Let me begin by disclaiming any intention of implying, as the title of this essay may suggest, the same prognosis for music that Baudelaire made for love when, in "La Charogne," he likened the future of his beloved to a dog's decaying carcass. It is true, however, that what I have to say about music will perhaps appear quite as shocking to the traditional lore of aesthetics as the poet's song did to that of love. But it is my intention to carry the comparison no further and to offer, not a romantic apostasy of love but what might rather be regarded as a romantic affirmation of art. In any event, my interest here is not in biological degeneration but in artistic generation, and I hope to suggest that in the case of music and, \textit{(mutatis mutandis)}, the other arts, some common ways of regarding the creative process are as misleading as they are misapprehended. More positively, I shall offer an alternative that may grasp more successfully something of the nature of the creative factor in musical composition.

That process is one which often baffles the non-musician, probably because the materials of music and the ways they are shaped seem markedly different from those found in the other arts. Moreover, they appear to have little direct connection with those regions of experience that lie outside that art and with which we are familiar and easy. And so the challenge of arranging such materials is incomprehensibly strange. Perhaps that is why in the western classical tradition music is so often called the most abstract of the arts, for it rarely draws directly from the sounds of nature nor does it usually assume the fragmentary forms in which they appear. Even when music is combined with theater as in opera, with poetry as in song, with rhetoric as in melodeclamation, or with environment as in musique concrete, it does not seem to possess in any direct fashion the referential character that language has in literature, or the images and forms of the world around that painting and sculpture have until recent times exhibited directly and even in their most abstract moments still retain. Music does not fashion itself out of the social condition of human action and reflection in the manner of narrative literature, nor can it grasp the steadying hand of mechanics and function that are an inherent part of architecture and to which Goethe and
Schopenhauer once compared it.\footnote{Arthur Schopenhauer, (The World As Will and Representation), trans. by E.F.J. Payne (The Falcon's Wing Press, 1958), Vol. II, pp. 453-454.} It is true that theorists have claimed at times that music reflects or embodies the qualities and dynamic forms of emotional states. This notion can be traced back to the Classical period, it appeared in certain theories during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, emerged as a position in its own right in the (Affektenlehre) of the eighteenth century Germans, and still continues beyond Langer's theory of the arts as symbolic of feeling in the twentieth. Yet this is a connection that requires a developed theory for it to be taken seriously, and such proposals have by no means been universally accepted. Apart from the commonplace association of music with feelings (a connection that results in rather little intelligibility by balancing the intangibility of the one by the chaos of the other), music remains perhaps the most arcane of the major arts, an intriguing yet incomprehensible wonder of creation. Indeed, there is surely a point to be found in Schoenberg's remark that "from the point of view of pure aesthetics, music does not express the extra-musical."\footnote{Quoted by Francis Sparshott, "Aesthetics of Music--Limits and Grounds," f.n. 30.} This, then, is the peculiar travail and glory of the composer. By inventing and ordering sounds which have no direct tie outside that art and which serve no primary purpose, he becomes a Promethean challenger of the divine monopoly on original creation. Apparently beginning with no more than a self-contained history of techniques and practices, the composer brings something into being where there was nothing before.

Yet at the same time that music is abstract and intangible, it is also concrete, utilizing the most direct qualities of audible experience. What these qualities are has often been specified by such terms as tone, pitch, timbre, duration, intensity, volume, rhythm, meter, tempo, and the like. Joined together in a musical work, these immediately perceptible qualities make music directly accessible. There need be no intermediary for perceptual experiences which we can apprehend in their striking directness and whose force requires no explanation (although it often tempts one). In the arranging of these aural qualities lie the confusions and challenges of musical composition, and much has been proposed and denied about this process. Some have tried to characterize the outcome of such an ordering in the most general terms. Hanslick's specification is the classic statement of the formalist position--(tonend
bewegte Formen), which may be translated variously as "sound and motion," @foot[(The Beautiful in Music), trans. Gustav Cohen, ed. Morris Weitz (New York, 1957)] "forms moving in terms of a tonal system," @foot[(Francis Sparshott, @UN(op. cit.), p. 45.] and "tonally moving forms," @foot[(Professor Geoffrey Payzant, in a new, important, not yet published translation of the Hanslick book.), but which I should prefer to read, closest to the last of these and least assumptively as "forms of moving tones." This is a position which has clear echoes in Stravinsky's observation that "the phenomenon of music is the phenomenon of speculation aimed at the elements of sound and time" @foot[(Igor Stravinsky, (Poetics of Music) (New York: Vintage, 1956), p.28.] and Langer's claim that the essence of music is "the creation of virtual time, and its complete determination by the movement of audible forms." @foot[(Suzanne Langer, (Feeling and Form) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p.125. ) Yet these highly generalized characterizations, while commendable for being literal and direct, seem to help us rather little in accounting for the ways in which music is shaped from these basic materials into individual works.

