CHAPTER 12

A. N. Whitehead, Feeling, and Music

ON SOME POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO AFFECT THEORY

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In one of the most enigmatic sections of his magnum opus *Process and Reality*, Alfred North Whitehead posits the "category of the ultimate" that undergirds his metaphysical system.[1] This is the principle of creativity understood as "the advance from disjunction to conjunction." The movement produces something that "is at once the togetherness of the 'many' which it finds, and also it is one among the disjunctive 'many' which it leaves; it is a novel entity, disjunctively among the many entities which it synthesizes."[2] In an aphoristic formulation of the same idea, Whitehead writes that "the many become one, and are increased by one."[3] As he says elsewhere, "the basis of experience is emotional," such that any becoming from many to one is marked by an "affective tone" arising from the specific interactions of a given "many" resulting in a fragile "one."[4]

It was a novel musical entity that got me thinking with these Whiteheadian ideas, specifically Eric Wubbels's Viola Quartet (2007). I've experienced the piece both live at its premiere and several times since on the recording, which features Victor Lowrie, Max Mandel, Tawnya Popoff, and Miranda Sielaff.[5] Though Wubbels hasn't read Whitehead, his music nonetheless dramatizes the process of "many becoming one" that the philosopher identifies as the production of feeling. Wubbels himself describes his music as an exploration of various kinds of synthesis: "The building block of what I focus on is unison, both rhythmically and pitch-wise. . . . I want to find interesting ways of creating unisons which means examining instruments physically, gesturally from their technique so you can find ways of matching them, find[ing] intersections in space."[6] The play of the many and the one in Wubbels's Viola Quartet is inscribed across musical features: the shared gestural repertoire between the violas, the complex hocketing, and the

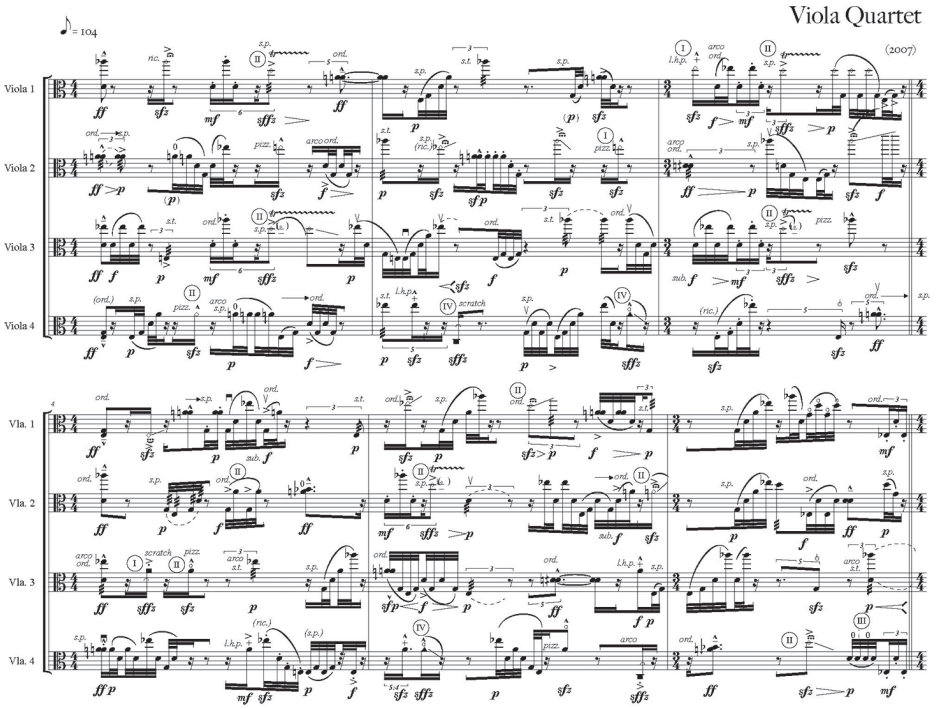

Fig. 12.1. Gestural enmeshments and the four violas as "meta-instrument." Eric Wubbels, Viola Quartet, p. 1. Reprinted with permission of the composer.

form itself, which moves from complex unisons in which the musicians form a "meta-instrument" from interlocking patterns (fig. 12.1) to reduced moments of pitch and rhythmic unison (fig. 12.2). Wubbels deftly moves between these types of unison through a sense of organic transformation—even mutation—as the players merge, diverge, and converge again over the course of the piece's sixteen-minute duration.

Affectively, the piece is riotous and enthralling. Wrenching, relentless flows of sound bark and spit from the violists' bows. Lowrie, Mandel, Popoff, and Sielaff are mangled into some sort of monstrous organism whose energy pulsates, explodes, and collapses, drawing me into their tenuous and strained collective. I join this many and become one with it as a first-person plural *we* bound up through sound and affect. But where is this *we* when we feel? The question of location is fundamental to any experience of affect, and indeed, the affect theory that has drawn on Whitehead has accounted for the relationships between subjectivity, sound, and sentiment in ways that seem not entirely congruent with Whitehead's radical relationality.

