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► **To cite this version:**

Alessandro Arbo. On Appreciating the Aesthetic Properties of Musical Works. *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 2018, 49 (2), pp.161-174. <hal-03647801>

HAL Id: hal-03647801

<https://hal.science/hal-03647801v1>

Submitted on 25 Apr 2022

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On Appreciating the Aesthetic Properties of Musical Works

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UDC: 78.01
Original Scholarly Paper
Izvorni znanstveni rad
Received: June 23, 2018
Primljeno: 23. lipnja 2018.
Accepted: September 15, 2018
Prihvaćeno: 15. rujna 2018.

1. Introduction

Most people would have no problem agreeing with the following statement: knowing the historical and artistic background of a musical work modifies the ways we listen to it. But how does this happen? In what sense and to what extent does such knowledge actually alter the identity of the work we listen to? To what extent do its aesthetic features change when we learn that a work has a specific title, or that it was written by a certain composer (rather than by another), or that it was composed at a certain age (rather than at another)? In this article we will try to find answers to these questions in order to better understand the role played by contextual knowledge in the recognition and appreciation of the aesthetic properties of the musical works. To achieve this goal, we will undertake a brief discussion of a philosophical tool known as the theory of aesthetic supervenience.¹

¹ Many thanks to Richard Hermann for his comments and Philip Clarke for suggesting some improvements of the text in its English version.

Abstract - Résumé

The article focuses on the role played by contextual knowledge in appreciating the aesthetic properties of musical works. The opportunity to distinguish between the expressive properties and the artistic properties is discussed. Contextual knowledge functions as a kind of catalyst intervening in the (indirect) supervenience of the aesthetic properties of musical works. Its impact is more crucial in appreciating the artistic properties than in appreciating some basically expressive properties.

Keywords: musical understanding • aesthetic properties • aesthetic supervenience • musical works

2. Aesthetic Properties

Our starting point is a thought experiment introduced by Jerrold Levinson in his seminal essay *What a Musical Work Is*. His purpose is to highlight the weakness of the (Platonic) thesis according to which a musical work coincides with an abstract type corresponding to a »pure« sound structure.² The basic argument goes as follows: if »the aesthetic and artistic attributes of a piece of music are partly a function of, and must be gauged with reference to, the total musical-historical context in which the composer is situated while composing his piece« (Levinson 1990, 68-69), then what is presented as the *same sound structure*, if it has been composed in two different contexts does not mean it is *the same work*.³ Here is the thought experiment that Levinson proposed:

A work identical in sound-structure with Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* (1912), but composed by Richard Strauss in 1897 would be aesthetically different from Schoenberg's work. Call it *Pierrot lunaire**. As a Straussian work, *Pierrot lunaire** would follow hard upon Brahms's *Requiem allemand*, would be contemporaneous with Debussy's *Nocturnes*, and would be taken as the next step in Strauss's development after *Also sprach Zarathustra*. As such, it would be more *bizarre*, more *upsetting*, more *anguished*, more *eerie* even than Schoenberg's work, since perceived against a musical tradition, a field of current styles, and an œuvre with respect to which the musical characteristics of the sound structure involved in *Pierrot lunaire* appear doubly extreme (Levinson 1990, 70).

For this work to be correctly identified, it seems vital to know something about the context in which it was composed. In other words, approaching *Pierrot lunaire* as a simple sound structure – without knowing anything about the end of Romanticism, atonality, the Second Viennese School, etc. – is always possible (and this may even be the case, most of the time); but what we are addressing here is (still) not this particular work of Schoenberg. As a work by Strauss, says Levinson, *Pierrot lunaire** would strike us as »more *bizarre*, more *upsetting*, more *anguished*, and more *eerie* even than Schoenberg's work«. In fact, knowing Strauss's works – and more precisely the works that Strauss wrote in 1897 – and with minimum knowledge of Schoenberg's work, we would say without hesitation that *Pierrot lunaire** would be more »bizarre«: a language so quick to defy the principles of tonality is not exactly up Strauss's street. We would hesitate however to call it more *anguished*, *upsetting* and *eerie*. Perhaps this set of properties appear more unusual in Strauss than in Schoenberg: but we would all be inclined to say that they appear so in either case. But is this right?

