

## REVIEW

GIORDANETTI, Piero. *Kant und die Musik*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005.

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Since the publication of *The Critique of Judgment* 1790, the subject of Kant's relation to music has been an embarrassing issue that scholars prefer not to talk too much about. His third *Critique*, which became an undisputed classic of modern aesthetics, contains several disparaging remarks that convinced many readers that he was not only ignorant of music, but that he might also have harbored some animus against it. Subsequent literature on the topic has not been able to dispel this impression. Most commentators have tried to work around this problem, conceding that Kant was not very musical, but that his conceptual contribution to aesthetics outweighed all other considerations. Eduard Hanslick's later demarcation of the beautiful in music clearly owes a lot to what some interpret as Kant's formalism. But the lack of concrete examples of musical analysis in Kant's discussion leaves open a chasm between the aesthetic subject and the work of art. A lot is said about the transcendental conditions to form a judgment of the beautiful or the sublime, but relatively little is said about the objects and events that causally produce musical aesthetic experience. Edmund Burke's examples of the acoustically sublime were loud noises such as cannon shots, explosions, thunder, crowds shouting. His examples of the acoustically beautiful were soft, delicate and subtle sounds without great contrasts and which could even border on melancholy. Kant, however, disregarded these observations for being merely empirical and psychological. The end result is that besides apparently reducing musical art to a mere play of agreeable sensations, Kant's aesthetics seems to lack any direct connection to music itself.

Piero Giordanetti's book is a vigorous effort to overturn this negative view. In addition, he proposes a reconstruction of Kant's musical aesthetics by delving into his unpublished remarks generally known as *Reflexionen*. He also places Kantian musical aesthetics in its historical-theoretical context, which leads him to discuss the influence that Leonhard Euler and Pietro Verri, for example, may have had on Kant. A further merit of this book is that Giordanetti

debates practically all of the most important previous commentators on this subject. It is important to point out that most of the secondary literature on this subject is made up of short articles that do not always dialog with one another. Articles by authors such as Carl Dahlhaus, H. M. Schueller, Giselehr Schubert, Peter Kivy, Jens Kulenkampff, Hermann Parret, and Martin Weatherston are basically position papers in which a personal view of Kant's musical aesthetics is presented very much in the style of a monologue (or in a direct dialog with Kant himself). By taking the discussion to the level of a book-length treatment, Giordanetti has the space and opportunity to engage in major contextual reconstruction and interpretive polemics. All of this makes his book a major contribution to the literature that one should not ignore.

*Kant und die Musik* is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 provides a condensed review of the sources of 18<sup>th</sup> century music theory that Kant relied on to elaborate his own ideas and makes no claim to be a comprehensive presentation of the state of music theory at the time. Giordanetti identifies ten major topics of interest which may be understood as strands that will be further developed in later chapters. In what follows I will summarize each one of these topics.

(1) Obscure representations (“*Die dunklen Vorstellungen*”): This thread is about the disagreement between Locke and Leibniz on obscure ideas.

(2) Imagination (“*Das Bildungsvermögen*”): Giordanetti mentions two issues that are related to imagination. The first one is whether music should be opposed to, or included among, the fine arts (*bildende Künste*). The second issue concerns the formation (*Bildung*) of musical taste in non-European peoples such as the Chinese.

(3) Numerical relations and proportions (“*Zahlenverhältnisse und Proportionen*”): Giordanetti identifies three points that were of central importance for Kant in Pythagoras' mathematical approach to music: (a) the arithmetic harmony of numerical relations, (b) the terrestrial harmony of natural laws and (c) the celestial harmony of the spheres. These three factors are interlocked to explain the musical phenomenon. Giordanetti discusses Euler's contribution extensively, as it shall be important further ahead to clarify the interpretation of a passage in §14 of Kant's third *Critique*. Euler's starting point is an attempt to give a physical explanation of the aesthetic pleasure we experience with music. For him, this pleasure is not the result of mere imagination, but is caused by the perception of order, understood as the numerical relation between tones. Musical order is made of two necessary dimensions. One is harmony, which is created by tones at different frequencies. The other is rhythm (*Takt*), which consists of

the duration of tones. Euler proposes that simple and easily grasped numerical relations are the reason why certain tone configurations are pleasant. Complex relations generate unpleasant sounds. Aesthetic pleasure with music is hence caused by harmonic proportion and rhythm, but Euler adds to this a third factor, which is our ability to understand the composer's intentions and apparent emotional state when he wrote the music. Since the recognition of these three conditions of musical beauty are a task of the understanding, Euler's musical aesthetics can be considered rationalist in that it only gives secondary importance to sensibility. Giordanetti then shows how Euler influenced much of 18<sup>th</sup> century musical aesthetics.

