of II and V in mm. 16 and 17, because this succession spells out what I can imagine to have been implicit in the use of D♯ to approach a note of V. If you look at the eventual resolution of D♯ in mm. 65 ff., you'll realize that this succession is unpacked there: first the D♯ diminished-seventh chord goes to the dominant a couple of times, but the
dominant with G in the bass; then, in mm. 69–70, it's reoriented toward
the II chord of m. 71, and this finally leads into a strong cadential progres­
sion that in effect closes the ritornello. The arpeggiation up from D♯
through F♯, A, and C~ in mm. 69–70 also connects the range of D♯ to the
range of B. Returning to m. 16, now: it's a nice touch that, during the II–V
succession, the first violins’ descent to A establishes the whole phrase’s
melodic space as explicitly plagal, thus resolving the contrast that struck us
in m. 10.

In light of all this, should I perhaps say that D♯ is resolved by the E of
mm. 16–17? It depends. Under an implied-suspension model, no, I
shouldn't—not unless I'm ready to commit myself to the view that D♯ is
left hanging, is thus in some sense prolonged, all the way from m. 10. Since
it is apparently the dominant against which D♯ would be suspended, I'd
have to be ready to accept the predominant of m. 16 as embellishing a
dominant that lasts from m. 10 through m. 17; and to take the tonic in the
latter half of m. 15 as connecting the dominant to this predominant,
rather than as resolving the dominant (a resolution that would pretty
much do D♯ in). I won't say that this is impossible, but it's a hard trick.

If my model is oriented toward preoccupation rather than “prolonga­
tion,” I have more freedom. I can comfortably say that my preoccupation
with D♯ is considerably alleviated in mm. 16–17, and I can mean some­
thing by this more specific than just that the passage of time has per­
suaded me to give up on D♯. I've been able to give some idea of what it
means, in auditory terms, to remember D♯ as a problem through these few
measures, by showing where besides in harmony and voice leading a con­
cern with D♯ might affect my perception. I have found this easier to do by
concentrating on my attitude—by representing my concern with D♯ as a
preoccupation that I retain, for reasons of choice or temperament, rather
than because it is forced on me by some structural property of
“unresolvedness” that I can demonstrate in the notes. Ultimately I will
want to have more to say about how the notes sustain such a preoccupa­
tion, but meanwhile it is a considerable relief not to have to say how they
force it.

I don't want to make too much of a slogan of saying that I'm describing
an attitude, but I do want to say again that it's a great help to think this
way because, by doing so, I take upon myself more of the responsibility for
what I hear, reducing my responsibility to show how the score causes what
I hear. Even if my attitude is formed in response to the music, still the
tendentiousness of listening that this attitude engenders is mine, and the
sense of the music that results is the product of an interaction between the
score and this attitude, not simply a projection of the score. I can believe
of the score that it is designed to withstand and reward a particular kind
of listening without having to believe that it consists of patterns that automatically induce it.

What I'm calling an attitude or a disposition, I might consider calling an affect, a mood. Why not? I don't see why, in our attempts to model listening, we need to restrict ourselves to those mental activities that most resemble conscious (and even professional) intellectual activity, like "expecting" or "believing to be implied by." It's not more fanciful to speak of ourselves as unconsciously having desires than as unconsciously making inferences—it's probably less fanciful, in fact. The arguments on this subject usually invoke the presumable information-processing function of unconscious processes, but a concern with information in itself doesn't necessarily confine us to talking about beliefs and inferences. Many affective states have quite specific cognitive components. Preoccupation, considered as an affect, might even be said to be defined largely by a cognitive component—by the phenomenon with which one is preoccupied (whether or not by any particular proposition about it).

Nonetheless, one advantage I see in allowing affects, dispositions, attitudes, or moods into our repertoire of theoretical models is the freedom that we would sometimes gain from always having to lead with a specification of what is heard. We may sometimes do better to speak of hearing in a particular way than of hearing particular things. Another advantage may be the freedom we could gain in talking about the onset, maintenance, and relinquishment of ways of listening by modeling them as attitudes rather than necessarily as beliefs. Intuitively, there may be more plausibility, and thus more explanatory value, in the idea of giving up a preoccupation simply by getting over it with the passage of time than with the idea of giving up a belief in this way.