Now specific systems of rules are sometimes adduced here, the most famous of which is surely Schoenberg's twelve-tone serial technique. Yet except in its most attenuated and cabalistic post-Webernian manifestations, a tone row specifies an order roughly comparable to a mode or a scale, except that the sequence in using the pitches is obligatory. This leaves an enormous range of flexibility to the composer's individual discretion, resulting in music as varied stylistically as Schoenberg's (Violin Concerto), Berg's (Lulu), and Webern's, (Symphony) op. 21, to cite some of the most famous. Rules have often been adduced for the writing of music, from Johann Joseph Fux's codification of contrapuntal practice and Rameau's ordering of the tertiary harmonic idiom, both early in the eighteenth century, to Goetschius's neat ordering of homophonic and contrapuntal musical forms at the turn of the twentieth and to periodic attempts to specify rules for writing four-part harmony. Yet except for serial composition, such systems of rules have most typically followed practice, not prescribed it, and have led to enshrining uninteresting conventions once the practices they specify are no longer fresh and unpredictable. Apart from the skill and auditory awareness that may be acquired by mastering an already petrified technique, rules have little to offer either as a method or an explanation of musical composition.
There is another even more common account whose simplicity and obviousness are compelling to the amateur and musician alike. It is, indeed, stereotypical to regard musical composition as a process of shaping tonal materials by the demands of one musical form or another. Not only does a preponderance of the musical literature, classical, folk, or popular, follow an easily identifiable form; those forms supply the names for much of that literature. Songs, ballads, fugues, canons, sonatas, symphonies, rondos, variations offer titles and explanations of music simultaneously. It is easy and clear to consider a musical form much in the manner of a mold that gives shape to its contents. Musical sounds are arranged within the restrictions imposed by a form, and the form provides guidance to the composer for the elaboration and ordering of his materials. Such forms are a rough analogue of the Kantian categories of the understanding, functioning as (a priori) determinants of chaotic tonal matter which, without such ordering, would be both shapeless and incomprehensible. Even if one wisely acknowledges those arguments for literature and painting that advise against thinking we can separate form and matter, the distinction is convenient and compellingly obvious in the case of music, and it appears to offer the most plausible account of the compositional process. Indeed, the very word 'compose' means, by etymology and usage, 'to place together,' and suggests a constructivist activity. Thus usage, convention, and intuition concur.

As an account of how composers compose, the process of shaping musical materials according to the patterns and strictures of a previously determined form is no doubt true in many cases. Production by formula has, to be sure, a long and tiresome history for the listener as well as for the composer with limited originality. Even though we are ready to admire Bach for those marvelous dissonances which stand as exceptions to the conventions of voice-leading that were codified only after his time and we extoll Beethoven and Mahler for their daring in bursting the confines of the classical symphony, it is still true that there is a vast literature that seems more or less to conform to those established patterns.

Still there are problems. For example, musical forms are not neutral structures that can be filled by any material at hand. You cannot have a Dutch colonial skyscraper, Philip Johnson and post-modernism notwithstanding, just as you cannot have a monumental classical symphony. When Mozart approached
this in the finale of his (Jupiter Symphony), for instance, he had to break the bonds of the sonata-allegro form and adapt it to his own purposes, just as Beethoven did for the same reasons in the first movement of the (Eroica). There cannot be a monochromatic still life or an epic sonnet for the same reason that the subject of a Bach fugue cannot serve as the theme of a symphony or a three-part song. That is because musical materials place demands on the composer; they require certain forms of elaboration and reject others. And when a composer is more swayed by the force of convention than by the force of his musical ideas, the result shows the strain, as when Schubert bent his extraordinary genius for lyric melody into awkward and ungainly dimensions under the expansive and developmental requirements of the symphony. To be able to function in a different, uncongenial form, musical ideas must be modified to change their character, as when the theme in a sonata-allegro movement is used as the subject of a fugato. At the very least, then, there is a correlative relation between musical materials and forms: the materials suggest what form is most suitable and the form suggests the type of material appropriate to it. But this is an uneasy balance, probably because the terms of the equation are the wrong ones and, indeed, because there is no equation in the first place.