(4) Single tones (*“Die einzelnen Töne”*): Giordanetti explains how aesthetic discussions about single tones had to evolve out of physicalistic approaches. In 18<sup>th</sup> century acoustics, mathematical and physical explanations were treated separately. Euler, for example, distinguished between (a) the phenomenon of single tones, which would receive a physical explanation, and (b) the analysis of the relations between simultaneous tones, which would be dealt with mathematically. Only then would he discuss (c) the psychological dimension, in which we have the sensation of a single tone. Sulzer further developed this aesthetic analysis by distinguishing between simple and composite sensations of tone and by defining the former as impressions of sustained strength or intensity. While the ancients had thought that the spread of sound and smells worked on identical principles, Euler's novel insight was to explain sound as air waves that reach our ears. He understood that pitch depended on the number of oscillations produced by an object and distinguished between sounds, noises and tones. Sounds included all aural phenomena and was subdivided in tones and noises. Tones were sustained, regular and harmonic sounds, while noises were the opposite.

(5) The analogy between tones and colors (*“Die Analogie zwischen Tönen und Farben”*): At the center of this debate was the color-keyboard proposed by L. B. Castel in which keys played tones while raising small colored towels. Most critics remained skeptical of Castel's invention although they accepted that there was some analogy between tones and colors. Kant was aware of this debate and Giordanetti references two sources he certainly used. The first is Locke's discussion about naming simple ideas (*Essay*, Book III, §4) and his example of the blind man who said scarlet was like the sound of a trumpet. The second is Buffon's theory of accidental colors.

(6) Music and culture (“*Musik und Kultur*”): In this brief section Giordanetti mentions Sulzer's and Lord Kames' positive view of music as a means to moral improvement.

(7) Dissonances and “nameless” pains (“*Dissonanzen und 'namenlose' Schmerzen*”): Pietro Verri argued that pleasure could not be defined without understanding its emergence as an absence of pain. The fundamental condition of humanity is to live in pain, which he divided into two classes: physical pain and moral pain. At the root of both types were what he called “nameless” pains because their source and location were obscure. These deeper nameless pains were, nevertheless, the fundamental motivation behind our behavior and taste. We act to find relief from the pain that afflicts us and we prefer music that soothes our frayed nerves. Verri was not interested either in music theory or in acoustics. A follower of Locke's empiricism, his approach was purely psychological. He remarked that people in a state of real moral satisfaction and physical health were noticeably insensitive to music and therefore could live without it if they so wished. On the contrary, sufferers felt a great need to seek solace in musical activities. That, then, was for Verri the sole purpose of music. The most important musical element was melody because it could produce the greatest physical pleasure. But by raising our souls and moving our passions music also brought general psychological benefits.

(8) Music and pleasure (“*Musik und Vergnügen*”): Giordanetti starts this section writing about the effect of music on (a) inanimate objects, (b) animate bodies and (c) the human soul (Wilhelm Derham). Only then does Giordanetti actually start talking about pleasure and Moses Mendelssohn's distinction between (a) sensory pleasure, (b) sensory beauty and (c) intuition of perfection.

(9) Music and affects (“*Musik und Affekte*”): Under this head comes the theory of affects (*Affektenlehre*) which tried to systematize how music stimulated or calmed down our feelings. Giordanetti claims that we cannot be sure about which sources Kant relied on to investigate this subject. The general assumption was that music's power over our feelings came from its effect upon our nervous system. However, there was no adequate definition of what “affects” were.

(10) Music as therapy (“*Musik als Therapeutik*”): since music was supposed to act upon the nervous system, several authors such as Leibniz, M. Mendelssohn, Sulzer and Kant himself believed that it could be used to heal patients that suffered from convulsions.

The task of Chapter 2 is to reconstruct the genesis of Kant's music theory (*Musiklehre*) up till the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This is the longest chapter in the book and is particularly

complicated because the thematic strands that were established in Chapter 1 now have to be followed in Kant's own writings. Giordanetti's sources are: (1) the published works (such as the *Academy Edition*), (2) Kant's own correspondence, (3) manuscript unpublished material and (4) students' lecture notes. He completely rejects the conventional view that there was no development in Kant's aesthetics of music and claims that his research goes beyond a mere comparative study that traces external influences on Kant's understanding of the subject. Indeed, by unearthing this material he insists that it also produces new results. Giordanetti provides us with a very detailed discussion, and it is both diachronic and synchronic (the multiple themes or strands). On a subject as important as the apriority of the judgment of taste in music, he shows that Kant's position went back and forth through the 1770s. These changes were not mere turnabouts on Kant's part, but were justified on grounds that Giordanetti painstakingly tries to reconstruct from the several sources mentioned above. The chapter itself is subdivided into four sections: (I) Early Thoughts (from the 1750s to the 1760s), (II) The early 1770s and the Systematic Project of a Critique of Taste, (III) From the mid-1770s to the Third *Critique*, and (IV) The *Critique of Pure Reason*.

In Section I, Kant's early thoughts on music are collected from several sources. According to Giordanetti, there are three non-musical fields which Kant draws on to approach the subject: logic, physics and anthropology.