Of course, I intend to do nothing like get over D♯ in the remainder of this paper. I'm going to work as hard as I can to draw out some account of what I'm hearing from what I've said is the way I'm hearing. Because my old question still stands: how do I know I am preoccupied with D♯? Or, what am I hearing that corresponds to the theoretical ascription of a preoccupation with D♯? The move from a percept (like "suspension") to an attitude (like "preoccupation") as my primary characterization of my

12 Conversations with Naomi Cumming helped me to think of this; you can find the point adumbrated in her "Eugene Narmour's Theory of Melody" (review of The Analysis and Cognition of Basic Melodic Structures) in Music Perception 11, nos. 2-3 (July–October 1992): 354–74, especially 359.

hearing doesn’t eliminate the requirement eventually to articulate the content of the hearing. It only enforces the possibility that the formation of that content may be ad hoc rather than principled in any obvious way. Hearing a suspension is a very predictable kind of auditory experience, as well as a predictable response to a certain kind of sonic configuration (in the right context and frame of mind). Taking on a preoccupation may likewise be a predictable response to a certain musical situation, but its consequences in auditory experience are significantly less predictable. These auditory consequences are what I have to work out.

What I like about the analysis that I’ve got already is how it disengages from any direct connection to the pitch (or pitch class) D♯, while remaining plausibly an account of listening under D♯’s influence. I take particular pride in the bonehead simplicity of hearing one chord as “too low” and the answering chord as “too high”—bonehead simplicity as a starting point for some pretty fancy lines of perception, admittedly, but also bonehead simplicity as a confrontation of very fundamental qualities of the sound, to which I’m delighted to have gained such pointed access through such esoteric methodological concerns.

Let me expand on some non-pitch features of the D♯ figure that I’ve already referred to. The figure occurs as an intrusion on the music of a small band—music of a certain understated squareness, imparted largely by the tonic-and-dominant drumbeats that frame the winds’ phrases. This intrusion has the specific form of a deadpan imitation of the drumbeats, on a very unsquare pitch, by the most unlikely instruments (unlikely to imitate a drum, especially to do so by way of entrance). The pitch is hard to interpret: it’s easy to suppose that it must be an alteration of the drum’s tonic that it imitates—that it is some kind of D, that is, and not some kind of E—but the implications of this alteration are not played out in the sequel. Meanwhile, the string basses mediate between the upper strings and the timpani, timbrally and registrally—and they get their pitches exactly right, almost as though the strings’ D♯-A pair were just passing for a version of the drums’ D–A pair. The low strings’ comparatively successful impersonation of the timpani is crucial to the eventual synthesis of the phrase in mm. 14–17, when they “liquidate” the drums’ rhythmic motive as the upper strings make their peace with the woodwinds.

In the long run, though, the violins retain their curious wish to be part of the band’s drum section. The band comes back in m. 43, with a major thematic articulation, and this time the violins do belong to the battery. In fact they lead it, introducing the rhythm “one, two, three, four,” in m. 42. They do a better job with the figure than before, too: they introduce it on the dominant note (the one that the strings always could get right). They
remain responsible for it after the drums and horns join them. (The low strings are still mediating; the violins’ vast improvement moves the mediating position closer to the timpani, which the low strings double, pizzicato.) In m. 50, the drums reclaim the figure, with horns and with trumpets; but even these instruments follow the violins’ lead in confining themselves to the dominant note (and the normalcy of their playing this role is slightly undermined by the minor mode).

If I extend these observations about the unusual behavior of the strings just a little further, I get a way to hear the D♯ figure resonating in the use of the orchestra through the entire ritornello. The two instances of the rhythmic figure, in mm. 10 and 42, are the only things initiated by the strings—until m. 65, when D♯ is harmonized and resolved. Only after this do the strings lead the tutti, in what might be considered the normal manner, into the cadence of m. 77 and the closing theme that ensues.

To make this claim about the strings’ restricted role, I have to finesse two passages. One is the minor-mode version of the second theme (mm. 51 ff.), which I can of course say is not an initiation, relative to the winds’ introduction of this theme in m. 43. The other is the earlier plunge into ∼VI (mm. 28 ff.); this I have to say is an undifferentiated tutti, rather than one led by the strings. I might also say that this passage stands outside the main line of D-major themes: never again in the movement does it occur at this point in what is otherwise an invariable sequence.

