Lyotard's Sublime:
Its Manifestation in the Musical Aesthetic of Toru Takemitsu and Leo Brouwer.

Harm du Plessis

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A minor-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Music in performance, coursework and dissertation.

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Declaration:
This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signed by candidate

Signature: Date: 2 December 2015

Contents:

Introduction to the Topic:

As a brief introduction to the topic of this dissertation, I wish to make a few remarks about the aim of the research, layout of the chapters and how the argument progresses through the work. The research question stems essentially from a desire to discover what, in my opinion, it might be that makes the guitar music of Leo Brouwer and Toru Takemitsu so conducive to aesthetic investigation, from the viewpoint of both a listener and performer of their works. The research approach is that of viewing their music through a philosophical lens provided by my introduction to the notions and attitudes of postmodernism, especially through the aesthetic writings of Jean François Lyotard.[1] Instead of embarking on an analytical investigation in order to prove the aesthetic elements I perceive in the music, I have chosen to consult existing analytical research on selected works of Brouwer and Takemitsu and to then draw conclusions from this material and link the findings to the philosophical ideas I explain at the outset of the dissertation .The research question I will be attempting to answer is whether there is an aesthetic common ground between Brouwer and Takemitsu that can be linked to the presence of the traditional aesthetic principles of their respective native countries in their guitar compositions. The presence of such aesthetic qualities is indeed perceptible in their music and it is my intention to investigate these qualities as they relate to postmodern notions of time and existence. The aesthetic theory that I have found to be well suited to explain the experience I have had with performing and studying many of the composers' representative works is the concept of the sublime as relayed by Lyotard. The temporal quality that Lyotard observes in the sublime is what draws me to his explanation of the concept. It will be shown that the temporal aspect which Lyotard identifies as an integral part of the sublime aesthetic is what provides the common ground between the musical of the two composers' works.

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[1] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).
Jean François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

The dissertation proceeds in the first chapter to explain some of the important notions of postmodernism, as they relate to the current topic, concerning the temporal aspect of human experience, in the study of history and from a philosophical view point. This leads to the ideas about temporality as an important aspect of the aesthetic of the sublime as posited by Lyotard in the second part of the first chapter. In this part of the text, reference is made to the composers Brouwer and Takemitsu in order to situate their musical philosophies and aesthetics in the philosophical framework that is provided in this chapter. A bridge between the philosophical framework is provided by devoting the second chapter to an investigation into the ideas by Jonathan D. Kramer[2] about the temporal aspect of music. This provides a link to Lyotard's observation of the temporal aspect of the sublime.

Finally, chapters three and four of the dissertation serve as a conclusion in the way of a practical application of the philosophical ideas relayed earlier in the work. This entails the summary of existing analyses of some of the composer's representative works with continual reference to the philosophical framework. By using existing analytical descriptions of the composers' work as a basis for my conclusions about how their music relates to the sublime aesthetic, it is possible to remain objective and to avoid looking for elements in the music for the sole purpose of proving the validity of the philosophical framework of the dissertation. In these chapters, the aesthetic qualities linked with Brouwer's Cuban and Takemitsu's Japanese aesthetic concepts are linked with the investigation of Lyotard's description of the sublime as described by Lyotard earlier in the dissertation, and it is shown how these aesthetic qualities are vehicles for the manifestation of the sublime aesthetic in their music. By drawing from, and linking the

[2] Jonathan D. Kramer, "New Temporalities in Music," *Critical Inquiry* Vol 7 No. 3 (1981): 539-556.
Jonathan D. Kramer, "Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol 64 No. 2 (1978): 177-194.
Jonathan D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," in *Postmodern music, postmodern thought,* ed. Judy Lochhead et al. 13-26 (New York: Routledge, 2002)
Jonathan D. Kramer, " Postmodern Concepts of Musical Time," *Indiana Theory Review* Vol. 17 No. 2 (1996): 21-61.

musical analytic findings of others to the philosophical aesthetic framework I provide at the outset, I will show that the aesthetic of the sublime reveals itself in the music of these two composers. As opposed to including a concluding chapter which summarises the discussions contained in the dissertation, the final two chapters in their function as the application of the philosophical premises to the actual music, serve as a conclusion to the linear argument of the dissertation.

Chapter 1. Philosophical Premises for the dissertation:

Part 1: The non-linearity of history.

The Following discussion serves as the philosophical premise on which the dissertation is based and as such it serves as the theoretical framework for all the resulting observations on the music of Leo Brouwer and Toru Takemitsu. The discussion is two-fold in that it first addresses the temporal aspects which Lyotard links with a postmodern view of history and time as a condition of the human experience, and then proceeds to interpret Lyotard's view of the sublime as it relates to the temporal aspect of experience. Lyotard's expressed relation between the present moment and the feeling of the sublime lies at the centre of the theoretical framework as it provides a connection to the temporal aspect of the musical development, musical philosophy and approach to composition of the two composers in question. It is within these aspects that I believe the sublime concept as a postmodern phenomenon (as iterated by Lyotard) and as an aesthetic lies. It will become clear that the way in which the philosophical ideas manifest in their art is different in each composer's case. This attests to the multitudinous nature in which music and art can be vehicles for the expression of complex philosophy and how the viewer's position in terms of these philosophies can inform their own way of experiencing the artwork. Here then as an introduction and before the ideas are applied to the actual music and musical philosophy of the composers, is presented Lyotard's philosophical ideas concerning the above mentioned concepts as I believe they relate to my investigation into the musical aesthetic of Brouwer and Takemitsu.