Section II deals with the early 1770s and the systematic project of a critique of taste. It is clear to Giordanetti that Kant's intention was to bring the physical studies of tone and music within the scope of a theory of taste. However, to understand the posthumous *Reflexionen* and the lecture transcripts one needs to keep in mind the foundations of his aesthetics of around 1770. First of all, it is necessary to correct the conventional view of previous scholarship, which regards Kant's 1770's aesthetics as purely empirical. The author then goes on to examine nine topics which constitute the diachronic thematic strands of the book. This allows us to see what Kant thought about a particular subject at this point in time.

(1) Obscure representations and the role of unconscious reflexion: Kant's approach to obscure representations is initially anthropological but has important consequences for aesthetics later on. In the Collins anthropology lecture notes, the focus is on the creative capacity behind musical improvisation. Giordanetti stresses that Kant was the first to discuss the role of the unconscious mind in the creative process by extending the Leibnizian concept of unconscious or

obscure representations to cognitive acts themselves. Another important point to keep in mind is the distinction between sensations (*Empfindungen*) and reflection (*Reflexionen*). While the former are perceived by the external senses, the latter require the inner sense and this can lead to confusion. Since Kant had not yet developed his theory of genius, in the *Blomberg Logic* he still thought the philosopher's ability to reason unaided by memory was analogous to the musician's ability to improvise on a theme. The very important point here is that if creativity is understood as an unconscious process, then (a) it cannot be the result of mere association and (b) it cannot be judged by mere sensation either. This implies something like a paradigm shift. Music making both in its passive and active dimensions becomes the matter not of mere feeling and sensation, but of the understanding and its relation to sensibility. Harmony, whether improvised or not, must now be understood as an ideal object that cannot be grasped by sense perception alone without the assistance of the understanding (*Verstand*) and reflection. It is not an objective representation of a sensory process, but the result of the interplay between reflection and sensibility. This exclusion of mere sensation means that neither the outer nor the inner senses can be considered the proper sources of harmony. This shift towards unconscious reflection in the early 1770's is in stark contrast to Kant's views in the 1764 essay on the beautiful and the sublime.

(2) The role of perception and imagination: Kant understood that music perception is not only a matter of hearing but also involves the imagination. Single sensory perceptions must be assembled into a whole by the imagination. This is an innate ability that needs, however, to be exercised. Perception of itself is insufficient for the comprehension of tonal harmony. The reported incapacity of Chinese people to understand European counterpoint indicated to Kant not a deficiency of hearing, but a lack of familiarity with Western cultural forms. The same was true of the visual arts. Kant's term for imagination in this period is *Bildungsvermögen*. It is a constructive ability which is also needed for visual recognition. Giordanetti warns, however, that this imaginative activity is not one of invention (*Einbildung*) as in poetry, but only intuition (*Anschauung*) in the presence of the object and of recall (*Nachbildung*) in its absence.

(3) Lively sensations, imagination and cognition: Giordanetti's source here is *Reflexion 199* (Adickes' date is 1769). It is not only our feelings that are affected by music. Our understanding can also be stimulated by lively sensations that induce our imagination to construct a pleasing fictional world. Giordanetti mentions the will in this context because

although the imagination is independent of the will, it can still be influenced by it. However, his note is too brief to make sense. The title of this subsection is not very helpful either (“*Die unwillkürliche Imagination*”). It is not clear what he means by *unwillkürliche* (involuntary? non-arbitrary?) and the point of this *Reflexion* is supposedly the effect of lively stimuli upon cognition, not the will.

(4) The sublime, intuition and emotion: The relation of this subsection's title (“*Von den eigentlichen Sinnbildern*” or “Of sensory images properly understood”) to its content is not very clear. While accepting Burke's theory of the sublime as a subjective emotion (*Rührung*), Kant added to it the Leibnizian-Wolffian distinction between symbolic (or discursive) and intuitive knowledge, thus producing the general rule that the feeling of the sublime was fundamentally intuitive and that it ceased when discursive thought began. However, Kant warned his students that exceptions to this rule could occur, such as the case of Cambridge Professor Saunderson, who had proven that red was the brightest color although he was born blind. This would show that by means of words and the analogy of sound an impression (*Rührung*) of color could be had without any proper visual sensation of it.

(5) Pleasure (*Vergnügen*): In this somewhat lengthier subsection Giordanetti explains (a) Kant's distinction between the beautiful and the agreeable, the role of (b) the feeling of life (*Lebensgefühl*), (c) charm (*Reiz*), (d) alternation (*Abwechslung*) and (e) affects (*Affekte*) in the aesthetic experience of music. These theoretical clarifications allow him to (f) put the critique of *Tafelmusik* in its proper context.

(6) The appreciation of form: This subsection is the longest (19 pages) and perhaps the most challenging in the book, but its subject is very important, because it deals with the appreciation (*Wohlgefallen*) of form in music. The separation between taste and feeling, appreciation and pleasure dates from the early 1770s. The beautiful must be distinguished from the agreeable because this is the only way to avoid subjectivism and to give aesthetic judgment an objective foundation. Kant's attempt to find an objective basis for aesthetic judgment in the aftermath of the 1770 *Dissertation* also date from this period.