For there is more to be answered here than this convenient falsehood can manage. The forms we have been talking about do not appear ready made: they have their histories. Different materials appear and an altered sensibility develops. Over the course of music history there have been changes in melodic style, altered and expanded harmonic structures, and fresh sounds, textures, and patterns generated by the technical capabilities of newly invented instruments like the piano and the synthesizer. These novel materials force the development and extension of the prevailing forms, such as the expansion of the Baroque binary form into the sonata-allegro form and the classical symphony into the romantic one. Isn't it more plausible to suppose, then, that the kinds of thematic, textural, and harmonic materials of a period influence and indeed shape the prevailing forms of that period? At the very least, composers of talent instill freshness and life into the conventions they inherit, as Bach, Brahms, and Stravinsky did. Often they develop and extend those conventions, as was the case with Haydn and Mozart, stretch them into unrecognizability, as happened with Bruckner, Mahler, and Wagner, and seize on new vehicles to carry their distinctive ideas forward, as did Chopin, Liszt, and Satie. Such composers can hardly be said to "follow the form" when their materials just
will not abide by the strictures of those forms.

However we structure the problem of the relation between musical form and materials and attempt to resolve it by attenuating the distinction and urging the reciprocity of its terms, the issue will not settle comfortably. For the phenomena of music, complex though they be, are not packaged that way, so far as perception is concerned. The distinction between form and materials in music comes after the fact, not before it. It is an ordering by which we hope (mistakenly) to understand those phenomena better. Yet it is hard to avoid the thought that this may be yet another case of the common philosophical occurrence of concepts and distinctions that generate more difficulties than they dispel. Sparshott comes to similar conclusions in discussing the separation between making and listening to music, yet he incurs the same difficulties with his categorization of three different kinds of music: melodic, rhythmic, and cerebral, as if these were not necessary parts of virtually every musical work. When it is the composer who leans on the form-materials distinction and guides his musical ideas by the demands of a form, there emerges all the tediousness of derivative art, of pat formulas with predictable products. While new materials and technologies are a major cause in changing musical sensibilities which then press in fresh directions for their embodiment, they offer but the most obvious case of what all art compels. In music as in the other arts, the work is not a construction from elements but an indissoluble unity.

How better can we develop an aesthetics of musical composition from the standpoint of perceptual experience? If we are sensitive to musical sounds as they are directly heard, we may discover that they possess a dynamic, generative character. Victor Zukerkandl and Schenker have explored certain aspects of these traits of musical tones and motives. A tone, for example, will not stand alone; its very duration extends the tone and projects a tension that propels it forward. Accretions and groupings develop, and each of these contains its own aural impulses that compel it to move ahead. From the opening motive of Beethoven's (Fifth Symphony) to the five-note figure that begins Bartok's (Music for Strings,
Percussion, and Celeste), the history of music is replete with works that develop out of the forces implicit in their motivic ideas.

Yet there are many other ways in which musical forces move. Patterns of tones, of rhythm, or of harmony, for example, may set up a momentum which must be continued and carried to fulfillment. Many of the (Preludes) from Bach's (Well-Tempered Clavier) are generated from patterns of harmony and of keyboard texture, uniform figures that constitute nearly the entire piece. Zuckerkandl's discussion of the dynamic properties of tones in the diatonic system does much to illuminate how connections among pitches are not fortuitous but are generated out of the forces and tensions inherent in the relationships among such sounds. Melodies have a kind of logic in their fulfillment, although words like logic or necessity have connotations too rational to convey the dynamic qualities of sound that the composer grasps intuitively. A work like Ravel's (Boléro) combines both a persistent rhythmic pattern with two similar melodies repeated endlessly, all cast under the dynamic framework of a single great crescendo to fashion an obsessively powerful work.