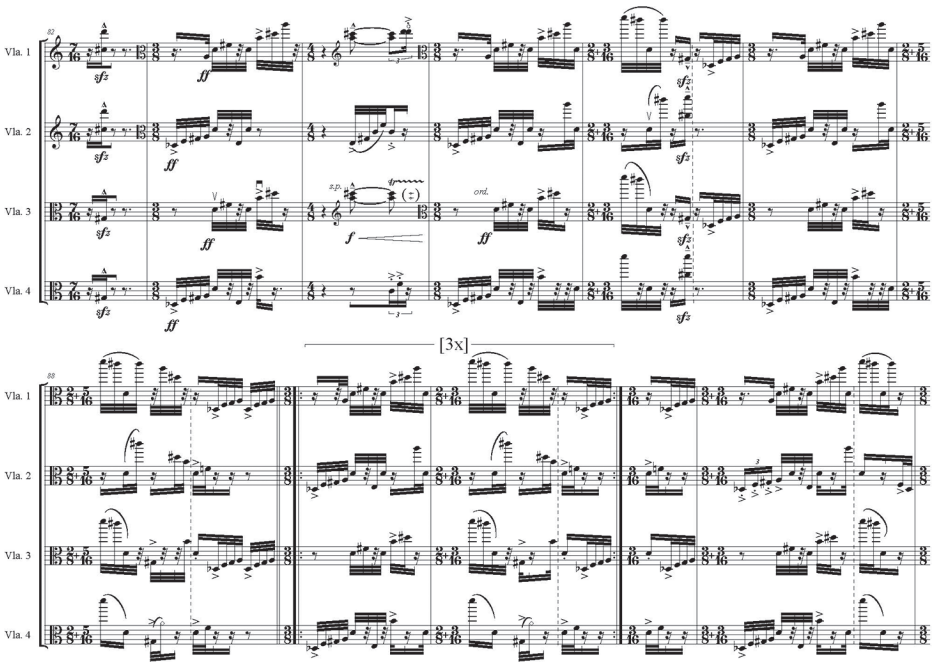

Fig. 12.2. Rhythmic and pitch unison with hocketing. Wubbels, Viola Quartet, p. 10. Reprinted with permission of the composer.

Glossing Whitehead in a larger reflection on semblance, art, and temporality, Brian Massumi writes:

> What is actually said and done from one moment to the next is discontinuous by nature. But something continues, thought-felt across the gaps. In Whitehead's words, it's a "nonsensuous perception," a virtual perception of "the immediate past as surviving to be again lived through in the present." Every situation, whatever its lived tonality, is sundered by these nonsensuously lived micro-intervals filled only qualitatively and abstractly by affect. Like the vanishing point, they wrap back around to surround. What Whitehead calls affective tonality is something we find ourselves in, rather than finding in ourselves. An embracing atmosphere that is also at the very heart of what happens because it qualifies the overall feel. Affective tonality is what we normally call a "mood."[7]

Here, Massumi enrolls Whitehead in his larger argument for "the autonomy of affect" that the former has developed over the last two decades.[8] Stated in this extract is the idea that "affective tonality" is some-

thing external to us and impersonal. Moreover, the larger assumption made by Massumi is that Whitehead's theory of emotions unequivocally supports his insistence on affect's autonomy.

Affect, as Massumi conceives it, is distinct from emotion, which is the form that affect takes once it has been domesticated by productions of subjectivity. For Massumi and others who have taken up his conception of affect—such as Jasbir Puar and Kathleen Stewart—affect is politically valuable inasmuch as it offers access to a world outside the current state of affairs or maps a potential plane upon which radical change is possible.[9] As such, it produces novelty and provides an energetic background flow whose virtuality and possibility are arrested once captured as personal emotion, thought, or language. As Massumi writes, "The primacy of the affective is marked by a gap between *content* and *effect*"—that is to say, there is no direct causation between what affect is and how a subject responds to it.[10] Affect is autonomous in that it exists prior to our sense of self or any sense of *we*. It follows, then, that both concrescence and community limit affect's circulation and political potential.[11]

It is this conception of affect that poses a problem for thinking the location of the *we* produced in listening. The complex becoming dramatized by Wubbels's Viola Quartet—its mangling together of bodies, technologies, listeners, and feelings—is too intertwined, too much of the same event to ascribe any autonomy to the affects engendered. I am not the first to find fault with Massumi's insistence upon affective autonomy. He has been critiqued in light of his work's grounding in misread experimental evidence as well as for its failure to account for the asymmetrical distribution of affects (both positive and negative) among persons.[12] Although I am in agreement with much in these critiques, I want to turn the question toward matters of music and emotion that are elided in the appropriation of Whitehead by Massumi, as well as Deleuze, from whom Massumi derives his theory of affective autonomy.[13] At issue is whether Whitehead can be understood to support a view of affective autonomy. I argue that his philosophy cannot, and, indeed, that Whitehead's theory of feeling describes affect as relational evidence for the processes of subject formation itself. Feelings result from becomings on all levels of worldly organization, from the atomic, to the human, to the technoscapes of global capitalism. The *we* that we are concretizes through affective mediation, through our mutual feeling of the world. The process of feeling is dramatized specifically in Whitehead's comments on music which have, until now, received little attention.