Lyotard relays his views on the postmodern as a part of a view of history that perceives time as a linear progression and the scholarly enquiry into how this occurs in the chapter called *Rewriting modernity* in his book *The Inhuman* (1991).[1] The argument proceeds directly from the title of the chapter; instead of presenting the ideas under the heading of

[1] Jean-François Lyotard, "Rewriting Modernity," in *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 24-35.

postmodernism, postmodernity or postmodern, he elects to reveal in the title the contentious question of historical placement of the periods of modern and postmodern, and applies the critical enquiry to the act of reviewing or specifically rewriting the perceived attributes of a historical period. In so doing he illustrates the tendency to avoid the periodisation of cultural history by postmodern thinkers including himself. In this instance he does so in order to bring to the fore the gap such a periodisation leaves in the critical consideration of the present, because the temporal placement of events seems to concentrate its efforts on situating these events in either -pre or -post periods, leaving the present as a point between two periods, overshadowed by its past and future. Lyotard reveals this by referring to Aristotle's idea that it is impossible to differentiate between past and future events without viewing them as part of a range of events with respect to the present or the 'now'. Interestingly, he states it is also impossible to truly differentiate a present itself, because the flow of events, of consciousness, of life, blurs our perception of it.[2] Lyotard notes:

> It is always both too soon and too late to grasp anything like a 'now' in an identifiable way. The 'too late', signifies an excess in the 'going away', disappearing, the 'too early', an excess in advent. An excess with respect to what? To the intention to identify, the project of seizing and identifying an 'entity' that would, 'here and now', be the thing itself.[3]

In applying this premise to the question of modernity and postmodernity as two separate historical events or periods, Lyotard makes his famous point that postmodernism is a state within modernism, that "modern temporality, comprises in itself an impulsion to exceed itself into a state other than itself […]modernity is constitutionally and ceaselessly pregnant with its postmodernity".[4] This seems to indicate that rather than viewing modernism and postmodernism as consecutive periods, respectively preceding or following one another, one should perhaps aim to view them as two presents, two 'nows', inextricably part of one another.

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[2] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 24.
[3] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 25.
[4] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 25.

This point is central to the postmodern view of historiography and also in my opinion holds valuable ideas related to the artistic development of Takemitsu and Brouwer, and the aesthetic concepts prominent in these composers' works respectively. This should become clear through the course of the dissertation and the ideas observed here will be referred to in the following discussions. A problem of history viewed as a traceable series of linear events has been perceived by postmodernist thinkers, and features prominently in the literature.[5] In a criticism, however, on postmodernism as an approach to historiography, Perez Zagorin has dismissed the postmodern process of language deconstruction in an attempt to situate historical discourses as a misinterpretation of the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure.[6] He relates the wide influence of Michel Foucault's work in postmodern criticism of truth; that what people within any society are guided to accept as truth is in fact a narrative controlled by the dominant powers in that society and only serves to promote those powers.[7] The postmodern treatment of historical discourses as any other literary text that is hence subject to linguistic and contextual scrutiny is in Zagorin's view, detrimental to the study of history as a discipline designed to refer to the truth about past events.[8]

In a reply to Zagorin's attacks on postmodernism, Keith Jenkins uses Jacques Derrida's work to counter Zagorin's claims that historical discourse treated as literature diminishes the real events of history. To use Jenkins' quote from Derrida here, seems the clearest way of understanding how postmodernists use language to approach history:

> What I call "text" implies all the structures called "real", "economic", "historical", "socio-institutional", in short all possible referents… "there is nothing outside the text"… does not mean that all referents are suspended, denied, or enclosed in a book, as people have claimed, or have been naive enough to believe and to have accused me of believing. But it does mean that every referent and all reality has the structure of a *differential* trace… and that one cannot refer

[5] Clive Caseaux, in his introduction to the ideas of Lyotard concerning the sublime and the avant-garde, notes that Lyotard, along with Jean Baudrillard emphasises the same problem in their criticism of knowledge as perspectival and contextual. This has direct relation to the ideas that are to be discussed momentarily regarding history as an absolute truth and by extension, the experience of time as progressively linear. See Clive Caseaux, ed. *The Continental Aesthetics Reader,* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 585.

[6] Perez Zagorin, "History, the Referent, and Narrative: Reflections on Postmodernism Now," *History and Theory* 38: 1 (1999), 7.

[7] Zagorin, "History, the Referent and Narrative," 8-9.

[8] Zagorin, "History, the Referent and Narrative," 13-14.