To some degree the influence of D♯ persists in the development of its rhythmic motive, no matter where in the orchestra the motive goes. In some sense, it’s with me whenever I find myself bothering to think of the rhythm “one, two, three, four” as a motive. I very well might not bother to think this about the opening drum figure, whose point seems to be precisely its foursquare commonplaceness.14 But the strings gradually defamiliarize this figure for me, give it a more specific identity. The process begins with the low strings’ dissolution of the motive into weak-beat attacks (especially second-beat) in mm. 14–17; these weak beats represent the motive, while the upper strings’ half notes stand for the woodwind tune. When the violins bring this motive back in m. 42, they regenerate it from a weak-beat figure (the one that they have been repeating since the half cadence of m. 35), thereby adding an upbeat inflection to the weak-beat inflection: a strong overlay of “—, two, three, four, one” upon the original “one, two, three, four,” which the drums and brass of m. 50 then

14 To be more precise, I learn to hear “one, two, three, four” as the motive from the strings, and then read this motive back into the opening, in which the drums actually never play exactly this. I owe this improvement to Anton J. Vishio.
ratify decisively. They also make the figure as a whole more definitely an upbeat, after its initial ambiguity.\(^{15}\)

The return of D\(^\#\) in m. 65 is a crux for both the rhythmic line of development and the orchestral one. The figure is put back onto its original footing, "one, two, three, four"; and from then, everything is hearty strong-beat romping until it is time for the soloist to enter. Needless to say, the soloist enters "—two, three, four, one"; and thus do the rhythmic and orchestral issues begin to come together with the fact, of which I haven't yet made much, of the piece being a concerto. All this fuss, remember, comes from an initial funny use of the violins to play drums, while much of the serious work is done by the woodwinds. This restraining of the orchestral violins allows the solo violin to be the first (sometimes the only) string instrument to play most of the major themes: the opening theme (mm. 102 ff.), the second theme (mm. 148 ff.)—but not the minor-mode version of the second theme, which the orchestral violins do play in the ritornello, and to which the solo violin contributes a counterpoint (mm. 152 ff.). The one theme that is introduced by the orchestral violins, the closing theme (mm. 77 ff.), is never played by the soloist.

The soloist's role in the assimilation of D\(^\#\) depends on its being, as it were, even more conspicuously a string instrument than the orchestral strings. In the approach to the second theme (mm. 143–4), the modulation to A major is accomplished with the aid of D\(^\#\), though without any particular allusion to the drumbeat rhythm; and when the violin settles onto E, in the measure preliminary to the theme (m. 143), it doesn't reintroduce the rhythm. Instead it replaces the rhythm with a trill, which it sustains through the entire major-mode statement. I hear this as an unexpected new degree of "violinization" of the figure, far beyond anything the orchestral violins could achieve by imitating the drums. (The solo violin's next long trill, in mm. 205 ff., will be the occasion for reintroducing the figure, and for drastically altering its dynamic, by making the repeated note normal and the following sustained note strange.)

Thus is D\(^\#\)’s charge transferred to aspects of the sound other than pitch, through the orchestral and rhythmic consequences of the violins’ playing at drums; and these, I would suggest, are the compositional facts that sustain Beethoven’s *audacità* of leaving D\(^\#\) alone for so long after such

\(^{15}\) A detailed reading of the opening would have to consider the initial measure as sounding hypermetrically "strong" when it happens, but perhaps "weak" relative to the woodwinds' subsequent entrance—unless, indeed, the strong accent is understood as diffused between the measures. This issue is intricately reopened by the drums between the woodwinds' first and second phrases.
rough treatment. I’m not displeased to have found my preoccupation leading me into such a peculiar pattern of connections among such a peculiar assortment of entities—that’s exactly what I’d hoped it would do. But I feel that I still haven’t passed the acid test, because I haven’t been talking much about the music right after the first theme (mm. 18 ff.). I haven’t been because none of the lines of connection I’ve been exploring yields very much in this music. This is to say that this music is really the music in which D♯ is left alone; what I’ve been talking about is the easy part. And I can still remember my own advice about not wanting to handle D♭ absence by finding D♯ everywhere secretly present.