(7) The appreciation of single tones: In the chapter on external senses of his anthropology course, Kant extends the mathematical investigation of music to the question of single tones. Giordanetti quotes the *Parow* transcript to the effect that the proportion of the successive tones is pleasing but that a single tone by itself already pleases (*vergnügt*). He insists that since Kant was

talking in this context about the universally valid judgment of proportion, he actually meant that it delights in the sense of appreciation (*Wohlgefallen*). Giordanetti also quotes the *Philippi Logic*, in which Kant seems to be distinguishing between the mathematical proportion of music that makes it beautiful as an appearance (*Erscheinung*) and the sensations and charm that it arouses. This sensory aspect of single tones would be comparable to the status of the feeling of the sublime because neither of them can be judged on the basis of universally valid rules.

According to Giordanetti, after having made the above distinction, Kant had to decide if (a) the single tone is merely agreeable or (b) it contains formal elements. Giordanetti believes that Kant wanted to confer to single tones the same “objectivity” they possessed in their inter-relations. The major stumbling block to this supposed theoretical intention of Kant's is that single tones are mere sensations (*Empfindungen*) and cannot, therefore, be anything other than subjective. Giordanetti believes that the acoustic fact that a single tone has many vibrations and that it is sufficient to initiate the play of sensations constitutes a formal aspect that can be judged universally. On a more general level this would mean that our hearing confers a unitary structure to the sensory manifold that the soul (*Gemüt*) is capable to grasp. Euler's influence on Kant here is very clear.

An important distinction Giordanetti draws attention to is that between sensation (*Empfindung*) and appearance (*Erscheinung*), which involves reflection. In a normal musical experience we listen actively and reflect on the appearance but when we suddenly hear a noise our attention shifts to the sensation itself.

(8) Music as culture: According to the author, Kant's position remains sympathetic towards music and this attitude is strengthened by his understanding of harmony as something objective and universal.

(9) Tones and colors: Giordanetti stresses that the analogy between tones and colors ceases to be merely physicalistic but now becomes also a matter of mathematical and aesthetic interest.

Section III of Chapter 2 deals with another set of topics, but now from the mid-1770s to the time of publication of the third *Critique*.

(1) The unconscious: Kant understood that there cannot be any invention (*Erfindung*) without previous activity of the unconscious mind. Giordanetti points out that at this time Kant still operated with a concept of invention that encompassed both the arts and the sciences. Later



on it will be restricted only to science. However, Giordanetti interprets this as part of a larger argumentative effort in which Kant tries to accomplish something like a paradigm shift in relation to sensualist British aesthetics and moral philosophy. In the same way that Kant tried to save moral and aesthetic judgment from the arbitrary subjectivity of feeling and sensation by transferring it to the sphere of reflective understanding, Kant would now be using the concept of the unconscious to give an account of artistic creativity that is not limited to enthusiasm as an explanation.

(2) The involuntary imagination: According to Giordanetti, Kant recognized that there was a direct relation between music and imagination, and that the effect of the former on the latter produces relief. But we must keep the anthropological character of Kant's observations in mind and distinguish between imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and fantasy (*Phantasie*). Fantasy leads to excess and is not only independent of the will, but may even go against it. Imagination is at least partially subject to the will. He informs us that the concept of imagination as a productive and involuntary faculty dates from the early 1780's.

(3) The imagination: In the late 1770's and early 1780's Kant made significant changes in the way he understood the role of imagination by using concepts such as those of idea, theme, spirit (*Geist*) and genius.

(4) The system of the arts: Kant's articulation of the imagination with the new concept of genius allows him to establish a system of the arts in which music appears as a fine (or formative, *bildende*) art that deals with themes or ideas of totality.

(5) Music as a play of sensations and its exclusion from the fine arts: Giordanetti warns us that what we just saw about Kant's classification of music as a fine art changes again around 1780 when he adopted a more "objective" or "realistic" criterion as to how the arts "really" (*wirklich*, in Giordanetti's words, p. 115) are connected. He now draws a distinction between the play of thoughts (*Spiel der Gedanken*) of poetry and rhetoric on the one hand and the play of sensations (*Spiel der Empfindungen*) of music and dance on the other. Painting, garden design and sculpture are now far removed from music because the formal common ground has been lost. Kant also adopts a linguistic approach to music which makes the triadic distinction between articulation of words, modulation of tone and gesticulation of gestures. Giordanetti rejects the common scholarly view that Kant conceived music as just an agreeable art in this period and in his *Menschenkunde* (which is the main source for this subsection and is discussed throughout it).