Repetition, in fact, may be the single most significant factor in the development of musical materials. It is important, however, not to construe repetition in a mechanical sense, for music is not built up out of repeated units as a building may be constructed out of blocks of brick or stone or as an engine fires its cylinders ceaselessly in an unvarying order. Repeated melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic patterns breed their sequels, so to speak, for the ways in which continuity develops are not only cumulative but generative. The chaconne and the passacaglia are instructive examples of how this may occur. Used mainly in the Baroque period, these are two related modes of composition that shape a piece out of a single repeated unit. Although there is some disagreement about the exact distinction between them historically, there is reason to associate the chaconne with a repeated harmonic sequence and the passacaglia with a repeated ostinato or ground—a line that appears mainly but not always in the bass. Out of a germinal unit that is usually made up of a set of four or eight bars in slow triple meter, a series of continuous variations unfolds, carried along by their own momentum to sometimes dramatic conclusions, as in Bach's (Partita No. 1) for unaccompanied violin and the finale of Brahms' (Fourth Symphony). *(Cf.)* Willi Apel, (Harvard
A different use of a repeated musical unit forms the basis of Schoenberg's serial technique. This utilizes a structural unit called a row, usually made up of the twelve semi-tones within an octave, arranged by the composer in a different and distinctive order for each particular musical work, and repeated in the same order but with varying rhythm, range, harmonic, and melodic appearances.

Repetition assumes many different forms in music. At times repetition may be of a single note (for example, of the first thirteen melodic notes of Chopin's (Etude) op. 25 no. 1, ten of them are the same e flat) or it may be of a simple interval (as in the prevalence of the minor second in Beethoven's (Quartets) op. 95 and op. 132 and the fifths and fourths at the opening of his [Ninth Symphony]). Fugal subjects characteristically are repeated in their entirety and any changes that are made are carefully limited so as not to affect their integrity and recognizability. Moreover, the literal repetition of entire large sections of sonata-allegro movements of sonatas and symphonies was common practice well into the nineteenth century. If understood as a recommendation for experience and not as a notational convention and if it is performed accordingly, repetition is no mere blind duplication but a new and different experience in its own right. Repetition then becomes regeneration rather than reiteration. One is reminded of William James's comment that "no state once gone can recur and be identical with what it was before....Does not the same piano-key, struck with the same force, make us hear in the same way?...It seems a piece of metaphysical sophistry to suggest that we do not; and yet a close attention to the matter shows that there is no proof that the same bodily sensation is ever got by us twice."@foot[From (The Principles of Psychology), reprinted in (William James: The Essential Writings), ed. B. Wilshire, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), p. 47.]

Since the forces and tensions inherent in musical sound occur in elusive ways, one can think of the composer as an artist who possesses a special sensitivity to the dynamic pressures of sound. All musical materials have distinctive traits and thus generate their own individual ways of being developed. And because these sounds and their germinal shapes are always different, there are no formulas for realizing their possibilities in ways that carry richness and wonder, especially under repeated listening. Every work, then, is newly made, not by a process of building up, but
by a process of germination and growth. One thinks here of such striking examples as the tone poems of Liszt, in which motives emerge and develop, the music dramas of Wagner, with their ceaseless interweaving of leitmotifs, and even a work like Sibelius' (Fourth Symphony), whose themes appear as the culmination of the movements rather than at the outset. But what is most pronounced in these cases is but the manifestation of the pervasive and central trait of musical creation. Musical de-composition means, then, that making music is not an act of combination but a process of producing sound sequences and structures by drawing out the generative possibilities of the musical materials. Writing music is an expansive activity, not a retentive or constructive one.

Just as musical materials should be thought of as germinal and not substantive, so our understanding of form in music must be transformed along similar lines. When musical form is considered perceptually, it undergoes a metamorphosis from the structure within which figures or themes are placed and developed into the processive shape of auditory experience. A musical form is not a container within which sounds are situated or a framework within which they are arranged. Form in music, and indeed in the other arts as well, is rather the order of experience, and in this art it becomes the perceived succession of sounds as they are grouped, identified, and shaped sequentially. Thus musical form is at most a guide to the sequence of musical ideas as they are heard. It is least of all an abstraction from that sequence and therefore dissociated and different from musical experience itself.