> to this "real" except in an interpretive experience. The letter neither yields meaning nor assumes it except in a movement of *differential* referring. That's all.[9]

To end this brief excursion into historiography, I would like to offer another quote that summarises Keith Jenkins's idea about how postmodernism could be applied to history and by extension, to a world view involving the hope that there can be a forward looking attitude that does not necessarily require us to first look back. In relation to the discussion that follows, this also makes a valuable point toward the non-linear view of time presented in Lyotard's work and as will be shown in the aesthetic of the music to be investigated.

> To me postmodernism seems to be a vehicle through which, at the end of the experiment of the modern, *a little bit of newness may be entering our world.* And I think it likely that such new imaginaries- of surprising things to come- may well not include in their number "histories as we have known them" or, even histories at all.[10]

Situating musical aesthetics into the argument, it is useful to refer to Jonathan D. Kramer's view on music linked to the postmodern view of history. Kramer notes that every musical artwork contains many influences; past ideals, present cultural context, the creator's personality and even some from the future, as future generations find new ways of comprehending the work.[11] Although Kramer offers a list, which will feature later in the dissertation of elements that could constitute a postmodern composition, he warns that such a list should not be regarded as a checklist to be used to situate the work within that category, and with that holds true to the postmodern view of text as a discourse and not something to necessarily be used as a means to a absolute view. In my opinion, the essence of what Kramer regards as postmodern music is a work that looks in a multitude of areas for influence, not valuing any one as more important as the next, not avoiding the past, but not disregarding the present or future either.[12]

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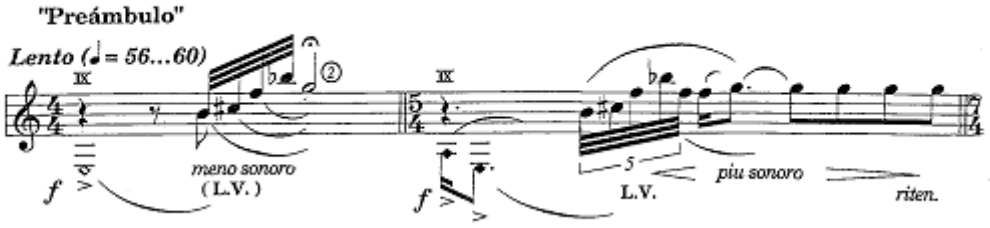
[9] Keith Jenkins, "A Postmodern Reply to Perez Zagorin," *History and theory,* 39: 2 (2000), 191. The italics in the quote are Jenkins's own.
[10] Jenkins, "Postmodern Reply," 200. The italics in the quote are Jenkins's own.
[11] Jonathan. D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," in *Postmodern Music, Postmodern Thought,* ed. Judy Lochhead et al. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 17.
[12] Kramer, "Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," 16-17.

Lyotard continues to expand the idea of rewriting by referring to the ambiguities that seem to exist in the concept. He observes that it has been a preoccupation of the modern time to attempt to start again, to be done with the old and to herald the new. It is important to note that Lyotard views the modern sensibility of time to contrast most starkly to the sensibility that existed in what he calls the classical age, in which he observes time was viewed as one concept, consisting of past present and future. Time was seen as one totality comprising the whole meaning of life in its flow. This becomes clear when considering the way in which myth "organises and distributes time".[13] In myth the beginning and end of the narrative forms part of a certain rhythm of time, this has the effect that the beginning and end of the story rhyme.[14]