(6) The dissonances: Giordanetti again relies on *Menschenkunde* to show that Kant's understanding of dissonances suffers significant changes after 1775, when he incorporates Pietro Verri's views on the utility of pain for life. During the early 1770's Kant thought that dissonances were (a) a necessary counterpart to musical pleasure and (b) the result of disproportional mathematical relations among tones. Giordanetti's discussion here concerns the changes in (a) after the mid-1770's. Around 1777 Kant abandoned his previous view that pain was something purely negative and which we seek to avoid at all cost in search of pleasure. Under Verri's influence, Kant acknowledges that pain has a positive role in life as a “prickle of activity” (*Stachel der Tätigkeit*) and is also necessary as an explanatory principle in history.

(7) The empirical validity of aesthetic judgment and harmony as a comparative a priori rule: Between the mid-1770's and the mid-1780's Kant adopts an empiricist view regarding the universal and necessary validity of the judgment of taste on the basis of music's mathematical tone relations. He abandons the 1770 *Dissertation*-based attempt to ground the judgment of taste in the apriority of the intuitive forms of space and time and cancels taste from his system. From the mid-1770's onwards Kant launches his critical project which is divided into a theoretical and a practical part. Aesthetics will only be brought back into the system after Kant acknowledges an a priori relation between cognition and feeling (*Gefühl*) in the mid-1780's. During this empiricist interlude Kant confers a priori and “objective” (or as Giordanetti puts it, “*in der Natur der Sache*”) validity to the traditional aesthetic concepts of symmetry, order and harmony. Giordanetti explains, however, that this is just a comparative a priori with merely empirical necessity.

(8) The appreciation of single tones: Giordanetti admits that in some passages of the *Anthropologie-Pillau* (chapter “On poetry as an art...”) and *Reflexion 983* suggest that Kant saw single tones as mere components of a play of sensations (*Spiel der Empfindungen*) in which harmony alone, because of its mathematical relations, can generate appreciation (*Wohlgefallen*). Moreover, beauty requires the representation of the whole, which single tones lack individually. However, Giordanetti insists that one must distinguish between two types of harmony. One would be the conventional one among tones, while the other would be the harmonic structure of single tones themselves. He therefore believes that Kant would have extended the empirically universal and necessary claim of beauty to single tones as well.

(9) Tones and colors: On this topic Kant's views seem to develop consistently without

major changes. His starting point was physics, gradually branching out to anthropology and then aesthetics.

(10) Music as culture: According to Giordanetti, from the mid-1770's onward Kant's views on music's cultural value became, on the one hand, more detailed because he specifies harmony as being the conceptual element that can cultivate the understanding. On the other hand, however, he admits that, as a sensory play, music contributes more to stimulate mind-body (*Gemüt-Körper*) interaction than to promote general culture and moral edification. The everyday experience of observing the lives of poets, musicians, dancers and actors indicated to Kant that they generally lacked a strong moral character. Giordanetti insists, however, that this does not mean that he despised music as a fine art.

In Section IV (*The Critique of Pure Reason*) of Chapter 2, Giordanetti indicates the passages of the first *Critique* that he considers relevant to music. Giordanetti emphasizes that this is important for both systematic and theory-developmental reasons and that it has been unduly neglected. He considers that the two most important passages are the transcendental aesthetics and the anticipations of perception because they deal with cognition of tones, but he also discusses the refutation of Mendelssohn's proof of the perdurance of the soul.

It is in Chapter 3 that we finally come to the problem of music in the *Critique of Judgment*. The previous chapters had a merely preparatory function because they were based on material that was not authorized for publication and which was also fragmentary. Giordanetti now intends to reconstruct Kant's argument and to examine its formal components. This analysis is indispensable to avoid the risk of just presenting a set of propositions without any systematic organization.

Since music is approached from several angles in Kant's works, Giordanetti defines two tasks for his investigation: (a) to reconstruct the content and significance of the theory according to its location in Kant's works and then (b) check if the theory as a whole is consistent. Another aim is to determine if and in what sense music was important to Kant. This chapter is the core of the investigation because it is based on authorized publications.

Giordanetti acknowledges that there is a widespread view that music was of marginal interest to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. However, it is nevertheless true that music is mentioned in several passages. The challenge is to see if one can draw a systematic and interesting theory from them. Topics discussed are the following.

(1) The universally valid judgment of taste about musical pieces: The preface of the *Critique of Judgment* defines the task of its investigation as being of strictly transcendental character and not empirical, anthropological or aesthetic (in the sense of cultivating taste). Giordanetti nevertheless believes that one also must give attention to the empirical-anthropological theory of pleasure (*Lust*). Although the description of the feeling of delight in the agreeable (*Gefühl der Lust am Angenehmen*) is primarily a private, empirical and anthropological subject, it is indispensable to contrast it with the feeling of delight in the beautiful (*Gefühl der Lust am Schönen*).

