As Julian Horton's provocative discussion of the tension between modern methodologies of interpretation and the traditional claims of analysis suggests, writing about music is a frustrating enterprise. To a great extent, the difficulty arises from the performative nature of music as well as from the inherent ambiguity of music's meaning. The subject is elusive. Music is diachronic for the listener, the reader, and the performer. The accumulated experience of an event counts, as does each unit of experience in a sequential unfolding as each occurs. So too does the expectation, the imagined work. The interaction, in anticipation, encounter, and recollection, of psychological dimensions with acoustic variables alters the stability of the objects of interpretation and analysis. Roger Sessions was reputed to have remarked that the best performance of the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven, the only one he considered adequate, was the one he heard in his head while reading the score. What was he referring to and what was he hearing? Did what he heard remain the same, even to him, when he repeated the experience? Even in the act of recollection by an individual, there is a nasty instability to the subject.

When one looks at the printed or manuscript page, is there an ideal or even minimum adequate sounding equivalent on which we all might agree? Does one construct an ideal mental image which is then imagined as heard as one reads, or does one piece together sonic fragments and even memories of actual hearings that become adapted into coherent anticipations of a future real or potential event? Is one's imagination predictive or even sufficient in terms of what notation implies? Given the multiplicity of synchronic events, on what basis does one assign priority in the mental construct of sound? A written text in a novel may be complex, but overtly only one word sounds or follows at a time. Which event and what sound or even manner of violin or piano playing is implied or foregrounded by either the whole text of a Beethoven sonata or any specific moment? How might we, using language, reconcile several readers' accounts of their contradictory anticipations of sound? An oft-repeated question of conductors is: what do they hear when
"reading" a score? As Pierre Boulez aptly surmised, do not all too many reduce the mutiplicity of variables into an artificial linear sequence? Furthermore, how can one account for the spatial dimensions of any real or imagined sound based in reading a score or hearing a work? Does every ear gravitate or settle, so to speak, on the same phenomenon at any given moment of time? That such problems exist with language and written texts is of less help than one might think, perhaps because of the sequential monopoly of single words following one upon the next, as in Homer (whether the Homeric poems are viewed as a transcribed oral performance or a through-composed text). In linguistic texts, a commonsense presumption of a fundamental comprehensibility and stability in terms of meaning persists with some authority, despite efforts to debunk that idea. There are, if not fewer competing variables, each with more specificity. That does not contradict Elias Canetti's quip that there is no more destructive cliché than the claim that language communicates. The expectation remains reasonable. After all, written texts are subject to summaries and reformulations using language. One can hardly summarize or restate a work of music in quite the same way, except perhaps in the form of transcription, reduction, or orchestration.

What is curious about the intensity of the debate over musical analysis is that once one abandons a Schenker-like claim to normative correctness, to truth, or even to priority based on a printed text, robbing music of its spatiality and performative reality, most of the argument could well cease. Nothing is more informative and suggestive than the sort of traditional musical analysis that frequently comes under attack now, even though it is neither normative nor complete, but partial. From a performer's point of view, analysis is interesting insofar as it suggests strategies for creating a work through performance. Analysis ponders routes to selective hypotheses regarding meaning. Furtwängler read Schenker closely. Even though his performances may not make those connections obvious, something remarkable and influential probably took place. From the marginalia in the books of analysis in his library, it is clear that the pianist Claudio Arrau studied analytical accounts of the music he played. For the historian, analysis, viewed as a historically contingent enterprise, can provide a bridge between music and specific intellectual and social circumstances to which a work of music is connected. Analysis opens up a level of cultural significance and meaning not otherwise obviously present.

Analysis can also be to music what translation is to literature. The translation from one language to another articulates something new out of a text. It may even change our view of the so-called original. Hegel in English is related to Hegel in German, but it stands apart; Hegel's
German texts read today by German speakers are again something new merely in terms of how the so-called original is conceived, if only from the standpoint of gaps in German usage between the current reader and the author. Students who read Thucydides in Hobbes's translation, in Crawley's, or in a modern American version (e.g., Blanco), each get a different impression of a text in a manner that transcends neat but hollow categories of accuracy and faithfulness to an original. This is amply the case for music.

All these quite simple-minded observations do not, however, resolve the nagging question of what constitutes the proper subject of music analysis. As music heard vanishes into the air, is recalled after the fact with or without visual reconstruction in reading, one is frequently hard pressed when one reads an analysis of printed music to link what is argued back to a sounding observation or version of a work. Every performer has the experience of being taken aback when hearing a recorded account of what he or she did. This becomes more acute when one seeks to compare a performance to an analytical account of a work, even if that account was employed in fashioning the performance. It is this subjective gap between the performer's perspective, the ear of the performer as listener, and the mental picture of intention that was partially responsible for Glenn Gould's legendary retreat from the concert stage and his attachment to recording as a medium. Indeed, recording has added its own dimension to the problem. Access to recorded accounts of music, studio and live, capable of repetition, selection, interruption, and several forms of listening (on speakers or earphones) has provided a newer candidate for the project of analysis and description: the recording as the work.