² This is the thesis defended by WOLTERS DORFF (1980), KIVY (1983) and DODD (2002).

³ This is also the thesis of KENDALL WALTON (1973, 725-726), relating to a similar thought experiment.

To answer we need to broaden the analysis of the aesthetic properties of musical works. What are they exactly and how do they work? A possible answer would be to say that they »supervene«⁴ on the physical-phenomenal properties of the objects under consideration – properties, qualities or concepts which, starting from Sibley (1959), are defined by simple negation as being »non-aesthetic«. As distinct from non-aesthetic properties, aesthetic properties depend on the former ontologically. Thus, a phrase like »this line is pink« refers to a non-aesthetic property, whereas »this line is elegant« or »this line is gracious« refers to an aesthetic property. It is easy to see that being elegant or gracious is linked to the presence of certain non-aesthetic traits or qualities: for example, the line may be curved, or has a rather nuanced or subdued color. It is generally pointed out at this juncture that aesthetic properties are not governed by positive conditions: even if the gracefulness of a drawing supervenes on the curved lines and nuanced or subdued colors, the presence of these does not necessarily guarantee the presence of such a quality (a line can be curved and pink without being graceful). We can at best, as Sibley suggests, identify some negative conditions: a zig-zag line and a garish color cannot be graceful. It is thus possible to determine a general principle:

Two objects (e.g., artworks) that differ *aesthetically* necessarily differ *non-aesthetically* (i.e., there could not be two objects that were aesthetically *different* yet non-aesthetically *identical*: fixing the non-aesthetic properties of an object fixes its aesthetic properties). (Levinson 1990, 135).

This description – which philosophers after Sibley have called the claim of »aesthetic supervenience« – has the merit of avoiding two opposing errors: 1) physicalism or psychologism, which reduces all aesthetic properties to objective properties that are either physical or perceptive; 2) cultural (or spiritualist) relativism, in which all aesthetic properties are simply »projected« onto objects by subjects. Recognizing that aesthetic properties »supervene« on non-aesthetic properties amounts to admitting that they are *ontologically dependent* on them: put otherwise, they belong to the things of the external world and not simply to our minds. Moreover, to observe that they are not governed by positive conditions means admitting their *conceptual difference* in relation to what is called the »supervenience base«.

We should remember that this claim (formulated a few decades ago) has been criticized for not being sufficiently explanatory (see Wicks 1988, Focosi 2009, 159-160, Bennet and McLaughlin 2012, §3.7). Actually it proves unable to shed any light on *why* the aesthetic properties supervene, given that what defines their

⁴ For a complete overview on the philosophical use of this term, see BENNET and McLAUGHLIN (2012).

supervenience is nothing other than a *covariation* and that it is impossible to identify any general rules. It is nonetheless true that it is (for the moment) the most effective description available to us to account for what happens in our aesthetic experience. It still has the advantage of clearly signifying that all sorts of objects can lend themselves to an aesthetic supervenience. But when talking about artworks, there is a difference that should not be overlooked: the aesthetic qualities of *Pierrot lunaire* cannot be reduced to the aesthetic qualities of a nocturnal landscape. But in what sense, exactly?

Let us turn our attention to the supervenience base. As we have pointed out, this base embodies non-aesthetic properties. However, as Levinson observes (1990, 135-136), these include not only phenomenal (which Levinson calls »structural«) and physical (»sub-structural) properties, but also contextual properties (i.e. the properties where the relationships between the object and the artistic and cultural context in which the work has been produced appear). The supervenience base of the aesthetic properties of *Pierrot lunaire* therefore contains *more elements* than the supervenience base of a nocturnal landscape (however eerie and anguished it may already seem to us). When we assimilate these properties, we become able to grasp new aspects, as well as similarities or relationships between artistic forms and practices (such as the rather free character of a Schoenberg melody, which is similar, in some respects, to the lines in a work by Kandinsky).