(2) The object of the pure judgment of taste, the beauty of a composition, and of pure and single tones: In this section Giordanetti wants to examine the problem of the object that is being evaluated in an aesthetic judgment. This issue is not raised in the first and second “moment” of the judgment (quality and quantity respectively) but in the third one (relation). It is not enough to distinguish the agreeable and the beautiful at the level of judgments. One has to do this also at the objectual level. Giordanetti criticizes the common view that Kant rejected all empirical content in the “interest” for the beautiful, much as he did in his moral theory. This is an incomplete view because the agreeable does still have a place in the experience of the beautiful. It has a special role, which is related to the play of cognitive faculties and the relief felt by the subject who judges the beautiful. Giordanetti insists that charm (*Reiz*) is not eliminated from the experience of the beautiful in the *Critique of Judgment*. He concentrates his reading of §14 on the problem of single tones. This allows him to (a) present Kant's critique of empiricist aesthetics, which commits the error of attributing beauty to single sensations (*Empfindungen*) and thereby of accepting charm (*Reiz*) as a foundation for the judgment of taste. It also allows him to (b) refute the conventional view of Kant as a strict formalist who denies any role at all for charm in the appreciation of the beautiful. According to his anti-formalist interpretation, Kant attributes a positive function to charm in that it increases the intelligibility of the musical form and also enlivens its representation while drawing and sustaining our attention to it. Single tones also contribute to the appreciation of the beauty of musical form by stimulating our attention. This non-logical contribution is due to three factors: (a) the multiplicity of tones, (b) their contrast from one another, and (c) their purity. Giordanetti explains that the play of cognition which is at the foundation of the pure judgment of taste operates on a different, higher level than the one in which charm performs its enlivening function. He also emphasizes that this

description of how charm participates in the judgment of formal musical beauty applies to Kant's aesthetics in general. He calls it a reappraisal of the empirical (*Neubewertung des Empirischen*) which harks back to Kant's 1770 ideas about the stimulation of attention. Giordanetti believes that the editorial alteration of §14 in the third edition was nothing short of a disaster because it misled generations of Kant interpreters and therefore devotes two excurses to point out and refute the mistakes of a wide array of previous commentators.

(3) Obscure representations: An important change in Kant's views regarding the role of cognition and the unconscious occurs in the *Critique of Judgment*. Giordanetti notes that although moral conscience (*Gewissen*) is still explained by unconscious activity of the understanding, in the field of taste (*Geschmack*) Kant abandons the distinction between clear and confused representations because it is not a matter of cognition any more, but of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. Giordanetti attributes this non-cognitivist turn to Kant's purge of not only the empirical, but also the conceptual component of the beautiful, which included the idea of perfection. He explains that unconscious thought processes and obscure representations were relevant to Kant only from an epistemological point of view and were supposed to be unrelated to feeling. Kant had previously theorized that the musician's improvisation was a semi-conscious cognitive activity. However, since he now realized that aesthetic judgments could not be conceptual, the cognitivist and unconscious view musical creativity had to be dropped.

(4) Free beauty and the absence of a teleological concept: Kant understood taste as a mood of the soul (*Gemütsstimmung*) which is self-sustained and which has “subjective universal” validity (*subjektive allgemeine Gültigkeit*). Another aspect of taste is that it does not assume any concept of finality (or end, *Zweck*). There is a freedom of the imagination in contemplating artistic form (*Gestalt*). Kant regards instrumental music with or without a theme as an “objective” correlate of the free play of our cognitive faculties. Instrumental music is an example of free beauty because it does not have any concept of finality to determine what it should “represent”. Hence, the free flow of imagination is not hindered. Music pleases us without the mediation of a concept to encompass its variety or to prescribe what would make it perfect. Giordanetti is, therefore, convinced that music falls within the scope of pure aesthetic judgment and that it is judged by the play of imagination and understanding.

(5) The involuntary productive imagination: Kant rejected the view that regular geometric forms such as a circle, square, or cube could serve as the simplest and most certain example of

beauty. By regularity he apparently meant symmetry. Giordanetti explains that this regularity is at the foundation of our concept of an object and that it coincides with geometrical shapes. However, it cannot provide the basis for a free and purposeful entertainment of the soul's powers (*freie, zweckmäßige Unterhaltung der Gemütskräfte*). In light of the content of this section, the title “*Die Annehmlichkeit der Musik*” (The pleasantness of music) is poorly chosen. It should be “The involuntary productive imagination” and should be linked to section 2 of Chapter 1 and sections 2.3 and 3.2 of Chapter 2, which constitute its antecedent stages in the thematic thread.

(6) The feeling of life (*Lebensgefühl*): This section's title is a bit too general (“*Die anthropologische Grundlage des Angenehmen*” or “The anthropological basis of pleasure”). It actually centers on the problem of the feeling of life. Giordanetti's position regarding the relation between the transcendental and the anthropological aspects of aesthetics is that they are complementary in that they shed light upon each other. Just because Kant rejects Burke's empirical approach does not mean that he considers his own anthropological investigations to be worthless from a transcendental perspective. Giordanetti stresses that Kant developed a transcendental definition of life which became a component of his concept of aesthetic pleasure. He also points out that the *Critique of Judgment* still retains a threefold distinction from his previous work between (a) animal (*tierisches*), (b) human (*menschliches*) and (c) spiritual (*geistiges*) types of life (*Leben*). The first relates to pleasure and pain in general, the second to delight (*Lust*) in the beautiful, and the third to the spiritual feeling of awe (or respect, *Achtung*) as a component of the feeling for the sublime. Once this is set straight it is possible to understand how Kant relates the pure judgment of taste to the feeling of life (*Lebensgefühl*). The concept of life, says Giordanetti, should not be confused with that of the body (*Körper*). Moreover, there can be life without consciousness of physical well-being and only with reflexive consciousness of our existence.