Whitehead, though, is hardly unknown to musicology and music

theory. He was among Susanne Langer's professors at Harvard and shaped her thought in some important ways, especially in regard to Langer's ideas of significant form.[14] Beyond Langer, the aesthetician F. David Martin has explored Whitehead's concepts of "presentational immediacy" and "causal efficacy" in relation to musical experience.[15] In music theory, Christopher Hasty and Jonathan Bernard have productively engaged with Whitehead's philosophy.[16] Yet both theorists confine themselves to commentary on temporality and, in Hasty's case, the philosopher's understanding of beauty. Neither reflects on Whitehead's comments about musical experience. As I'll discuss below, Whitehead establishes explicit connections among music, emotion, and aesthetics, yet such connections are rejected out of hand by the composer-theorist Richard Elfyn Jones, who has emphasized Whiteheadian conceptions of temporality at the expense of emotion and affect. Jones has gone even further in his appropriation of Whitehead, refusing to "indulge" in questions of emotion while "confin[ing] ourselves to a rational, Whiteheadian approach."[17] That the temporal insights of Whitehead's thought are of interest for certain kinds of music-theoretical work is unsurprising, yet attempts such as Jones's to radically separate forms of experience (feeling from rationality) dismiss one of the most basic goals of Whitehead's philosophy: avoiding the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, in which we elevate abstract rationality over enmeshed emotional experience.[18]

While these scholars and others, such as Steve Goodman, have shown the potential of Whitehead's philosophy for thinking about musical and sonic experience, they have not noted that at important moments in his philosophy Whitehead turns to music to develop his theory of feelings—what he generally terms "prehensions."[19] These references are few, but they are striking for their heuristic value as well as their potential for thinking of emotional relations as indices of collective sociality.[20]

I

Whitehead's scholarly work falls roughly into three periods: an initial period of mathematics, a second period lasting from approximately 1910 to 1924 in which he worked in the philosophy of science and education, and then from 1924 to his death in 1947, which saw him turn to metaphysics and the development of process philosophy, or, as he called it, "the philosophy of organism."[21] In this last period Whitehead took up a professorship of philosophy at Harvard, where Susanne Langer became his student in 1924. Through his late philosophical works, White-

head aspired to construct "a critique of pure feeling" that he hoped would "supersede the remaining *Critiques* required by Kantian philosophy."[22] In addition to Kant, Whitehead's main interlocutors were René Descartes, David Hume, Isaac Newton, Henri Bergson, and William James. Whitehead's philosophy is exceedingly complex, and even a simple summary of its contours is beyond the scope of this essay, yet in order to situate his theory of feelings, we must draw out a few central concepts: (1) the revision of the subject-object relation figured as an emotional encounter, (2) the founding of such emotional relations as the fundamental events building the world, and (3) the care with which we should treat our concepts and abstractions.[23] These themes are present in a passage from *Adventures of Ideas*:

> [Philosophers presuppose] that the subject-object relation is the fundamental pattern of experience. I agree with this presupposition, but not in the sense in which subject-object is identified with knower-known. I contend that the notion of mere knowledge is a high abstraction and that conscious discrimination itself is a variable factor only present in the more elaborate occasions of experience. The basis of experience is emotional. Stated more generally, the basic fact is the rise of an affective tone originating from things whose relevance is given. Thus the Quaker word "concern," divested of its suggestion of knowledge, is more fitted to express this fundamental structure.[24]

The radicality of Whitehead's metaphysics is outlined in this passage. First, he disaggregates the subject-knower and object-known equivalents. In earlier philosophy, such as that of Descartes, Locke, and Hume, these relations are assumed to be identical, yet as Whitehead argues, they imply a relationship of "mere knowledge" that abstracts the subject from the occasion of knowing so that it can become purely mental. As such, the equation of subject-object with knower-known exemplifies the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, of mistaking a high abstraction for a basic fact. The alternative conception Whitehead proffers imagines a subject-object relationship constituted through feeling, the mutual experience of the subject and object by one another. Feeling here need not be identified with high-level emotional states (though they are the result of these processes) but can be registered as concern—which Whitehead understands as a directional or vector feeling. We also might understand it as a mutual *tending toward* an object, or, following Sarah Ahmed, as an orientation toward others.[25] Ultimately, this basic fact of feeling resists any conception of subject and object

as distanced. Whitehead comes to describe the emotionally involved subject and object as a "superject," which is the minimum unit of experience.[26] Another point to draw out from this passage is that feeling is not a priori. The affective tone arises through processes of feeling the world. There is no affect separate from this production of subjectivity in experience. This last point exemplifies Whitehead's ontological principle: "There is nothing which floats into the world from nowhere. Everything in the actual world is referable to some actual entity."[27] As such, affect does not exist ex nihilo as pure virtuality, nor is it ever truly separate from some feeling thing.