The irony is that from the performer's point of view much of postmodern writing about music is less useful than conventional analysis, no matter how alluring new interpretive strategies might be. Much of the maligned modes of analysis still seem more helpful to the musician, even when they are counterintuitive and arcane. This is made amply clear in Nicholas Cook's 1987 classic gem, *A Guide to Musical Analysis* (London: Dent). And of course, the whole matter becomes more complicated when the kind of music one is talking about as contemporary shifts in style. An analysis of the music of Tan Dun, for example, must sidestep traditional analytic strategies, since Tan Dun's music radically exploits the diachronic and episodic potential of the musical experience. Schenker's dim view not only of Wagner but of most if not all composers after Brahms had something to do with the limits of his analytical tools and aesthetic presuppositions, brilliant as they are. When directed at a different sort of music in the repertory, Schenkerian analysis either becomes marginal, stretched beyond utility, or merely a basis for debunking the
worthiness of certain music. Claude Debussy's endless and somewhat tiresome bashing of formal expectations and rules was not entirely disingenuous. Although *La mer* might lend itself to more conventional formal analysis, much in Debussy's music does not, even the *Nocturnes*. It is remarkable, for example, in retrospect how strong Debussy's influence must have been on George Gershwin. The music of *Images* is a kind of anticipation of *An American in Paris*, and what is shared by these composers is not only materials, gestures, and timbres, but the way ideas, repetitions, and relationships emerge moment to moment. Insofar as overarching formal structure is a convincing category in the consideration of the recollected experience or the printed work as a whole, Debussy's kind of near-improvisatory sense, the impression of spontaneity, and the control of time all call for several legitimate ways of accounting for musical events. Looking at the printed score with the presumption that one can satisfy a Schenker-like expectation of a particular organic, functional, structural, evolutionary, or unified conception of logic becomes a less promising avenue.

All this brings us once again back to the difficulty we encounter when we step away from analysis toward criticism and write about music in ordinary language in order to achieve even an adequate description. Three of the essays in this issue of MQ, by Elisabeth Crist, Pauline Fairclough, and Pamela Potter, take as their subject the influence and significance of the way music was written about within the genre of criticism. The subject more often than not was music heard, not the texts as read, as in literary criticism and as was the case in the era 1750–1830. In the case of Copland's Third Symphony, what is striking is how reliable the residue of criticism is in revealing commonplace social, political, and cultural prejudices of an unremarkable and commonplace nature well outside the realm of music. At the same time, reading through the generous citations Crist offers, one is horrified by the flawed, primitive, and often nonsensical ways in which the music was described, judged, and written about. In the end, one does not even come away convinced that the critical legacy tells us much about what audiences heard or responded to. Once again we are confronted with how marginal journalistic criticism actually is as historical evidence for musical culture. There are advantages to forgetfulness. When historians exhume the long-buried mass of criticism in the daily press, one is taken aback at what was once written, printed, and taken seriously, if only to satisfy the daunting demands of daily, or even weekly, publication. Criticism is essential to history, but the subject may not be music as such but everything that sounds its appearance.

Over the long term the critical reception of Copland's Third Symphony may have influenced the frequency with which it was performed, but little else. In the absence of any recorded evidence, it would be hard to
know even what these critics were writing about particularly in the cases of George Szell’s or Jascha Horenstein’s performances. One’s curiosity is piqued but not satisfied. As Crist suggests, what is encouraging is the recognition of how ephemeral the residual influence of contemporary critical commentary is. The fate of the Third Symphony was not determined by critics. The criticism itself is rescued from oblivion only by historians. Copland’s Third Symphony, as Crist suggests, has gained a new life as a powerful and effective piece, now played and heard without the associations buried in its reception history that once filled corners of newsprint long and legitimately forgotten. Only a handful of critics survive as worthy of rereading, and most turn out to be composers or performers, such as Virgil Thomson, Vincent d’Indy, Claude Debussy, and, of course, Schumann and Berlioz. The service that Crist has performed admirably is to remind us not to be nostalgic and not to forget how depressing and difficult the instrument of journalistic music criticism of performance has made the composition and performance of new music in the twentieth century. The narrow and parochial agendas of critics are all the more reprehensible in a world in which new music of any sort struggles for a voice and recognition.