A supervenient description is a convincing one, even if we should carefully consider the distinction between the contextual and structural (and sub-structural) properties. If all the structural properties can be defined in a roughly stable way, the set of contextual properties is by its very nature more variable. The discovery of new relationships can change the way we think about a work; revising the genre categories used to express these relationships (e.g. baroque, rococo, country music, heavy metal, grunge, etc.) can also make them vary considerably. On the other hand, the structural properties of a work – if they are to be correctly recognized – require more advanced skills: if hearing a sound as loud or soft is more a question of perception than cognition, it is not the same for the distinction between hearing a chord (that functions) as a German sixth or as a dominant seventh (as we are asked to do during an enharmonic modulation).

There is another point that deserves to be examined carefully. If in a particular sense »hearing something as a (musical) work« requires that we know about the contextual properties, in a more general sense we already need a web of beliefs in which such knowledge is rooted: we have to believe that what we are hearing is *music composed by someone*. This aspect emerges clearly in the theory of »double supervenience« posited by Roger Pouivet (2010, 155-178). He observes that if aesthetic properties supervene on the physical-phenomenal properties of objects, one can sometimes doubt the direct character of such supervenience – and this is precisely the case that is of interest to us here:

Aesthetic properties supervene on intentional properties, as for example when we are dealing with a painting. Otherwise put, for a work to have an aesthetic property, let's say »sad« for the sake of argument, the painting has to be sad. It is also necessary that the person who believes that he is looking at a painting can apply that attribute to it. (Pouivet 2010, 162)

We should therefore take into account the relatively more »narrow« nature of the indirect supervenience base of aesthetic properties and its broadening at the level of intentional properties (Pouivet 2010, 164). To complete the picture, we must add the evaluative aesthetic properties – such as »beautiful« – that »supervene on aesthetic properties that are non-evaluative, classificatory (»symphonic«), affective (»poignant«) and historical-aesthetic (»baroque«)«. The full set of properties is the following:

- 4) evaluative aesthetic properties
- 3) aesthetic properties
- 2) intentional properties (beliefs, emotions)
- 1) physical-phenomenal properties (Pouivet 2010, 175).

How can this double supervenience of the intentional properties and the physical-phenomenal properties be more precisely established? The aesthetic properties seem to emerge on two bases at the same time (see Pouivet 2010a, 58), i.e. those formed by the physical-phenomenal on the one hand and by the web of our beliefs on the other. But can we actually consider the functioning of intentional and physical-phenomenal properties as being similar? Let's come back to the *Pierrot lunaire* example: if the eerie and anguished moods are manifested in what we hear *via* our knowledge of Schoenberg's (or Strauss's) work, it is because the mere mixture of sonorities and vocalisms that can be grasped without having the right contextual knowledge already has these properties (or at least to a certain extent). Would we hear them if they were absent from the (physical-phenomenal) supervenience and if someone told us they believed they existed? This seems unlikely and is in any case easy to refute: is there anyone who would claim, by virtue of acquired beliefs or particular contextual knowledge, that the introductory phrase played by the cellos and basses in the opening *Allegro maestoso* of Mahler's *Symphony n° 2* is »tender« (or should be heard as being »tender«)?

It has to be said though that this fact is not always so obvious. Take John Cage's *Imaginary Landscape N° 4* as a case in point: a listener lacking the appropriate beliefs and background knowledge – a Testadura⁵ passing from a visit of art galleries and settling down in their armchair in front their stereo system or wearing .mp3 headphones – might well believe that what they are listening to is a radio-based technological experiment; that it could even be a »musical work«

⁵ This is the name that Arthur Danto gave to the unsophisticated spectator (or more precisely to »a plain speaker and noted philistine«) in his famous essay on »The Artworld« (DANTO 1964, 575).

might never even enter their head. Would we claim that the artistic properties supervene on the base formed by the physical-phenomenal properties via the web of knowledge and beliefs relating to the origin of the artefact? The fact is that the physical-phenomenal properties in this case are random: if a change at this level is accompanied by a change in aesthetic properties, how can we say we are talking about the same work or a work which has the same artistic properties? Instead, it might be argued that these depend entirely (or almost so) on our web of beliefs by disregarding (to a certain extent) the physical-phenomenal properties of the musical object. We can draw a parallel in one of Duchamp's famous *ready-mades*: we are willing to see a urinal as an artwork because a famous artist invited us to do so at a particular point in the history of art. In this example, we would be dealing with semantic rather than perceptive supervenience, one that arises directly from intentional and contextual properties.