So: how is D♯ absent from mm. 18 ff.? What experience of the passage corresponds to the claim of some persistent concern with D♯? What in the passage becomes salient by virtue of D♯’s absence?

I’m going to try bonehead simplicity again: what’s salient is the absence of D♯. You wouldn’t bother to notice this if you were starting at m. 18, but in context it’s pretty striking to run into nothing untoward between D in m. 18 and E in m. 20. The theme’s one-step-at-a-time phrasing, its slow unfolding of ostentatiously slight content with an extraordinarily exact and easy-to-follow parallelism between the elaboration of D and the elaboration of E (and then that of F♯), gives an especially strong sense that we’ve got D♯ out of our system—that D♯ isn’t remotely in consideration.

This is a case in which identifying what I hear is especially hard. Saying to myself “Gosh, no D♯” would feel like a kind of failure, for reasons I elaborated earlier. This passage might be the one for which the image of deadpan humor is specifically revealing. In the wake of D♯, perhaps the way to hear the passage is as exaggeratedly innocent in character.

I can point out details that clean the slate in specific respects: that these are woodwinds getting down to the lower part of the triad with no trouble, and that they eventually get back up to A, in thirds (in m. 25), and resynthesize the triad space before the cadence, in a kind of cleaned-up version of the first section’s synthesis. But the way to experience all this is less to remark it than to hear the passage as curiously unengaged with the signal peculiarities of what precedes it.

One of the subtler characteristics of the passage is the relative erasure of weak beats, particularly second beats, as distinctly articulated points. This provides for continuity with the music of mm. 28 ff., and for contrast with the violins’ eventual regeneration of the four-beat rhythm from the weak-beat figure of m. 35 ff. This is another kind of disengagement—from the rhythm one-two-three-four, as it’s begun to be parsed—but we may not be specifically aware of it until it’s reversed.

Measures 28 ff., I wouldn’t call innocent, even if they are disengaged from the opening rhythmically (and orchestrally). At the least, they are
guilty of *every* pitch class outside the D-major scale, in some spelling: F♯ and B♭ in m. 28, E♭ and C♯ in m. 30, and eventually G♯ in m. 34. This means, among other things, that these measures take off from a problematic pitch where there wasn’t ever one in the D–E–F♯ space, between E and F♯. (There was no reason at all to remark the absence of F♯, or for that matter of B♭.) In general, this section so violently separates itself from the issues raised by what precedes that, I must admit, I hardly hear the E♭ of m. 30 as resembling D♯, however preoccupied I may be. I’ll just say that inasmuch as I do hear this resemblance, I hear these measures as a realm in which out-of-register resolution of sensitive notes seems to be less of a problem than it is in the opening, both for E♭ resolving to D in m. 31 and for B♭ resolving to A in mm. 32–33. (I suppose this sense of resolution is facilitated by a general indeterminacy of register, created by the tune’s wide range and by the heavy doublings of the orchestration.)

Through this passage, D minor eventually emerges as an alternative sphere not particularly troubled by D♯. This is what D minor is later, too, in the second theme: the return of D♯ at m. 65 is, on the spot, significantly a return from D minor to D major. I must admit that, in the minor-mode statement, I don’t know what to do with the change from a Neapolitan, in m. 59, to an ordinary II chord in the parallel place in the repetition of the phrase, in m. 63: I have to imagine that this change is to avoid sounding E♭ close to D♯, but I don’t know what to hear. I do know that the definition of D minor as a realm without D♯ (but perhaps with E♭) adds force to the wonderful crux of the development section, in mm. 343–6, in which D is regained as the tonic—D _minor_—by a move from E♭ major, recently tonicized (as VI of G minor), reinterpreted as the Neapolitan, to the dominant of D. The dominant arrives in ⁶ position, so the bass succession is E♭–C♯. This, as I say, is a way of reestablishing the tonic; and it in some sense belatedly vindicates the “Neapolitan” hearing of our D♯ as E♭ (but only in D minor).

The development of two distinct lines along which D major might be disrupted—the line of D minor and the line of D♯—has its reflection in the specific losses of innocence that the theme introduced in m. 18 eventually undergoes. In the exposition, this music turns to D minor—starting over, in that mode, at just the moment when its slow climb D–E _would_ have reached F♯. From this point the soloist carries a second wave of ascent, D–E–F♯, through which much of the work of modulating to A is accomplished (the job is completed by combining F♯ with D♯).