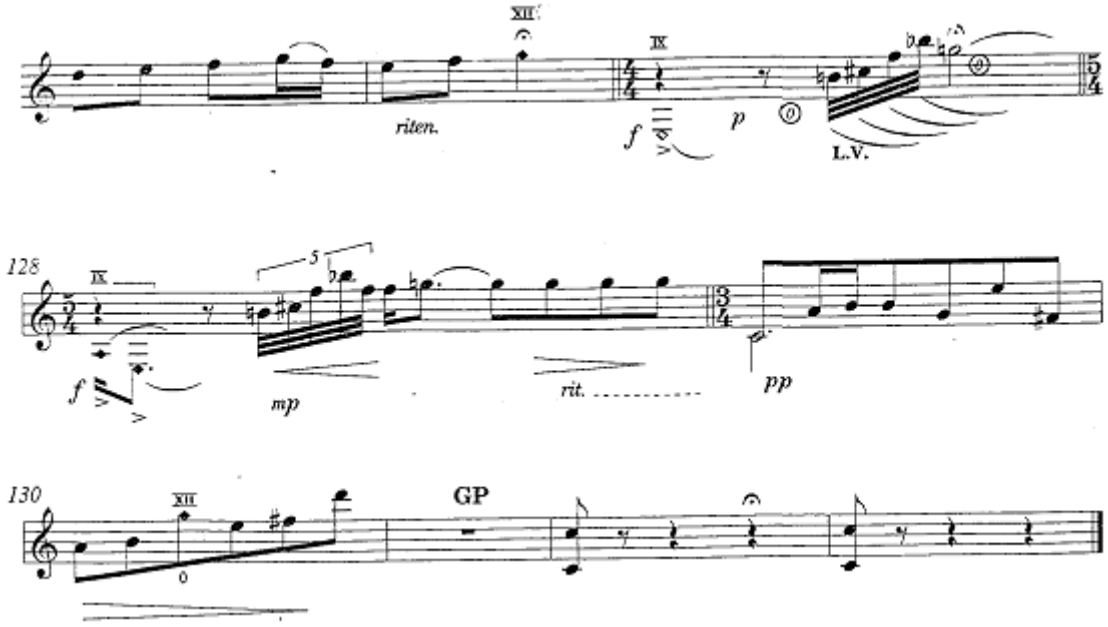
Here as a brief excursion from the progression of Lyotard's main argument, I would like to draw attention to the very prominent aesthetic concept in Brouwer's music of beginning and ending a piece in a way that would suggest this rhyme. This would seem an obvious observation that could perhaps be applied to many composer's music, but in Brouwer I have perceived examples which seem to recall exactly the phrase which Lyotard uses; the story having a rhythm of time with the effect of rhyming the end and beginning. As an example, it is appropriate to look at the end of the first movement of the *Sonata* (1990) written for Julian Bream. The way in which Brouwer returns in the coda to the opening germinal motif of the *Preambulo*, not the first main theme of the *Danza,* before the final reference to the second main theme and the final cadence of the movement, seems to me to be a very good example of the rhyme that Lyotard observes in myth. Here follows an example 1 and 2 of the Opening and the ending from Brouwer's *Sonata* (1990) to illustrate this musically. [15]

[13] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 25.
[14] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 25.
[15] Leo Brouwer, Sonata para Guitarra Sola (Madrid: Opera Tres, 1991) 1, 10.

Example 1: Brouwer, *Sonata*, bars 1-2.



Example 2: Brouwer, *Sonata*, bars 127-133.



Brouwer does not end the movement in exactly the same way as it started, but there seems to be a poetic device behind the perceived unity. In an interview, Brouwer himself comments on his sense of total time in composition, as the reason for his continual return to the beginning when revising a composition in progress: "I always go back to the beginning to have the thread continue, the spine that supports the whole body".[16] Thus,

[16] Constance McKenna, "An Interview with Leo Brouwer," *Guitar Review* 75 Fall (1988): 16.

this 'mythic' sense of time seems to be built into the composition, even its creation through Brouwer's compositional process.[17]

As a further application of Lyotard's notion of 'classic' temporality or sensibility of time Brouwer's own view of postmodernism as it relates to his music and to his identity as a Cuban artist will be discussed in detail in chapter four which deals with this composer specifically. Brouwer comments in the same interview referred to earlier, that some of his most experimental music written in the sixties and seventies (pieces such as *Canticum*, *Parabola* and *Espiral Eterna*) was based on the structures and models of structures of the European avant-garde. The musical content of these pieces, however, is based on the cells and units of his folkloric roots. Brouwer goes on to say that there is a great degree of stylistic variance within the music of this time and especially between the music of the periods that immediately preceded and followed these works. He explains that in between these solo guitar pieces, he composed chamber music, electronic works, music for films etc, and that the guitar works serve as "prototypes of change"[18] along the path of his musical development. Thus, the composer argues that one can hardly analyse the guitar music without being aware of the other music in between.[19] After his period of total abstraction, Brouwer returned to a language which could be seen as neo- romantic, but which he refers to as hyper-romantic. This period could also perhaps, at the hand of the discussion in a later chapter of Brouwer's views on postmodernism, be described as his postmodern period[20].This musical development seems to hark back to the notion of the present situated between the past and the future; the guitar pieces might be viewed to a series of 'nows' within the continuum of the composer's musical development. This

[17] McKenna, "An Interview with Leo Brouwer," 16.
[18] McKenna, "An Interview with Leo Brouwer," 14.
[19] McKenna, "Interview with Leo Brouwer," 14.
[20] See John Bryan Huston, "The Afro-Cuban and the Avant-Garde: Unification of Style and Gesture in the Guitar Music of Leo Brouwer "(Doctor of musical arts, University of Georgia, 2006), 56-77.
Huston refers to *El Decameron Negro* as the model for Brouwer's postmodern period. One can assume that as the Sonata was written nine years after, it would still fall under the same stylistic period according to the author. *Decameron Negro* is mentioned in connection with postmodernism, but not *Rito de los Orishas* or the *Sonata*, both of which to my mind embody the spirit of postmodernism with relation to the varied musical references and usage of folkloric material. This will be an element of Brouwer's aesthetic that features prominently in the chapter dealing with this composer specifically.

development forms a kind of cycle in which the composer travels through multitudinous forms of musical expression and arrives back at the use of earlier modes of expression, as is evident in the 'hyper-romantic' or postmodern works. These 'nows', although unique and complete in themselves in terms of stylistic or aesthetic aims, relate to the preceding and anterior periods surrounding them by the common material that binds them; the folkloric content that Brouwer refers to. This binding factor will become the main relation between the philosophical ideas discussed here, and will be made apparent in the chapter on Brouwer.