Some remarks can be made about this point. Firstly, the situation we have just mentioned is not common: even though avant-garde art and music have already tackled such experiments, they remain nevertheless exceptional: when we focus on aesthetic meanings or symbolic values in a piece of music, we are generally interested in (and take pleasure from) seeing them emerge from the physical-phenomenal base, and we do not normally remain indifferent to them. This is a point that requires a little amplification: indifference is never total and the qualities of the object matter to us despite the random nature of their combination. Cage's imaginary landscape is based on sounds that have been explicitly chosen for their noise or signal-based qualities, sounds that we might expect to emanate from the radio and thereby perceived as being extraneous to »normal« musical expression. Duchamp's *Fontaine* is a urinal turned upside down: even though the artist has proved that the properties of the '*objet trouvé*' do not really count, it is still the case that the urinal has – due to its very shape and the function it has as a non-artistic artefact – an iconoclastic power greater than that of, say, a clay vase. Even an avant-garde work has to choose its materials if it wants to present itself as audacious or anti-conventional. The foregoing shows that, even in extreme cases, the supervenience of aesthetic properties is in fact double.

3. The Right Identification

This said, there is still the problem of identifying the properties or the categories likely to activate this aesthetic functioning: if several reception contexts favour the modification of these categories, how are we to choose those which enable us to have an appropriate perception? Is there a criterion likely to make us bring out some that are more pertinent than others?

Kendall Walton (1970, 357-358) has offered a convincing answer to this question: while admitting openly to such variability, we should consider the properties the artist (or composer) intended the public to perceive in the work

when it was composed as being »standards«. A second criterion, generally (but not automatically) in accordance with the foregoing, consists in choosing the properties that allow us to derive the greatest appreciation from the experience we have of the work, because they condition us to be more finely attuned to its salient aspects. In the event of a conflict between these two criteria, it seems reasonable to maintain, as a minimum condition, that »it *cannot* be correct [...] to perceive a work in categories which are totally foreign to the artist and his society, even if it comes across as a masterpiece in them« (Walton 1970, 360). For the rest, »none of these complications relieves the critic of the responsibility for determining in what way or ways it is correct to perceive a work.« (Walton 1970, 363). The adoption of this perspective – which involves taking into account both the composer’s intentions and the perceptive abilities of the audience listening to the work – will prompt us to distinguish between a set of properties that should be considered as »standards«, others as »contra-standards«, and yet others that can be considered as »variables«.

A special case needs to be considered at this point: that of improvised music – or more precisely, the music we listen to with the belief that it is in fact an improvisation. To what extent does the fact of knowing (or believing we know) it is improvised change the way we hear the music? As Clément Canonne has shown (2013, 352), we pass from an »instrumental listening posture that involves hearing the sounds as the product of an instrumental gesture (...)« to an »intentionalist listening posture that involves hearing the sounds as the product of an instrumental gesture coupled to a generative thought«. We could in fact make the observation that in both cases generative thought is present, and that it is just the time dimension in the thought that is different. When the (aesthetic-)expressive properties interact with the right web of beliefs, they constitute the supervenience base of the (aesthetic-)artistic properties of the work (or improvisation). The presence, to a greater or lesser degree, of these two types of properties characterizes different ways of hearing and understanding music.