In the recapitulation, this theme finally meets D♯—in a repetition apparently just for the purpose, mm. 400–405. The harmonic progression in these measures is what we’ve thought all along would make the most sense of D♯, namely V/II, II, V. But notice how D♯ is treated. The bassoon
reaches D♯, in its characteristic register, at the top of the scale in m. 401. This D♯ is resolved to E, but not in the bassoon part—in the clarinet part, while in the bassoon it drops a major seventh, as it perhaps did on its very first occurrence. The cellos and basses respond in mm. 404–405, in octaves like the clarinet and bassoon, but with their top octave matching that of the bassoon—and the cellos’ high note is the very C♯ to which D♯ originally moved. So right here D♯ does everything it ever has done or might do, all at once: moves to E without resolving, resolves to E, and falls to C♯. And even the step D♯–C♯ is now embedded in a context in which it’s less than no problem harmonically.16

What I have found most instructive about working out this analysis is the far-flung, heterogeneous, and (as I suggested earlier) ad hoc and unpredictable character of the comparisons, connections, and contrasts that I am led to draw by the open-ended notion of preoccupation. Perhaps my initial apprehension that preoccupation was not a state of hearing is better understood as recognition of this ad hoc character than as recognition of a categorical failure of audibility. That is, the feeling that I didn’t know exactly what it would mean, as an auditory experience, to have D♯ lingering in my ear over a long period of time may have been a response to the difficulty of imagining what it could mean in general: a slowness to see how a sufficient account could be worked out for this particular case. A moral that I might draw is that (contrary to my expectations) there can be excellent reason to acknowledge, as states of hearing that properly concern music theory, many mental states that are not well-defined in any principled way as combinations of those percepts that we know best how to tie to sonic configurations. As long as there is an answer to the question “What is it to hear that?” in each instance that we care about, there may be no need to be able to give an answer for all instances.

This view is most congenial to an essentially pragmatic conception of music theory as seeking above all to enhance auditory experience (less so to one of theory seeking to translate musical experience reliably into some regimented symbols more trustworthy than music). Under this conception, a theoretical posit may serve its purpose by provoking perception—especially perception along lines that you might not have considered before an encounter with the posit: simply put, by getting you to notice

16 There is a remarkable subsidiary plot line involving the bassoons, including at least their prominence in the development section, their joining the strings on the repeated D♯s in the recapitulation, the first bassoon’s role in the passage I’ve just described, and the first bassoon’s star turn in the movement’s coda.
things that you’d otherwise never have thought to listen for. In this enterprise, I have found the image of an open-ended preoccupation—open-ended as to objects and extent—a useful device.

In my exploitation of this device, I am relieved to have found a way to sublimate the purist ambition about which I expressed reservations earlier. Nothing in what I have just said is a reason to back off from the question “What does it mean to hear that?”; there is only an implicit warning against too specific an expectation of how the answer to this question will go. I’d better make sure I’m comfortable with the idea of music theory as ineluctably involving complex, specially made-up stories about how its concepts relate to experience, as opposed to regular reliable translations of these concepts into experiential terms. Moreover, I’d better get comfortable with the idea that figuring out such stories (essentially an interpretive activity) and swapping them have to be central practices, and central occasions for learning, in music theory—and therefore that a bit of theory might be esteemed for the sharpness with which it provokes such invention, just as appropriately as another bit might for the smoothness with which it appears to render such invention unnecessary. And I’d better recommend these views to all my colleagues; which I hereby do.

**ABSTRACT**

What does it mean for the celebrated D#s in the first movement of Beethoven’s Violin Concerto to “stay in one’s ear” during the time between their initial unresolved occurrence and their eventual resolution? What is it to hear such a thing? Or is the relevant experience not to be described as an auditory one?

Supposing that an account of an auditory experience can be given (one is offered), what if it is of such a nature as to seem unsuited to generalization? Then, presumably, occasion will have been found to countenance a music-theoretical posit without consistent auditory significance. Is this acceptable? To what conception of music theory might it be most congenial?