(7) Morality and natural beauty: The title of this section is more precise than the preceding ones, but is incomplete, for the first half of the text deals with morality. Giordanetti has to tackle the apparent contradiction between (a) Kant's recognition that taste is conducive to the development of moral character, but (b) the fact that many artists seem to have a weak moral character. After giving this explanation Giordanetti makes a sudden change of subject and starts discussing Windelband's thesis that tone and color are reflexive sensations (*reflektierte Empfindungen*). It is not clear what this has to do with morality, which had been the subject till

now and which does not even appear in the title of the section as a whole. This is discomfiting for the reader. Since tone, color, natural beauty and art *are* mentioned in the title, we may think that we are at last getting to the point of the section. On p. 187, however, he mentions that §42 of the *Critique of Judgment* deals with the distinction between natural beauty and artistic beauty in their relation to moral feeling. Apparently, his intention here is to deny that the contemplation of art is disconnected from moral feeling. Natural beauty does have priority in awakening moral feeling, but this does not exclude art from the moral sphere either. He mentions an § but the number is missing. It later becomes intelligible that Giordanetti is mentioning tone and color because he means to say that Kant is referring to them as secondary properties of objects in nature and not of art. It is, of course, an important point if colors and tones are being examined from the point of view of natural beauty or artistic beauty. But much of this confusion could be avoided if Giordanetti divided his text into adequate paragraphs. There are no paragraph divisions on the whole of p. 187. If his point is true, Kant is treating colors and sounds as a language of nature and not as artistic sensations (*Empfindungen*). Intellectual interest in natural beauty must also pertain to beautiful form and should not concern charm (*Reiz*). Giordanetti notes that there is a difference between (a) the charm of natural tones and colors and (b) the charm of other sensations we receive from natural objects.

(8) The criticism of *Tafelmusik*: Giordanetti admits that Kant's condemnation of this genre underwent no significant change throughout his life, but contends that the main reason for this was not personal animosity. It is true that for Kant mathematical relations among tones provide the foundation for the beautiful in music and that *Tafelmusik* inevitably has such a structure. The composition, Giordanetti reminds us, is the “objective a priori correlate” of the pure judgment of taste. But since its declared purpose is to distract rather than to attract our attention, there is no point in judging or appreciating it. Whatever aesthetic effect the mathematical structure may have is lost on us. Therefore, it belongs to the merely agreeable arts and under no circumstance can be considered a beautiful art.

(9) Music's uncertain place in the hierarchy of the arts: In this longer section Giordanetti quotes and analyses §51 in full and tries to determine what Kant really thought should be the place of music in his hierarchy of arts. Contrary to the conventional view that Kant's assessment of music was simply negative, Giordanetti argues that Kant was actually not quite sure about how to rank music because the issue of whether single tones and colors could be considered

beautiful or not was still undecided. What Kant tries to do in §51 is to show both sides of the issue and examine the arguments for considering music beautiful or just agreeable. Euler's theory remains for Kant the only adequate foundation on which a claim for the beauty of music theory as a structural composition and as single tones could be made. Giordanetti also details points that have been neglected by previous scholarship, principally concerning Kant's understanding of the reflexive character of music comprehension.

(10) Form, morality and culture: This section is a brief discussion of §52, which provides standards to judge the value (*Wert*) of the fine arts. Giordanetti reminds us that form in itself is the essence of art and then adds that it can also serve as a foundation (*Grundlage*) of culture as it promotes learning and morality. Kant does not regard culture and taste as social constructs. To acquire culture we need a moral disposition (*Anlage*) and receptivity to moral ideas associated to artistic forms without any distractions. Giordanetti goes on to discuss the foundations of and the relations between taste, culture, the beautiful and the feeling of the sublime but does not indicate what relevance that would have to music, which appears only in the section's title ("*Musik und Kultur*").

(11) Parallel analysis of music's aesthetic value: This lengthier section undertakes a fruitful examination of §53. Kant's objective is to determine the aesthetic value of each art by using two main criteria: (a) the pleasure (*Gefühl des Angenehmen*) they produce and (b) their capacity to convey moral ideas and to stimulate cognition. Giordanetti's important point here is that the empirical-anthropological analysis of (a) coexists with and does not contradict the transcendental analysis of (b). In his view, most commentators do not realize this parallel structure of Kant's argumentation and tend to overemphasize (a) when it comes to music.