Cadences offer a clear illustration of how a formal feature can function directly in auditory perception. Signifying formal divisions in a musical work, cadences are the notes or chords that conclude a musical phrase, a section of a piece, or an entire work, and they impose some kind of closure, momentary or complete. Some cadential patterns have been studied and classified according to their place in the modal or diatonic system in which they appear. Thus it is common to think of cadences as formulas to be brought out and employed at the appropriate divisions in a work and thus to help define its structure. While this way of describing them reflects familiar and convenient usage, it says nothing about how cadences actually function, about the quality of completeness, definiteness, indecisiveness, or elusiveness of the endings they articulate. More than with most terms that designate formal features, the
terminology used in classifying the harmonic formulas of cadences that were prevalent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries does, in fact, offer some descriptive suggestion of their auditory function, as in the case of perfect or full, imperfect, deceptive, and half-cadences. Other terms, such as authentic and plagal cadences, do not. Yet what really counts for a description of how cadences function are not the chord progressions or structures that distinguish one kind of cadence from another for taxonomic purposes but how these are actually heard, the quality and strength of closure they convey. A composer's choice of a cadential pattern is guided, then, by the feel and force of the movement he is shaping and by his perception of the demands of the musical materials. How much is the movement of the music to be slowed down or arrested? What sense of completeness or incompleteness does the music require at that moment? What sort of cadential arrangement will hold just the right degree of closure for that point in a work? When is it right that a piece end and what will give that ending the proper weight to balance the music that preceded the final cadence? These are the kinds of considerations that function here in forming a musical experience. Rather than choosing a cadence from a stock of formulas, the composer is sensitive to the demands of the music and is guided by its needs.

What is true of cadences applies equally to a common internal structural feature of tonal music--modulation or the transition from one tonal center to another. Modulation is typically analyzed according to harmonic formulas that clearly establish a new key, and yet nowhere is a composer's skill more apparent than in his ability to effect these transitions. When produced by formula, we get the clumsy announcement that such a change is now taking place, as in the embarrassingly awkward modulatory interludes that Schubert often resorts to. It is as if he were saying, in effect, "Wait a moment while I modulate. Then the music can continue on its melodic course." In contrast, the skillful modulations that occur in Mozart, Chopin, or Brahms seem the natural outgrowth of the musical movement as it seeks fresh tonal surroundings and eventually returns to its original place. Instead of a formula, modulation becomes the discovery of fresh tonal regions.

The larger divisions of musical form can be understood in much the same way as cadences and modulations. Standard forms of the classical and romantic periods may be treated either as structures or as experiential patterns. The ternary or
three-part song form, for example, embodies the basic idea of alternation in which a middle section offers a change in character from the similar sections which flank it. This is usually represented structurally as ABA form, but it is heard as the experience of familiarity and contrast. The same opposing accounts can be given the sonata-allegro form, a different, more complex and elaborate three-part order and the typical identifying structure of the first movement of the sonata, symphony, and concerto during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Yet in a similar fashion, the thematic contrast that is presented in the exposition, the elaboration and working out of those ideas that takes place in the development, and the return of the original ideas that signifies the recapitulation can be understood either as a complex framework for the ordering of thematic materials or it can be heard as a pattern of musical unfolding. Other standard forms of the period lend themselves to the same kind of interpretation: the rondo with its constant alternation of new thematic ideas with the original one, the variation with its succession of modified restatements of the initial theme, the scherzo with its transfiguration into lightness of the character and even the formal pattern of the minuet. These too may stand either as formal structures or as successions of qualitative experience. Perhaps the fugue, a Baroque form that has continued to attract composers, illustrates best the insufficiency of the formula. Even though the fugue commonly begins with an expository introduction of the fugal subject in the various voices in an established order of pitch relationships, there is a good deal of flexibility in what follows, and the composer's sensitivity to the musical implications of the subject is mainly what determines the remainder of the piece. There are techniques and devices that lie at his disposal, to be sure, but here as in other musical forms, it is the sounds that guide the choices, not the choices the sounds.