At this point I return to Lyotard's text to explain the ambiguities he observes in the concept of rewriting the past from the context of the present. The analysis of these ambiguities provided by Lyotard through references to psychoanalysis and philosophy will lead to a discussion of how the act of rewriting features prominently in the historical context and artistic development of Takemitsu. Lyotard distinguishes between two ways in which one might understand rewriting. In one instance the –re can refer to the act of starting again, of doing away with all that has been and so to speak 'start on a clean slate'. This will inaugurate a new age of periodisation in which the old period's faults; prejudices, judgements, assumed truths never reconsidered as a result of tradition, will be done away with. This is linked to the phenomenon of revolution. Lyotard links this kind of rewriting to Marx and the socialist revolution. What Marx called prehistory (the period before the revolution) and all its flaws present in the period is remedied by this act of rewriting.[21] It is possible to find many parallel examples in music history. For example the emancipation from tradition heralded by the Second Viennese school and the resulting shift in musical aesthetics, which presumably freed the new period from the 'assumed truths' of tonality.

The second form of rewriting is illustrated by referring to the technique of 'working through' present in Freud's psychoanalysis. In contrast to the first way, this way of

[21] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 26

rewriting does not posit a return to a beginning, but requires one to consider the events of the past in a non-judgemental way. This technique stands in contrast to mere remembering as the latter stems from a desire to pinpoint a specific event, where the former seems to desire to view the whole history of the subject in a way that would lend meaning to its totality. Here we see a link to what was previously called a classical sensibility of time, what Lyotard now refers to as destiny, something which is very prevalent in the mythic tradition. What is interesting here is the observation made by Lyotard that the enquiry made into the past, in this case the act of working through, is part of that same destiny. As shown before related to Brouwer's work, there seems to exist a certain rhythm that encompasses this view of time which makes the beginning and end rhyme. It becomes clear that Lyotard seems to be criticising the technique of working through not on grounds of its psychological benefit to the subject, but sees it as illustrating his point, that by rewriting in this way, the events that prompt the rewriting, flaws of the preceding period, are merely rewritten, because the act of rewriting is part of the same destiny as the events that are to be rewritten. It does not matter that working through and remembering are different in terms of their view on the past, they both aim to change the future by reconsidering the past i.e. rewriting the past by writing it again.[22]

Lyotard provides another example of this kind of rewriting by referring to Nietzsche's emancipation of thought, through the process of which Nietzsche tries to get away from metaphysical thought that states that man only needs to act in accordance with what is good and just. The philosopher posits that this is not possible because of the fact that there can be no in accordance with, for there exists no principle that is primary or originary- "Every discourse, including that of science or philosophy, is only perspective"[23] – a notion here related to Nietzsche, but one that has been introduced earlier as a postmodern mode of thinking. Lyotard observes that here Nietzsche "succumbs to the temptation to designate what grounds the perspectivisations, and calls it the will to

[22] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 26, 29.
[23] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 29.

power"[24], thus his argument repeats the metaphysical process. The attempt of rewriting thus seems to imply that one always writes the past again, with minor adjustments made, but always returning to older conclusions, drawing them again under different guises. It then is possible to perceive a non-linearity in the way artistic and philosophical endeavour returns to previous states of being albeit with the benefit of having a different perspective on the progress of ideas from the viewpoint of a different moment in the present. Here a look at the development of modern music in Japan and how it relates to Takemitsu's own development as a young composer might serve to illustrate some of the above mentioned problems of rewriting. The way an entire generation of artists can rebel against a tradition, aiming to rewrite it and end up doing that, but never completely escaping their links to the past is an example from Takemitsu's own artistic context as a post-war Japanese composer. The present can be overshadowed or at least obscured by its anterior and posterior, but it is possible to create new music, as these composers have done, from the vantage point of their own present which may be obscured, but not rendered less important by the past or future.

In contemporary Japanese musical history, the phenomenon of modern composers struggling to find a middle ground between nationalist and international musical tendencies was common since the introduction of Western musical composition.[25] Takemitsu relates his personal opposition to chauvinistic nationalism in any form and states that to him it seems that it is this kind of nationalism that leads to fascistic tendencies.[26] Post-war Japanese composers showed a preference for avant-garde techniques, as these provided a separation between the composers of this generation and the predominating nationalist ideologies of the time before and during the war.[27] Takemitsu is no exception to this collective phenomenon and until the 1960's he had explored many avant-garde tendencies such as serialism, indeterminacy, electronic music

[24] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 29.
[25] Shono Susumo, "Avant- Garde Music in Japan," in *The Garland Encyclopaedia of World Music Vol 7,* ed. Bruno Nettl et al. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 735.
[26] Toru Takemitsu, "Contemporary Music in Japan, "*Perspectives of New Music* Vol 27 No. 2 (1989), 198.
[27] Susumo, "Avant Garde Music in Japan," 735.