While Whitehead is critical of abstraction in this passage insofar as it limits our understanding and appreciation of experience, he is not opposed to abstraction. He recognizes that it is necessary—that we are, to twist a concept from Deleuze, abstracting machines experiencing the world. Yet, as Isabelle Stengers has noted, Whitehead asks that we care for our abstractions and attend to what they lure us into thinking, feeling, and speaking.[28] Most of all, Whitehead insists that we refuse to follow a line of flight to some Archimedean point that will give us a perfectly objective view.[29] We are each capable of achieving only a partial perspective, the richness of the world being an inexhaustible source of change and novelty. The revision of our perspectives and abstractions thus becomes the work politics, which I understand as the affective maintenance of collectives and relational communities.

With the persistent novelty of these concepts, it is no surprise that Whitehead has been taken up in late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century affect theory and science studies. And Deleuzian resonances abound in Whitehead's corpus. Consider, for example, Whitehead's statement that "philosophy can exclude nothing. Thus it should never start from systematization. Its primary stage can be termed assemblage."[30] "Assemblage," of course, is how Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of *agencement* has been translated into English, and it would be interesting to speculate on the potential connections here, yet Whitehead's use of the word is rare and does not attain the consistency or specificity of a concept in his philosophy.[31] But the term is suggestive. Beginning our work from assemblage—from parts and ingredients of events—avoids the other fault of forging too high an abstraction, which would "bifurcate experience" into what is real appearance and that which might be construed as semblance—or, as John Locke would write, primary and secondary qualities. In *The Concept of Nature*, Whitehead argues: "For natural philosophy everything perceived is in nature. We may not pick and choose. For us the red glow of the sunset should be as much part of nature as are the molecules and

electric waves by which men of science would explain the phenomena. It is for natural philosophy to analyze how these various elements of nature are connected."[32] To ascribe truth to one event over another would be to commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness—to endow a high abstraction with a concrete force not proper to it.

Whitehead seems to set up an impossible task for any scholar—"we may not pick and choose." And yet we must. We need abstractions in order to communicate our feeling of the world. Whitehead's point, as I understand, it is that we need to attend to the performativity of our abstractions, their real effects on the world. Abstraction is not the same as bifurcation, nor is abstraction necessarily an arena for misplaced concreteness. In advance of my fuller discussion of Whitehead's theory of feelings and music, the concepts developed so far—the emotional basis of experience and the injunction to avoid misplaced concreteness and bifurcation—afford a vantage point to critique Massumi's formulation of affective autonomy. In *Parables for the Virtual*, he writes:

> The autonomy of affect is its participation in the virtual. *Its autonomy is its openness*. Affect is autonomous to the degree to which it escapes confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction, it is. Formed, qualified, situated perceptions and cognitions fulfilling functions of actual connection or blockages are the capture and closure of affect. Emotion is the most intense (most contracted) expression of that capture and of the fact that something has always and again escaped.[33]

Notice what it is that affect does: it "escapes confinement," it is both virtual and potential. It is "arrested," "captured," and subject to "closure." Subjectivity, evinced by emotion and cognition, is produced through blockages of affect. Affect's political force lies in its capacity to resist subjectivity—or, as in the passage quoted above, its power lies in filling up fragmented moments outside our experience. Affect is a priori, existing before subjectivity and stanching its flow. Compare this with Whitehead's understanding of emotion. The affective tone of experience arises from the mutual feeling of subjects and objects. Affect arises out of relations, through productions of subjectivity. With his desire for deferral, escape, and circulation, Massumi gives the concept of affect a false concreteness that places the potential capacity for change and novelty off limits for us. We are always already outside of affect, even though it surrounds us; we may be in it, but we are certainly not of it. In what follows, I ask if the kind of bifurcation produced by Massumi's affect theory is worth holding on to, or if Whitehead's theory of feelings

offers us another way to think of affect relationally and communally through the experience of music.

II

Whitehead's argument that "the basis of experience is emotional" is all well and good, yet the passage from *Adventures of Ideas* discussed above does not tell us much about what feeling is, how it works, and what forms it takes. Whitehead's theory of feeling is part of a larger metaphysical system that he calls "the theory of prehensions."[34] Prehensions are the relations between subject and objects discussed above that take the form of affective tones. In Whitehead's philosophy, the words *feeling*, *prehension*, *event*, *emotion*, and *affect* are largely interchangeable. Yet, while Whitehead finds the terms equivalent, he does understand there to be "gradations of feeling"—from simple vector feeling to complex emotions to cognition, what Susanne Langer refers to when she articulates feeling and thought as contiguous.[35] This theory of prehensions is developed at length in *Process and Reality*. Of particular interest for musical thought is that Whitehead's example of feeling is the audition of a musical tone: "As a simple example of this description of feeling, consider the audition of sound. In order to avoid unnecessary complexity, let the sound be one definite note. The audition of this note is a feeling. The feeling has first an auditor, who is the subject of the feeling. But the auditor would not be the auditor he is apart from this feeling of his."[36] Here we should bear in mind Whitehead's insistence that "we may not pick and choose" what aspects of experience really count—any failure to begin from the mangle of experience that is listening (for example to imagine "sound itself" as a falsely concrete idea) and imagine an objective position from which we might audit sonic experience would immediately bifurcate our integrated feeling into primary and secondary qualities—or, more to the point, produce a high abstraction whose conceptual utility would be impoverished by its marked rejection of qualia.