Nuanced levels of knowledge and beliefs enter into play when we listen to different musical repertoires or genres. Knowing the musical conventions that Mozart worked with is no doubt important in understanding the artistic properties of his symphonies (Davies 2003, 229). In the case of rock music, the fact of knowing if the CD track we are listening to was recorded in a studio or played live will contribute to our perception of it as either a »work« (with all its aesthetic and artistic properties, see Pouivet 2010a, 58-59), or as the »document« of a performance of the song – meaning its melodic, harmonic and rhythmic structure – that such a work is supposed to »manifest« (in terms of the thesis posted by Gracyk 1996, 18). In turn, the aesthetic understanding of film music involves the images and knowledge of the narrative framework. Take, for example, *The Story of a Soldier* written by Ennio Morricone for Sergio Leone’s film *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*:

a highly evocative piece that is full of expressive properties such as sweetness, tenderness and melancholy. However, if we listen to it whilst watching the visual context in which it is supposed to function, we tend to hear it differently: it provides a paradoxical backdrop to a scene of flagrant violence. Its properties change according to the web of references generated by the images and scenario: the music becomes particularly effective, functioning as it does as a counterpoint to the images we see on the screen. The music might even strike us as cruel or perverse because of its very sweetness and tenderness. What changes significantly, finally, is the (aesthetic) understanding of some basic features of the musical work we are listening to.

4. An Example

Wittgenstein (2000, 298) invited us to describe aesthetic understanding in terms of that »mental click« we experience when there is a change of aspect, like a sudden flash of lighting or an illumination. This description corresponds to what we experience when we grasp the function of a structural element or an interpretative choice (e.g. »I thought it was the introduction but in fact the theme had already started«; »what I thought was the conclusion was just a semi-colon«; »now it's the right tempo!« etc.). Understanding should not however be confused with an act of interpretation, to the extent that it is not presented as an action or a process. Or it could be said that these can only be a preliminary phase: the moment where one is looking for a meaning that has not yet found.⁶ It is of course possible to develop a strategy of progressive understanding in which we will see the different aspects or features of the object under observation (or listened to) gradually emerge; but each time we grasp a pattern or a meaning, these will appear as a sort of pause in this process, and will not coincide with the idea of an interpretative activity, but with its fulfilment.

We should not draw any false conclusions about this observation. The impression should not be given that understanding a musical work is like a sort of mathematical operation with a »simple« solution at the end. If our knowledge and beliefs can be improved, we should speak rather of several degrees or several stages of understanding. Certainly knowing the type of music already allows us to target specific important differences: we can grasp the response the work provides to specific compositional issues, and also to grasp in a more correct way its role or its social functions (as rightly emphasized by Davies, 2003). This knowledge can be improved: perhaps we will discover aspects that will lead us to

⁶ »When I interpret, I step from one level of my thought to another«; WITTGENSTEIN (1974, 147).

profoundly change how we listen (as happened, for example, with the sonorities and structures in Beethoven's late style works).

To understand the implications of this in more detail, let us take a closer look at the next example. In our scenario, a listener with a minimum of musical skills – but without any further background knowledge – is played a recording of the first movement from the orchestral suite *Les éléments* by Jean-Féry Rebel (using in our experiment the excellent version played by the *Musiciens du Louvre* ensemble conducted by Marc Minkowski, an Erato CD released in 1993). Our listener might very well give the following description of what they hear: the music sounds powerful, questioning, frightening (maybe even terrifying); these characteristics arise from perceptible qualities such as the amplitude, attack, sound mass, densities and moments of dissonance. We then hear phrases in the lower register, some more rarefied passages punctuated by flurries of descending notes, dominated by a feeling of darkness and mystery. However, as our listener does not have the relevant background knowledge, they may be mistaken about the identification of the piece's properties. For example, they may take the opening dissonant cluster to be a badly played chord or think that what they are listening to is a sort of orchestral rhythmic experiment during a rehearsal. They may also think it is a contemporary work, or a very noisy soundtrack; or even that there is a technical problem at the beginning of the recording (maybe the track is damaged).