(12) Pleasure again: In this section Giordanetti seeks to refute the conventional view about §54 that Kant's general analysis of music was restricted to the empirical level of physiology and psychology. He claims that this view disregards the context in which Kant pursues these investigations, for he always kept pleasure (*Vergnügen*) and appreciation (*Wohlgefallen*) apart. Giordanetti also blames Kantian scholars for having neglected and misunderstood Kant's very detailed anthropological analysis of charm (*Reiz*), which was included into the *Critique of Judgment* as a complement to his transcendental investigations. Kant's theory of the effect of music on the body does not contradict his aesthetics, for it is empirical and not transcendental.



(13) The formal objective purposiveness of mathematical beauty: This section discusses §62. Giordanetti clarifies Kant's complex distinctions regarding the materiality/formality and subjectivity/objectivity in purposiveness (or adequacy to ends, *Zweckmäßigkeit*). Subjective formal purposiveness underlies taste, the sublime and genius. Objective material purposiveness pertains to teleology. Objective formal purposiveness includes both geometrical forms and arithmetic numbers. Kant argues that geometrical figures cannot be considered beautiful because they involve concepts. Giordanetti proposes that we extrapolate the same argument to the field of arithmetic, for this does have implications for music. Pythagoras, Plato and Sulzer defended the idea that there was an intellectual beauty that manifested divine reason. For Kant this could not be so, for beauty presents a formal purposiveness of the subjective type, not of the objective type. Moreover, he rejected the theological implications of their view. As far as beauty in mathematics is concerned, Kant only allowed for a subjective appreciation (*Wohlgefallen*) that results from a successful proof of a formula, for in this case there is a stimulation of the imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and the understanding (*Verstand*). The formula itself, however, cannot be considered beautiful.

Chapter 4 is the shortest of the book and it deals with the period after the publication of the *Critique of Judgment* in 1790. It contains the following topics.

(1) The postscripts: Giordanetti says that Kant's views on music remained stable and present throughout the period after the publication of the third *Critique*. Music is still related to reflection (*Reflexion*). Composition and mathematical structure also retain their respective roles unchanged.

(2) The correspondence: Giordanetti mentions a letter to composer Johann Friedrich Reichard (October 15, 1790) in which Kant says he would be happy if the principles (*Grundzüge*) that he proposed for the faculty of taste (*Geschmacksvermögen*) could be further detailed and developed by someone more acquainted with its products (*Producte*). It is a pity that Giordanetti does not comment on this more, for it seems to give support to at least two not unimportant points: (a) Giordanetti's own contention that Kant took music more seriously as an art than is generally believed, and (b) the view of the *Critique of Judgment* as a tentative proposal that could be revised in light of later developments in the arts and the works thereby produced. The letter that gets most of Giordanetti's attention is the one to Christoph Friedrich Hellwag in response to two objections. Hellwag's contribution to this debate is discussed earlier

in the book, but since there is no name or subject index, the reader has to leaf through Chapter 1 to find it. It is on p. 38.

(3) The second edition of the third *Critique*: Regarding the second edition of the *Critique of Judgment*, Giordanetti argues that Kant made a very careful revision of the printed copy that was sent to him by his publisher. This is borne out by the correspondence and gives further support to Giordanetti's contention that §14 should not have been altered in the third edition. What Kant did add to the second edition was the infamous “lack of urbanity” remark. Giordanetti maintains that Kant is here referring to disagreeable music with “*lahme Töne*” from an anthropological angle and not to music as an art. He also backs up this argument by citing the examples of Schopenhauer, Lichtenberg, Goethe and Jean Paul, who were all as sensitive to noise as Kant was.

(4) Other writings: Giordanetti mentions two later writings which are of interest. The first is the essay *On a Recently Prominent Tone of Superiority in Philosophy* of 1796 and the second text is the essay on perpetual peace (1795).

The aesthetics of music has suffered for centuries from neglect that has not always been benign. Giordanetti is probably right that Kant did not despise music, for otherwise he would not have even given himself the trouble to explore its aesthetic dimension. However, this does not change the crucial fact that it remained a very marginal subject for him. This is perfectly understandable and excusable in light of Kant's unparalleled overall achievement. *Kant und die Musik* is certainly a very important contribution to both Kantian studies and musical aesthetics. My suggestions for a future revised edition are that (a) the subtitles be better adjusted to the content of the sections they refer to; (b) that more frequent paragraph separation be considered to facilitate the reader's burden of following Kant's intricate arguments; (c) that a name and subject index be added; and (d) that a conclusion be appended to the book. The author keeps a low profile throughout the whole text except for his blunt rebuttals of other commentators' interpretations. This is perhaps just a matter of necessity, for the addition of personal commentary could easily double the book's length. But at some point the reader interested in music and philosophy needs some kind of assessment of Kant's views that puts them not only in their historical context as Giordanetti does, but also gives us a sense of how plausible they are from the standpoint of the music and philosophy of our own time.