Take, for example, a specific tone heard later in Wubbels's Viola Quartet (fig. 12.3). Here the four players arrive at a hard-won unison. The struggles of the opening minutes give way to the uneasy repose and stasis of this passage. As Whitehead remarks, "A feeling bears on itself the scars of its birth; it recollects as a subjective emotion its struggle for existence."[37] The feeling as subjective form is the particular relationship between me as a listener as part of the event of the quartet—a nexus producing emotion through the mutual feeling of subjects and objects drawn together in the musical performance. When I

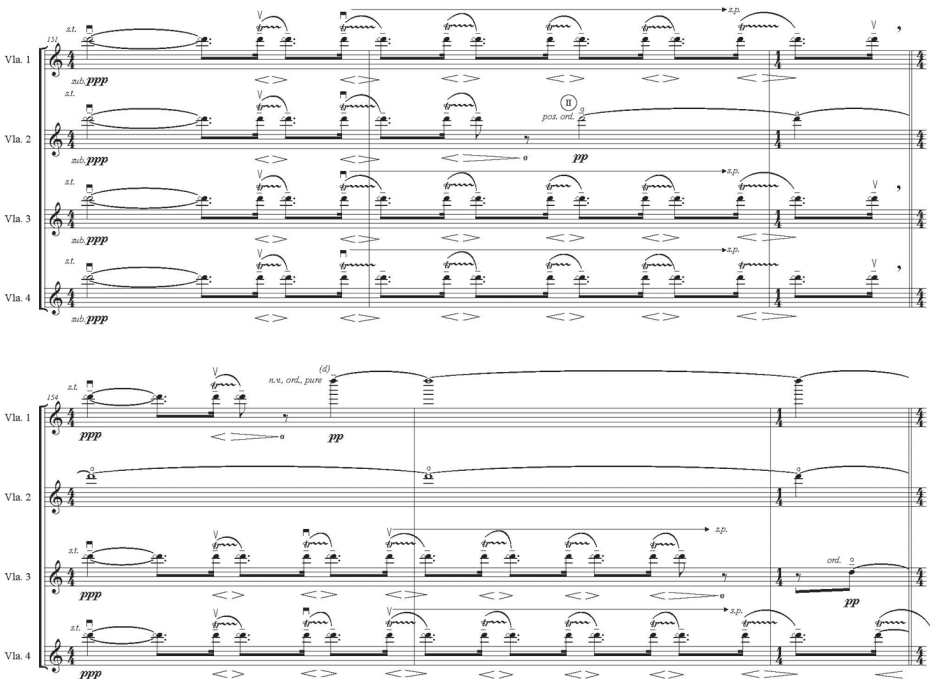

Fig. 12.3. Pitch unison between violas. Wubbels, Viola Quartet, p. 18. Reprinted with permission of the composer.

asked earlier, "Where are we when we feel?" it was the relationality of the *we* that was of greatest interest to me. The quartet forges a fragile nexus, and we as listeners are enrolled within that nexus, feeling with and through it. Affect does the work of mediation, marking the passages and movements of our production of subjectivity, but doing so through coproduction. The many are become one—not one as a singular unity, but as a concrescent diversity. The affective tone arising from this occasion is something we are both in and of, for it would not have come into existence had we not felt it. Its feeling is the result of our becoming-with the sounds we experience.

As Whitehead's elaboration of sound-as-feeling continues in *Process and Reality*, he conceptualizes an aural event as a nexus:

> Secondly, there is a complex ordered environment composed of certain other actual entities which, however vaguely, is felt by reason of this audition. The environment is the datum of this feeling. It is the external world, grasped systematically in this feeling. In the audition, it is felt under the objectification of vague spatial relations and as exhibiting musical qualities. But the analytic discrimination of the

> datum of the feeling is in part vague and conjectural so far as consciousness is concerned: there is the antecedent physiological functioning of the human body, and the presentational immediacy of the presented locus. There is also an emotional sensory pattern, the subjective form, which is more definite and more easily analyzable.[38]

Here Whitehead complicates as well as enriches our sense of sound, noting the nexus of experience as composed of processes, actual entities, and events already at work in advance of the experience of sound, but suddenly brought into a novel relationship through it. Whitehead insists that experience is not atomic—though it can be analyzed as continued processes of assembly and transformation which enroll more and more of the world in experience. Audition is an exemplary moment of feeling one's world in gradations of vagueness and specificity. This understanding bolsters a conception of music as, in the words of Antoine Hennion, "mediation itself"—the constant gathering and sowing, weaving and unweaving of experience.[39] These very processes make us what we are, entangling us together with sound, the world, and one another: "The final concrete component in the satisfaction is the audition with its subject, its datum, and its emotional pattern as finally completed. It is a particular fact not to be torn away from any of its elements."[40]