If the musical skills of this listener were a little bit more developed, they could perhaps offer up an assumption on the work's production context; this is what would be expected from a musicology student, for example, during a music listening test. After the opening cluster, they would thus be able to perceive a rise in the melody following an unstable diminished seventh chord (a chord which, because of the A heard before can be heard as a dominant minor ninth without the root). The chord is followed by powerful D minor chords that »open« on to more rarefied passages. If the beginning seems somewhat enigmatic, what follows clearly illustrates music in the baroque style. Even there, we might find it difficult to decide: is it a contemporary composer who is writing in the baroque style or a baroque composer who was ahead of his time?

To avoid being confused by such ambiguities, we need to consider some specifics. It will be recalled that the opening movement is titled »Chaos«, this being part of a cycle entitled *Les éléments* (1737) by Jean-Féry Rebel (1666-1747), violinist and composer at the Court of Louis XV from 1726 onwards. The score is played here by the *Musiciens du Louvre* ensemble conducted by Marc Minkowski. If the performance context is fairly close to us (i.e. its performance and recording), the composition itself roughly coincides with the French baroque style: a musical style that intentionally sought artifice, illusion, splendor, pomp, celebration and glory (of the king). Rebel has composed (here and in other pieces) a free-standing dance symphony independent of any dramatic representations (see Cessac 1993,

V). History then goes on to tell us about his relations with Michel-Richard Delalande and André Cardinal Destouches: in 1721 in the Tuileries, Rebel conducted the opera-ballet *Les éléments* composed by these two men based on the libretto by Pierre-Charles Roy. But history would also evoke, though on a slightly wider scale, the musical style of Lully (under whom Rebel received his training and who at the time was a prominent model). Continuing our quest for those all-important specifics, it would be useful to know the position and character of this work compared to others written by the same composer: we discover that this was in fact his last work after a series of *Sonates* for violin, a lyric tragedy, and ballet music. The version we hear is the orchestral one; it is interesting to note however that the composer explicitly stated that it could be played in a chamber version and even on the harpsichord alone (the opening cluster then takes on a very metallic and noisy character). Other information is provided by the «Avertissement» written by the composer to accompany the score. In it we read among other things that the opening «symphonie» represents «Chaos itself, the state of confusion that reigned among the Elements, before the moment when, subject to immutable laws they took their prescribed place in nature's order» (Cessac 1993, XIV).

How does all this knowledge impact on the listener's perception? The title clearly confirms much about the piece: it seems to *justify* the presence of certain characteristics. It invites us to pick out certain traits (what seemed an «error» – the cluster – is a semantically relevant aspect). The «Avertissement» adds more precise meaning to expressive material that is open to several interpretations (Are these strange sounds trying to convey something? Is it a storm? A monster? A murderer bursting in?) As we saw when experiencing the sudden emergence of an aspect, that Wittgensteinian «click», we could say here: «Ah, now I understand: this opening confusion is the chaos that reigned before the creation! Yes, the composer has well and truly managed to represent this event». As for knowing the background to the composition, it allows us to wisely discern and grasp the artistic interest of what we hear: it's a striking beginning, more original or extravagant than the *Ouverture* composed by Destouches (which was nevertheless a success in its day); we further understand the harmonic anomaly which is justified in light of the trend in French music of that time to incorporate sound effects in performances intended to be played on the stage for consumption by a cultivated aristocratic audience.

As we have seen, this knowledge and these beliefs occupy a mid-point between the supervenience base that is constituted by the physical and phenomenal qualities and the artistic qualities of the work. We can therefore speak of a two-level supervenience, while still emphasizing the indirect character of both: on one level – characterized by the simple ability to hear – we mainly tend to grasp the aesthetic and expressive aspects of musical objects that supervene on the physical and phenomenal base via the web of beliefs and general musical skills; on a higher level, we are better able to grasp the aesthetic and artistic properties

via the integration of background knowledge that is likely to direct our attention to the right supervenience base. The opening cluster will therefore be heard as a stroke of inspiration specific to the instrumental invention of a French composer at the time of Louis XV. We are thus now able to hear the object in question in a more refined way: the artistic properties reveal the interest and originality of the creative act and increase our aesthetic pleasure.