What is at the heart of an experiential interpretation of musical form, however, is the operation of memory. For while sounds occupy a transitory and elusive moment, music is far more than the relentless passage of auditory instants. There is a relatedness and cohesion to musical sounds. Indeed, my entire account rests on the recognition of this but, far more important, so does the very possibility of music itself, certainly in the western classical tradition and probably beyond it as well. It is the capacity for aural memory that permits musical continuity and shape to appear and that allows the possibility of
repetition. Moreover, we can grasp the experience of form only by means of memory, whether form be analyzed as an abstract structure or construed as an integral experience. Memory is the experiential dimension of musical form.

The subject of memory is, to be sure, a major one in philosophy and it can barely be mentioned here. What we can observe at least for our purposes, however, is that the function of memory in musical experience is rather unlike its use in other places. Music does not require factual recollection or what might be called durable memory. Memory here is rather a consciousness of the immediate auditory past, a consciousness that extends as a projection from that reservoir into the future. Music functions within a mnemonic aura, so to speak, an aura of past and prescience. Musical sounds resonate for a while in imaginative perception and carry at the same time an anticipation of sounds to come. There is, then, in this art as in others a phosphorescence of perception, and its glow extends to enclose the musical work and become the form of its experience.

This experiential rendering of musical form is a transformation that reflects the compositional process, not its methods. What is significant here are not the techniques of individual composers but rather the aesthetic significance of the process through which music comes into being. It is immaterial here whether a composer works laboriously at the development of his ideas, as Beethoven did, or whether the music issues easily, perhaps fully formed, as the uniquely gifted Mozart wrote. Nor does it matter whether a composer uses the piano or another instrument for assistance or writes in silence at a desk. There are biographical differences that are expressed in differences of techniques and working habits. But what is common to all composers, whatever their individual methods may be, is the process of fashioning an experience of the movement of sound in time and in space.

Musical improvisation presents an interesting test of this idea. At first glance it might seem as if improvisation were a spontaneous welling forth of music governed only by the impulse of the performer at the passing instant, as seems to be the case in the sometimes Dionysian frenzy of jazz or rock improvisation. On the other hand, some small knowledge of improvisational practice suggests a contrary idea in which most improvisation takes place within sharply defined boundaries of phrase and harmony, so that little is left to the performer's
discretion but melodic turns and harmonic voicing, as in Baroque and Rococo ornamentation, the realization of a figured bass, the cadenza in a classical concerto, or jamming a chorus in a jazz performance.

Cavell offers a view that appears to reconcile both alternatives when he notes that, especially up to the time of Beethoven, much music sounds as if it were being improvised, yet this takes place in a context in which the conventions of music are understood so well that we always know where we are and where we are going. Thus the sense of spontaneity combines with the security of a familiar order. With the disappearance of conventions we have lost such meanings in arbitrariness or have resorted to the nihilism of total organization. [Stanley Cavell, "Music Discomposed," in (Art, Mind, and Religion), William H. Capitan and D.D. Merrill, eds. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967), p. 86-88.] Sparshott, on the other hand, touches on the topic of improvisation in pursuing the difference between a score and a performance by contrasting composition with improvisation. A score is associated with a completed composition while a performance conveys the quality of improvisation. [Op. cit., p. 56.] Yet both philosophers identify improvisation with a sense of spontaneity and growth, with the quality of freshness that comes with direct creation.