III

In view of these passages, what kind of affect theory emerges from Whitehead's philosophy, and what concepts might they provide for our understanding of the particular musicality of emotional experience—that is, its affective tone? At first blush, there seems to be a potential conformity with some aspects of Deleuzian affect theory as presented by Massumi, at least on the matter of distinguishing gradations of emotion. Deleuze's forms of intensity and sensation seem at first to align with Whitehead's sense of bare feeling having a vector character that does not rise to the level of conscious discernment. This bare feeling's vectoral quality is a kind of brute awareness or perception:

> The crude aboriginal character of direct perception is inheritance. What is inherited is feeling-tone with evidence of its origin: in other words, vector feeling-tone. In the higher grades of perception vague feeling-tone differentiates itself into various types of sense—those of touch, sight, smell, etc.—each transmuted into a definite prehension of tonal contemporary nexus by the final percipient.[41]

Yet there is a crucial difference between Whitehead's understanding of the process of feeling and the Deleuzian-Massumian version. In the latter, for affect to be felt as emotion is for it to be captured in ingrained patterns of thought and culture, to be arrested in subjectivity. Emotion is then bound to the logic of representation whose value for the more radical empiricism that Massumi advocates is limited.[42]

Whitehead's theory of feeling makes no such distinctions between feeling, affect, and emotion, as they are all emergent from a process of subject-object interaction—of actual entities feeling the world. For Whitehead's theory of feeling to conform to Deleuzian-Massumian affect (understood as prepersonal or nonsubjective), it would have to bifurcate experience through deterritorialization, tearing feelings away from the actual entities generating it, blocking processes before a final satisfaction has been achieved.[43] Such a rending of affect from subjectivity is untenable for Whitehead, who in section 2 of his theory of feelings writes, "A feeling cannot be abstracted from the actual entity entertaining it. . . . Thus, a feeling is a particular in the same sense in which each actual entity is a particular. It is one aspect of its own subject."[44] Or, to put it more bluntly, "Feelings are inseparable from the end at which they aim; and this end is the feeler."[45] An affective event, then, is a line not of flight out of an assemblage into the virtual but toward concrescence.[46]

Despite the tension I've identified between Whitehead and Deleuzian affect, Deleuze draws upon Whitehead to bolster his view of deterritorializing musical affect. Deleuze's references to Whitehead are infrequent. In *Difference and Repetition* (1964), Deleuze calls *Process and Reality* "one of the greatest books of modern philosophy."[47] Only in his study on Leibniz, *The Fold* (1988), does he produce a sustained commentary on Whitehead's philosophy. The brief chapter, titled "What Is an Event?," evokes the scene of musical performance in order to join Whitehead's thought to his own. *Event* is the word Whitehead offered as an equivalent concept for his ideas of "prehension," "feeling," and "actual entity"—all concepts that refer to a spatiotemporal unity, an "occasion of experience" giving rise to a specific affective tone. Deleuze stages his encounter with Whitehead by musical means: "A concert is being performed tonight. It is the event. Vibrations of sound disperse, periodic movements go through space with their harmonics or submultiples. The sounds have inner qualities of height, intensity, and timbre." Deleuze's account begins abstractly in a play of forces—vibrations, movements, dispersion. We're in a world of sensation prior to subjectivity. Gradually, though, the event materializes. He continues: "The sources of the sounds, instruments or vocal, are

not content only to send the sounds out: each one perceives its own and perceives the others while perceiving its own."[48] The sensational event is gradually given physical form, and its elements come into relation with one another—relations of perception, based in autoaffection and observation. After laying out the conditions of the event, Deleuze translates his concert into the language of Whitehead by means of *Swann's Way*: "These are active perceptions that are expressed among each other, or else prehensions that are prehending one another: 'First the solitary piano grieved, like a bird abandoned by its mate; the violin heard its wail and responded to it like a neighboring tree, it was like the beginning of the world.'"[49]

Deleuze's adoption of Whitehead's term *prehension* marks his swerve toward affect in thinking of musical experience, as does the quotation of the concert scene from *Swann's Way*. However, for Deleuze, this affect is not an emotional tone giving rise to concrescence of subjectivity, but a translation of the concert event into its vibrations and virtuality. As the Proust quotation seems to suggest, musical affect is a deterritorialization of sound, a becoming-animal that arrives at "pure virtualities that are actualized in the origins, but also pure possibilities that are attained in vibrations or flux."[50] My reading of this passage is admittedly a close one, but the distinctions between Whitehead and Deleuze's accounts of affect emerge when the fuller contours of Whitehead's theory of feelings are taken into account. Deleuze invokes Whitehead's concepts to convey musical experience as an unraveling of the material conditions and a movement toward sensation itself, figured here as "vibration" and "flux." The ultimate satisfaction is not, as for Whitehead, the creation of novel feelingful entities, but rather the production of a line of flight toward undifferentiated, free-flowing affect. The political utility of this conception of affect remains the same as in Massumi: to derealize current matters of concern, to return to states of flux prior to subjectivity, and to escape representational forms. Novelty, for Deleuze, cannot be created through productions of subjectivity, though it is a point that Whitehead insists upon when he argues, as I noted at the beginning of this essay, that "creativity is the ultimate" and that "the basis of experience is emotional."