The case of Sollertinsky is equally curious. In the end, what Sollertinsky had to say about Mahler was not compelling beyond the precise frame of his immediate readership in Soviet Russia. The sole lasting importance of his writing is its suggestive influence on Shostakovich. Here is a case in which politically determined recasting and the judicious application of interpretive rhetoric made palatable what otherwise would have been music inherently hostile to Soviet aesthetics. In Sollertinsky’s hands, within the context of dictatorship, the writing of music criticism became an exercise in linguistic manipulation and reformulation, permitting music to be heard and used that might influence the range of music subject to suppression. The state apparatus, particularly if it is characterized by a highly stratified bureaucracy, operates effectively by accepting the recasting of the meaning of words and redefining reality according to its own terminological requirements. Anyone who has tried to negotiate state regulations even in democratic states quickly discovers how the use of language as a naming, categorizing, and referencing tool can influence outcomes dramatically. A bird categorized as a flying object might become admissible into an arena that officially excludes living beings. Music has thrived in conditions of unfreedom often far better than literature and painting because it is more susceptible to such deft recategorizations. When it comes to linguistic categorization, it is the most chameleonlike of all the arts. Shrewd critics may be helpful to composers in dictatorships, even though they are mostly unwelcome adversaries or adherents in a free society.
 Nonetheless, in an environment where our view of Mahler has been shaped by such luminaries as Theodor W. Adorno, Henry de la Grange, and Donald Mitchell, it might be useful to take Sollertinsky at face value. His 1932 monograph was translated into German only in 1996; it still does not exist in English. It has not been taken into account in mainstream English-language or German-language scholarship on Mahler. Sollertinsky gets only a passing reference in Christoph Metzger’s quite comprehensive and useful recent monograph Mahler Rezeption. Perspektiven der Rezeption Gustav Mahlers (Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel, 2000). Beyond Shostakovich’s selective but inspired appropriation of Mahler as a model, does Sollertinsky’s reading of Mahler tell us something we have overlooked about the Mahler we think we know and understand?

The ideological reshuffling that writing about music can achieve has of course its most notorious moment in history in twentieth-century Germany. Changing the words and texts of Handel’s oratorios was an extreme example of an effort to preserve Handel for performance during the Third Reich. In a perverse way, one would like to hear these Nazified versions. How would they strike us, and what do they tell us about how we conceive of Handel? As a point of comparison, one can ask equally if Tchaikovsky’s Coronation Anthem became a different piece when one substituted the words authorized during the Soviet regime, as was the case for over fifty years. And how, furthermore, is the work received today, when the original words are restored, in Russia to an audience brought up on the replacement texts? The same question should be posed for Prokofiev’s 1939 birthday cantata for Stalin, Zdravitsa. The original text was suppressed and substituted in the late 1950s after the de-Stalinization.

It would be interesting to find out, using the tools of empirical sociology, whether all of the ideological appropriations of Handel so adeptly offered us by Pamela Potter have left residues. Could it be that the current favored mode of performance practice vis-à-vis Handel owes something to the modes of politicization she so ably chronicles? Perhaps the time has come to revisit long-forgotten habits of performance for Handel. In a context where a blatant and noxious political agenda seems absent, as for example in the England of Thomas Beecham and Malcolm Sargent, what interest or affective allure might there be for contemporary renditions of Handel in the style and orchestrations of these two great conductors? Is there, in the end, only one Handel that merits our hearing? In the same vein, a re-creation of early-nineteenth-century performance practices is long overdue. The forces used around 1812 involved more than 700 choral singers and 700 instrumentalists. These monster oratorio performances of the late Napoleonic era in Vienna and of the early 1820s so vividly remembered by Caroline Pichler and Franz Grillparzer might pre-
sent us with a view of the music that shatters any stable picture we might have about what Handel's music is, even as an object of history. Repugnant as the Nazi and East German practices might be to us, they should force us to remain vigilanty self-critical about the all-too-facile transfer of analytic and historical reconstruction onto the realm of performance, or its description as neatly objective or apolitical. What was horrifying about the varying modes of German appropriation was the particular politics. The concomitant virtue is not necessarily the absence of politics. There are even underlying continuities in cultural-political meanings between overtly divergent political ideologies, especially with regard to the connections between the ideal of community and traditions of choral performance.

Radical reinvention of music through performance using printed texts and notation merely as an enabling but incomplete set of instructions has become an art at risk. We have come to accept historicist restrictions of appropriate style that limit the task and possibilities of recreation. For this reason, the music of the baroque and classical eras needs to be rescued from the grip of our own current historical conceits. One clearly redeeming function that writing about music can play is precisely in inspiring new generations of performers to abandon linguistically fashioned analytical strategies that assert a constraining if not monopolistic authority. Potter's account should give us further pause about all claims of objectivity and scholarly detachment in the enterprises of making critical editions and determining stylistic adequacy in terms of performance practice. The elusive diachronic and psychoacoustic character of musical experience is brought home to us through the faltering, sometimes obscure, sometimes offensive, and frequently clumsy efforts, past and present, to define and control music through language.