and mixed media.[28] It is interesting that the composer became seriously interested in the national traditions of his country not only through Japanese influence, but also through one of the most highly regarded avant-garde thinkers of the twentieth century, John Cage. Takemitsu himself relates: "in my own development for a long period I struggled to avoid being 'Japanese', to avoid 'Japanese'qualities. It was largely through my contact with John Cage that I came to recognize the value of my own tradition".[29]

Judith Anne Herd (1989)[30] presents a most detailed account of the post-war years in contemporary Japanese musical culture that is valuable to refer to at this point in the discussion. She divides the developments of neo-nationalist movement into three stages corresponding to two groups of composers and one other composer not affiliated with a group. The first group, *Yagi no Kai*, spearheaded the movement by using elements from traditional music in combination with the tonal musical language of neo-classicism. The composers of the second group, *Sannin no Kai*, showed how aesthetic elements from various Asian traditions could be synthesized with modern compositional techniques.[31] The sentiments expressed by of one of this group, Ikuma Dan, and relayed by Herd summarises the group's ideals for creating a new style of Japanese music:

> It is not enough to write Japanese-sounding compositions using Western forms and harmonies. Those who have tried to do so have had no real or lasting success. The purpose of the composer, first of all, must be to write good music, and this we are not likely to have through mere re-arrangement of traditional music for Western instruments. Something new, but at the same time fundamentally Japanese, must be created. Western musical forms are based on Western ideals of logic and symmetry. These are not necessarily Eastern ideals. The East has its own ideals, and it is in relation to them that truly oriental musical forms must be evolved. In such forms will the Japanese Western-style music of the future be cast.[32]

In this quote, it is possible to observe that Dan means to be all the more in the present in terms of temporal nationalistic context, and in so doing create a music that is of the present with the benefit of the past and possible further developments of the future.

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[28] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (New York: Cambridge University press, (2001), 39-46.
[29] Takemitsu, "Contemporary Music in Japan," 199.
[30] Judith Anne Herd, "The Neo-Nationalist Movement: Origins of Japanese Contemporary Music," *Perspectives of New Music* Vol 27 No. 2 (1989): 118-163.
[31] Herd, "The Neo-Nationalist Movement," 154.
[32] Herd, "Neo-Nationalist Movement," 138, 140.

Herd emphasises the importance of last composer of the three stages of development of neo-nationalism that she posits in the article. Yoritsune Matsudaira, like Takemitsu, also started to look to his own traditions for inspiration after encouragement from a Western master, in his case, Aleksander Tansman. Matsudaira was a follower of Bartók and Stravinsky long before he turned to his native tradition of *gagaku* (traditional Japanese court music), and after careful study of this tradition, was intrigued by the similarities of *gagaku* to the polytonal music of Stravinsky. After this intensive study, the composer focused on combining *gagaku* with twelve tone and other advanced techniques.[33] Matsudaira succeeded in separating himself from the chauvinistic nationalism, as Takemitsu calls it, of the pre-war years completely by embracing modern composition. The author concludes that these earlier composers paved the way for composers like Takemitsu by broadening the expressive range of Western compositions through the integration of their inherited traditions with their modern compositional output. It is Herd's opinion that Takemitsu's use of the Japanese idea of space; *ma,* is a distinguishing factor of his music, something that links him to the other composers in her discussion and is of great importance to my investigation into his musical aesthetic.[34]

When one considers these developments in Japanese modern music, one is reminded of Lyotard's idea that by trying to rewrite the past, it often gets written again. I do not mean, nor do I think that Lyotard's argument means to suggest that it is pointless to engage in this kind of rewriting activity.[35] The above discussion shows that the composers involved in the efforts to develop their own aesthetic world by combining eastern and western traditions did indeed succeed in doing so, but it can be argued that their music is most likely often viewed as Western music with a Japanese flavour, and thus might be

[33] Herd, "Neo-Nationalist Movement," 140-141.
[34] Herd, "Neo-Nationalist Movement," 154.
[35] Kramer notes that what links postmodern music to the postmodern approach to history is the occurrence of composers paradoxically relate to the past in a very direct way, but also attempt to refute it in their detached way of using it in compositions of their present now. See: Jonathan. D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," in *Postmodern music, postmodern thought,* ed. Judy Lochhead et al. (New York: Routledge, 2002): 16-17.

considered by an uninformed listener as nationalist Japanese music. This considered, we see again the point that Lyotard is trying to make, that when rewriting history, we write it in some ways again. What then is the answer? Should one then merely be content with the state of things and abandon any attempts to explore new way of expression, as it seems one can never be completely free from the past?- certainly not. The attempts made by these composers did succeed to promote new ways of thinking about Japanese music and its place within modern musical expression, and when viewed in relation to the pre-war nationalists, it is clear that they did on many levels, separate themselves from the past and the elements pervading that past, which for them was detrimental to the art of creating music.