By way of conclusion, I'd like to consider the alternatives Whitehead offers us for rethinking affect not as foreclosed upon by processes of subjectivity, but as produced by them. Novelty emerges through these processes, and it does not depend upon their undoing for political agency. His thought also provides a mode of working with abstractions and concepts that understands their performative effects and leaves them open to revision. This latter mode becomes the real work of

politics. To open up these lines of thought, I wish to pursue the Proustian path marked out by Deleuze. The brief passage from *Swann's* Way quoted in *The Fold* continues:

> Was it a bird, was it the soul of the little phrase [of Vinteuil's sonata] not yet fully formed, was it a fairy—this creature invisibly lamenting, whose plaint the piano afterward tenderly repeated? Its cries were so sudden that the violinist had to leap to his bow to collect them. Marvelous bird? The violinist seemed to want to charm it, tame it, capture it. Already it had passed into his soul. Already the violinist's body, truly possessed, was shaking like a medium's with the summoned presence of the little phrase. . . . Like a rainbow, whose brilliance weakens, fades, then rises again, and before dying away altogether, flares up a moment more brilliant than ever. . . . The ineffable word of one man who was absent, perhaps dead (Swann did not know if Vinteuil was still alive, breathing out above the rites of these officiants), was enough to hold the attention of three hundred people, and made of this dais, where a soul had thus been summoned, one of the noblest altars on which a supernatural ceremony could be performed.[51]

Proust here seems to be a process philosopher. Musical performance does the work of ordering the assemblage of things, sounds, instruments, and people. In performance, Vinteuil's sonata "holds" together three hundred audience members, linking up the past and the future, animating community through the interaction with sound. For a moment, a moment Swann desires not to break, "the many become one and are increased by one," as Whitehead has written. I spoke earlier of music being a form of mediation. What Whitehead, by way of Proust and Wubbels, allows us to conceptualize is that music is a form of affective mediation producing modes of feeling that compose our common world. This is not a utopian vision. Novelty itself is not an intrinsic good, nor are all forms of emotional belonging egalitarian or desirable.[52] If anything, Whitehead allows us to conceptualize the affective mediation of the world not as something to be celebrated in itself, but as an ontological condition to be attuned to in hopes of building better bonds and composing better worlds:

> Music elicits some confused feeling into distinct apprehension. It performs this service, or disservice, by introducing an emotional clothing which changes the dim objective reality into a clear Appearance matching the subjective form provided for its prehension.

> There is then the vague truth-relation, *via* community of subjective form, between the music and the resulting Appearance. There is also the truth-relation between Appearance and the Reality—the Reality of National Life, or of Strife between nations, or of the Essence of God. This complex fusion of truth-relations, with their falsehoods intermixed, constitutes the indirect interpretative power of Art to express the truth about the nature of things.[53]

The modifications to affect theory that Whitehead offers are an end to both autonomy and modes of theorizing that attribute good politics to conceptions of affect that escape the world, exceed subjectivity, and revel in the break between content and effect. Whitehead's theory of feeling retains the creativity and plurality of Deleuzian affect theory while directing it toward the work of recognizing and modifying the "emotional clothing" of our experience, which is entangled with our abstractions, symbolic codes, and modes of representation. As I see it, the work of affect theory is to assist in "the fearlessness of revision" that Whitehead called for, not to idealize sensation beyond our selves.[54]

Notes

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1. Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, corrected ed., ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978), 21.

2. Ibid., 21.

3. Ibid., 21.

4. Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 176.

5. Eric Wubbels's Viola Quartet is included on Alex Mincek, Jeff Snyder, Alex Ness, Kate Soper, Jim Altieri, Eric Wubbels, Clara Latham, and Sam Pluta, *The Language Of*, Quiet Design CD 700261255088 (2008).

6. Eric Wubbels, quoted in Ryan Dohoney, "Proximity to a Notion of Fusion: An Interview with Alex Mincek and Eric Wubbels of the Wet Ink Ensemble," *Dissonance: Swiss Music Journal for Research and Creation* 116 (December 2010): 22.

7. Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 65.

8. Massumi makes his case for a Deleuzian-Spinozist conception of affect in "The Autonomy of Affect," in "Politics of Systems and Environments, Part II," *Cultural Critique* 31 (Autumn 1995): 83–109; later published in Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 23–45.

9. See Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); and Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

10. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 24.

11. Massumi develops this line of thought further to suggest that because affect is autonomous and virtual, there is a fundamental discontinuity in experience such that "all relations are virtual." See Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 64. Whitehead's point, as I understand it, is that affects only emerge from concrete relations and mutual feeling of subjects and objects. Feelings are, in a quite literal sense, facts.