The categories that direct us to the right supervenience base are indeed those which the composer would have expected the audience and the society of his time to have understood, even if other choices are still possible. In the imaginary museum of a music lover, the opening of the work described above could figure in the Commendatore's antechamber scene in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (where several morphological similarities can be identified). How would we understand that opening if, say, it had been composed in 1950? The *clusters* would strike us as being somewhat »simple«, mannerist, even; as for the harmonies used, we would probably hear them as a neoclassical gesture, or as an imitation of a given style. In short, our judgement would change, and not necessarily for the worse: as a neo-classical, neo-baroque or other style of work, this piece could have *other* merits and *other* properties, even if the harmony and sound densities probably surprise us much less.

The example of *Pierrot lunaire* that attracted the interest of Levinson lends itself to similar considerations: its so-called »harrowing« and »mysterious« character only become more interesting to us when we know how much the expressionist movement and Viennese culture in general at the beginning of the 20th century (Freud, Schnitzler and Schiele, to mention just three names evocative of that time) wanted to explore the »dark side« of the psyche, going beyond the paths trodden by German Romanticism. This is why what appears to have the same harrowing traits takes on a different meaning in the case of Strauss whose work is more readily associated with Romantic and post-Romantic categories (although his familiarity with Viennese culture and interest in the dark recesses of the mind should certainly not be overlooked). Nonetheless, a change of categories or of beliefs (however radical they may be) is not enough to make them sound joyful, in the same way that the opening bars of Mozart's »Jupiter« symphony can be perceived as harrowing: even being sure that Schoenberg wanted to express joy and Mozart a tragic sense of life, we could not say we hear the first example as being joyful and the second as tragic. Similarly, whether or not we know Kant's categorical imperative, or the notion of heroism and the story of Napoleon, the beginning of Beethoven's *Third Symphony* sounds »imposing«, with connotations that vary to a greater or lesser extent between »fiery«, »brusque«, »solemn«, and »triumphant«; but it can never be heard as »elegant« or »affectionate«.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion to be drawn from these remarks is that the web of contextual beliefs and knowledge functions as a kind of catalyst intervening in the indirect supervenience of the aesthetic properties of a musical work. The integration of such a catalyst is a relevant condition for drawing our attention to the right supervenience base and for us to be able to hear it as the specific musical work that it is. However, if we distinguish, among the aesthetic properties, those concerning certain essentially expressive aspects from those concerning more specific artistic aspects, in light of the examples given above, it should be pointed out that the effect produced on the expressive properties by an awareness of the work's historical context is generally less pronounced than the effect produced on the artistic properties.

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*Sažetak***O percepciji estetičkih svojstava glazbenih djela**

Na koji način i do koje mjere uvjerenja i kontekstualne spoznaje (kao što su poznavanje naslova, autora, sredine u kojoj je komponirano, itd.) jednoga glazbenog djela uvjetuju percepciju njegovih estetičkih kvaliteta? U članku se nastoji odgovoriti na to pitanje putem rasprave o filozofskoj doktrini estetičke neočekivanosti. Naročito se ispituje teorija dvostruke neočekivanosti koju je formulirao Roger Pouivet, prema kojoj se – u slučaju glazbenih djela kao i u svim umjetničkim djelima – estetička svojstva iznenada pojavljuju istodobno na fizičko-pojavnim svojstvima kao i na intencionalnim svojstvima. Upozorava se na činjenicu da uvjerenja i kontekstualne spoznaje funkcioniraju kao katalizator koji se upliće u indirektnu neočekivanost estetičkih svojstava u njihovom fizičko-pojavnom temelju. Takve dispozicije valja promatrati u funkciji raznih glazbenih repertoara ili žanrova. Tada se primjećuje da se učinak, koji se očituje u shvaćanju izražajnih svojstava djela osvještavanjem njegova povijesnog položaja i glazbenog žanra kojemu pripada, općenito pokazuje kao manje izrazit nego što je to učinak koji se očituje u shvaćanju njegovih umjetničkih svojstava.