In my opinion, what seems to separate Takemitsu from his contemporaries, and what makes his music especially well suited to the argument we have seen presented in Lyotard about the present moment or the now, is the view that he himself has about his task as an artist and his place within the artistic world. Takemitsu says:

> I am not a composer who represents Japan, not even a Japanese composer. Born and raised in Japan, aware that I am influenced by its culture, even as I try to free myself from that influence, at the same time I am fully aware that is impossible.[36]

And in another instance he writes:

> There may be folk music with strength and beauty, but I cannot be completely honest in this kind of music. I want a more active relation to the present… It is only through his own sense of worth and by proving himself that a composer is able to relate to tradition in the most faithful sense. Music is either sound or silence. As long as I live I shall choose sound as something to confront silence. That sound should be a single, strong sound. I wonder if the task of the composer should not be that of presenting the basic unaltered form of music.[37]

As made clear in these quotes, Takemitsu stands apart from the composers previously discussed not only in his view of his Japanese heritage, but he also seems to have a much broader ideal in terms of his music's function as part of modern artistic expression. In my opinion, the honesty with which Takemitsu approaches his Japanese cultural influences

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[36] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings*, trans. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glen Glasow (Lanham: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 142.
[37] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence*, 4-5.

and his resulting use of aesthetic concepts contained in that culture, is what makes his music unique from Nationalist Japanese music. By using traditional aesthetic concepts such as *ma* and *sawari,* as will be discussed in detail later, Takemitsu does "relate to tradition in the most faithful sense"[38]. By doing so, he relates with his compositional art to past and future, but remains open to the now.

In this section it has been shown through examining Lyotard's text, that rewriting the past seems to be a contentious effort in the sense that it obscures the present or the now through the concentration on trying to reinvent it instead of letting it unfold and observing and experiencing it as a meaningful part of the totality we perceive as time. What Lyotard calls the classical view of time with reference to mythic tradition, relates Brouwer's use of folklore in his musical aesthetic. In looking at Brouwer's own view of postmodernism later in the dissertation it will become clear that this concept seems to afford the composer to view time as a totality as is evident in his multitudinous range of styles and the combination of ancient or folkloric elements with those of the avant-garde.

More directly linked to the practical rewriting of history, it has been shown that the historical context in which the young Takemitsu composed and his development as an artist was greatly informed by this act. As a post-war composer in Japan, Takemitsu was not alone in his struggle against the past and its perceived faults. And although it is clear that the efforts made by himself and his predecessors and contemporaries to separate themselves from the past were not in vain or pointless, the results of these efforts did not, in my view, herald a new age with entirely new ways of composition or artistic expression. The product was still linked to the past and their music still perceived as Japanese sounding western music. Only through Takemitsu's own philosophical ideas and his embracing of all the influences part of his context was he able to create music that is completely his own and completely part of the now, not excluding, but not overshadowed by the past or future.

[38] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence*, 4-5

This then is what can be seen to make Brouwer and Takemitsu unique; their embracing of influences and through this their openness to the now. In the course of the dissertation the elements I believe to be at the centre of their ability to do this will be examined. By embracing the 'now', they are evoking in their music the idea of the sublime; the sublime, Lyotard argues is what is present in every 'now', or what should be present in a work of art that follows the aesthetic of the sublime. If the artist and the listener or observer is open to its perception. In the next section, this element of Lyotard's view of the sublime as well as his understanding of others' view will be examined.

Part 2:

Lyotard's aesthetic of the Sublime.

Lyotard comments that the temporal now as a basis for consciousness or existence in time has been the subject of philosophical thought and analysis since the time of Augustine. He goes further to say that the sublime moment, however is:

> […] A stranger to consciousness and cannot be constituted by it […] It is what dismantles consciousness, what deposes consciousness, it is what consciousness cannot formulate, and even what consciousness forgets in order to constitute itself. What we do manage to formulate is that something happens […] or rather, and more simply, that it happens […] Not a major event in the media sense, not even a small event. Just an occurrence.[1]

An idea that should not be forgotten and is highlighted by Lyotard is that the possibility also exists of nothing happening, which, although it seems like a contradiction to the idea of an occurrence in actual fact can be as much of a sublime experience as its counterpart. The event, or its anticipation or the realisation that there might not be an event, all constitute a sublime moment. The contradiction that one perceives in the formulation of the concept is inherently part of the sublime. In this section, I make use mostly of Lyotard's book *The Inhuman* (1991),[2] in which he gives a most engaging account of the sublime by referring to other philosophers and their contribution to an analysis of this kind of aesthetic. He also presents his own approach to this aesthetic concept from the viewpoint of art criticism and applies it to various artists as will be seen toward the end of this discussion. It will be shown how Lyotard's view of the sublime is expressly linked to time. It will become clear how this relates to his philosophical predecessors with regard to the sublime as an aesthetic concept and how Lyotard's sublime informs the enquiry into the aesthetic world of Brouwer and Takemitsu when their music and musical philosophy is viewed through the lens it provides.

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[1] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 90.

[2] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991.