12. On Massumi's use of scientific data, see Constantina Papoulias and Felicity Callard, "Biology's Gift: Interrogating the Turn to Affect," *Body and Society* 16, no. 1 (2010): 29–56; and Ruth Leys, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (2011): 434–72. On the white privilege of affective autonomy, see Claire Hemmings, "Invoking Affect: Cultural Theory and the Ontological Turn," *Cultural Studies* 19, no. 5 (2005): 548–67.

13. See esp. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guatarri, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

14. See Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art, Developed from "Philosophy in a New Key"* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953). See also Langer, "The Process of Feeling," in *Philosophical Sketches* (New York: Mentor, 1964), 11–29. For commentary on Langer, see Eldritch Priest, "Felt as Thought," in *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience*, ed. Marie Thompson and Ian D. Biddle (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 45–64.

15. F. David Martin, "The Power of Music and Whitehead's Theory of Perception," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 25, no. 3 (1967): 313–22.

16. Christopher Hasty, *Meter as Rhythm* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Hasty, "Broken Sequences: Fragmentation, Abundance, Beauty," *Perspectives of New Music* 40, no. 2 (2002): 155–73; and Jonathan W. Bernard, "Elliott Carter and the Modern Meaning of Time," *Musical Quarterly* 79, no. 4 (1995): 644–82.

17. Richard Elfyn Jones, "A Whiteheadian Aesthetic and Musical Paradigm," *Canadian Aesthetics Journal* 8 (2003), accessed February 12, 2017, http://www.uqtr.uquebec.ca/AE/Vol_8/libres/jones.html. See also Jones, "A. N. Whitehead and Music: Real Time," *Musical Times* 141, no. 1873 (2000): 47–52.

18. On misplaced concreteness, see Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 7–8.

19. Steve Goodman, *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 91–98.

20. My interest in emotion as mediation aligns my work with that of Richard Grusin, who has turned to Whitehead to develop his concept of "radical mediation." See Grusin, "Radical Mediation," *Critical Inquiry* 42, no. 1 (2015): 124–48.

21. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, xi.

22. Ibid., 113.

23. On caring for abstractions, see Isabelle Stengers, "A Constructivist Reading of *Process and Reality*," *Theory, Culture & Society* 25, no. 4 (2008): 91–110, reprinted in *The Lure of Whitehead*, ed. Nicholas Gaskill and A. J. Nocek (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 43–64. See also Stengers, *Thinking with Whitehead: A Free and Wild Creation of Concepts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

24. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 175–76.

25. Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), passim.

26. See Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 151 and passim.

27. Ibid., 244.

28. Stengers, *Thinking with Whitehead*.

29. For the classic critique of the desire for the Archimedean point—which also references Whitehead—see Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 257–68.

30. Alfred North Whitehead, *Modes of Thought* (New York: Free Press, 1966), 2.

31. On *agencement* vs. assemblage see John Phillips, "*Agencement*/Assemblage," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 23, nos. 2–3 (2006). Alfred North Whitehead uses the term "assemblage" in his description of the event: "[Prehension] was introduced to signify the essential unity of an event, namely, the event as one entity, and not as a mere assemblage of parts or of ingredients. It is necessary to understand that space-time is nothing else than a system of pulling together of assemblages into unities. But the word *event* just means one of these spatio-temporal unities. Accordingly, it may be used instead of the term 'prehension' as meaning the thing prehended." Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 72. A potentially analogous term for *agencement* in Whitehead's thought could be "nexus," which implies particular relationships between a given set of things. For further ruminations on the connections between Deleuze and Whitehead, see Steven Shaviro, *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze, and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).

32. Alfred North Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature: The Tarner Lectures Delivered in Trinity College, November 1919* (1920; New York: Dover, 2004), 29.

33. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 35.

34. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 219–82.

35. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, 10; and Langer, "The Process of Feeling," 18.

36. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 233–34.

37. Ibid., 226.

38. Ibid., 234.

39. Antoine Hennion, "The History of Art—Lessons in Mediation," trans. Liz Libbrecht, *Réseaux: Communication—Technologie—Société* 3, no. 2 (1995): 238.

40. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 234–35.

41. Ibid., 119.

42. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 39–86.

43. See the feminist elaboration of this point in Hemmings, "Invoking Affect."

44. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 221.

45. Ibid., 221.

46. For more on Deleuzian musical experience as virtuality and flux, see Michael Gallope, "Is There a Deleuzian Musical Work?" *Perspectives of New Music* 46, no. 2 (2008): 93–129.

47. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul R. Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 284–85.

48. Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, rev. ed. (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 91.

49. Ibid., 91.

50. Ibid., 91.

51. Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Penguin, 2002), 365–66.

52. This echoes Hemmings's point in her critique of Massumi and Eve Sedgwick when she notes the asymmetrical production of negative affect among women and people of color

in Western society. Some do not have the luxury of escaping or disassociating from the affects they are involved in producing. See Hemmings, "Invoking Affect."

53. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 249.

54. Alfred North Whitehead, *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1959), 88.