While improvisation may take on different degrees of freedom in musical practice, it captures something of the dynamic character of the perception of music that I have been attempting to locate. In itself, actual improvisation is hardly the pure case of free creation in music. On one side, it is confined too much by conventions and formulas; on the other, improvisation is often too rapid to realize the nuances and to choose most truly from among the different dynamic forces that are present at any point in the unfolding of a work. Its freshness lies in the constant possibility of a chance arrival at an unpremeditated chordal structure or turn of phrase, where the hand leads the ear, not the ear the hand. [David Sudnow develops this at length in connection with jazz improvisation in [Ways of the Hand] (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1978).] Improvisation, then, reflects the generative characteristics of a given material and offers a first approximation of where it might go. But there is something more. It conveys the impression of a freely unfolding progression of musical ideas, an impression that touches the life that lies at the heart of musical experience. Yet improvisation
offers the feeling of freshness more than the fact of it, for while the sounds may in fact not be newly contrived, they have the sense of spontaneity, of spontaneous generation, as it were. In this respect improvisation embodies the creative quality central to the experience of music, a quality that is the measure of every performance. Elliott Carter grasps this point precisely: "From a purely musical point of view, I've always had the impression of improvisation of the most rewarding kind when good performers take the trouble to play music that is carefully written out as if they were thinking it up themselves while they played it--that is, when with much thought and practice they come to feel the carefully written-out piece as part of themselves and of their own experience, which they are communicating to others directly from themselves in the moment of the performance, in an alive way." @foot[Allen Edwards, (Flawed Words and Stubborn Sounds; A Conversation with Elliott Carter), (New York: Norton, 1972).]

Yet it is not the composer and the performer, alone, who work toward realizing the creative forces in musical sounds. As the trait central to the experience of music, the generative sense of musical development is found no less equally in the act of appreciation. In contrasting live performances with recordings, Sparshott argues that there is here "the simple knowledge of compresence with the artist: something real is happening among people." He observes that music in which expressive or active elements predominate invites participation and that probably most music does so, thus becoming a celebration of community. @foot[(Op. cit.), pp. 65, 31.] This is surely so, but it is because all listening--active, engaged listening--shares this quality of live performance. In appreciative engagement no less than in creative activity, music is brought into being for, as William James noted, every perceptual experience is, as such, original. Thus participation in the dynamic character of musical experience is equally the core of the creative act and the central trait of the re-creative acts of the appreciative listener as well as of the performer. The engaged listener follows the direction that the composer perhaps laboriously shaped. He regenerates the music by responding to the same internal forces that guided the composer originally and so pursues the same process along the same path. "You are the music while the music lasts," wrote T.S. Eliot in (Four Quartets), and when this happens there is no qualitative difference between the composer and the listener, only an historical one.
Much has been suggested in this broad tracing out of the notion of the generative character of musical creation. Yet the very scope of the idea exhibits its strength and leads, as we have seen, to a metamorphosis of our conventional understanding of the features of music. Repetition now becomes regeneration, not duplication. Cadences are seen as pauses of different qualities in the dynamic course of musical movement. Modulation is not a formula imposed to meet certain formal stipulations but is recast into a movement of transition toward a fresh tonal region. Improvisation touches the unfolding dynamic life of musical ideas, while memory now means an aura of persisting awareness that surrounds moving sound. Form and matter are transmuted into the shaping of tonal experiences out of the dynamic forces implicit in musical ideas. And as a key to understanding how it is to write music, the concept of musical generation at the same time unlocks certain puzzles about its performance and appreciation. Here is evidence, then, for the fecundity of the idea, for art has no separate parts and continuity among the different aspects of music reflects a kind of mutual clarification. The original creation of musical objects and their re-creation in performance and in appreciation thus join as experiences of the generation and fulfillment of musical ideas.

This essay on musical creation began with a biological metaphor, one that rejected Baudelaire's love lyric of decay in favor of an image of growth. While this is an apt image for all the arts, it especially suits music. More than in the other arts, the sensory directness of musical experience requires no intermediary of knowledge or recognition. And the immediacy of the musical event reflects the directness of growth in which internal forces press forward to realize the potentialities that are inherent in the materials at hand. Growth can be guided, to be sure, but it is most successful when it works, in art as in biology, by fulfilling the possibilities that lie in the materials themselves and not by imposing external demands. The positive side of musical de-composition lies, then, in musical generation, for freeing music from misleading models can help encourage an equal flowering of its creation and its appreciation.

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Add when developing appreciative re-experience of the generative process: Stravinsky: "the listener reacts and becomes a partner in the game initiated by the creator." "this exceptional participation gives the partner such lively pleasure that it unites him in a certain measure with the mind that conceived and realized the work to which he is listening, giving him the illusion of identifying himself with the creator. That is the meaning of Raphael's famous adage: 'to understand is to equal'." [81]

Perhaps that is what Raphael meant by his famous observation, "To understand is to equal." (Quoted by Stravinsky, etc.)