Lyotard's description of the sublime as an aesthetic concept contains two main constituents necessary for its perception. Firstly and very importantly, it is linked to time; the moment in which the sublime is experienced. Whether in art or as a result of beholding some marvel of nature, the sublime always happens in the 'now'. It prompts the viewer or subject to question: is it happening now?, and provide an answer: it is happening now, or, nothing is happening now. Within this moment, there is always a possibility of something either happening, or not happening, both of which could be experienced as a sublime feeling. This leads to the second attribute of the sublime. The sublime is characterised as a feeling felt by the subject or an affect that is generated in the subject, a feeling that always has a duality at its core: pleasure and pain, anxiety and joy. The artist producing the work and the viewer can both be subjects of the sublime feeling. As Lyotard notes: the expectancy of something happening, the anxiety that goes with it, but also the pleasure of suspense being broken by an event, or indeed if nothing pertinently is happening, could all have a feeling of pleasure and joy or anxiety linked to it. Even the expectancy of the unknown, of welcoming that unknown could constitute these feelings. This can occur both in the conception of an idea or in its understanding after having been received. Lyotard notes that these feelings felt by the subject in expectance are strongly linked to modern philosophies of existence and the unconscious.[3]

Lyotard makes clear that there have been many thinkers who have worked with the idea of the sublime. His own analysis of the concept has much in common with Kant's extensive study of it as part of the *Critique of Judgement* (1790).It must be made clear that Kant deals with the sublime concept as it relates to beauty in nature as has been shown, whereas Lyotard applies the concept to the human endeavour of art . Lyotard, with his background in art critique links many of the concepts to the art of painting. He cites examples of artists who have to a greater or lesser extent in terms of specificity, related to this concept in their work. Before looking at these examples and Lyotard's view of the

[3] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 91- 92.

sublime as manifested in visual art, and before eventually relating the sublime to aspects in various styles of music by composers with similar sensibilities in the next chapter, it is useful to first examine here how Lyotard highlights the role that the sublime has played in the study of aesthetics throughout history and to see how the concept has, as posited by Lyotard, evolved into what "is perhaps the only mode of artistic sensibility to characterise the modern".[4]

As mentioned here and in part one of this chapter, the analysis of the temporal present or now has been a preoccupation of philosophers and artists for centuries.[5] Lyotard notes that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe, the contradictory feelings associated with this specific view of aesthetics was named or indeed renamed as the sublime by Edmund Burke and Emanuel Kant.[6] As will be shown, the temporal aspect of the sublime as explained by Lyotard is not a pertinent feature in Kant's analysis of it. The origins of the idea as a literary discussion is traced back to 1674 when the French author Boileau published *Du Sublime* (1674), a transcription of a treatise attributed to a first century rhetorician, Longinus. The break with traditional rhetorical technique presented in this work is apparent in the indeterminacy perceptible in the text that corrupted the didactic intension of the text itself. The resulting uncertainty felt by the reader has been attributed to the assumption that the sublime can only be discussed in a sublime style. In the text itself, Longinus identifies the sublime in discourse as being unforgettable and thought provoking. The text tries to situate the sublime in the techniques and rules of rhetoric and gives the example that it (the sublime) exists, or is perceptible in the simplest turns of phrases at points where one would have expected a greater air of solemnity to be given to the discourse by the speaker. Longinus's text

[4] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 91-93.
[5] The three texts by Longinus (trans. Boileau), Kant and Burke respectively, referred to by Lyotard and which are summarised and mediated through his view in the current chapter, are considered the main texts of critical enquiry into the subject of the sublime, though be it that their approach and context of application differ greatly. See Kenneth Holmqvist and Jaroslaw Pluciennik, " A Short Guide to the Theory of the Sublime", *Resources in Stylistics and Literary Analysis,* Winter (2002): 719.
[6] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 92-93.

relays that sometimes, the sublime thought even manifests as a complete silence[7]. This points to the indeterminacy that this early author perceives in the sublime, the unknown and the unexpected or the anxiously anticipated, as also observed by Lyotard. He notes that the essence of rhetoric, the perfection of argument seems to be fundamentally shaken by this view of the sublime and that this is the absolute nature of the sublime; to bear witness to the inexpressible or the imperfect[8] however it might manifest, and by whatever means are most suited to that expression in the moment.[9]

The disruption of the rules of what is deemed to be perfect, as observed by Lyotard in Longinus' text on rhetoric bears a similarity to the way in which the sublime as an aesthetic concept is often expressed through the desire to present that which is not presentable and in the way the concept constitutes a break with the traditional ideal of art and the function of artists. Lyotard observes that by considering the sublime and the indeterminacy it invokes in art, there comes a change in the way the public must view art and artists. The preoccupation with what Lyotard calls *techne,* and the institutions that promote it; schools, academies, masters and disciples, are subverted in the sublime view. In this comment he is pointing to a kind of artistic expression that corrupts previously held beliefs, art that challenges the status quo; what he calls avant-garde.[10] It becomes clear that the sublime is part of an approach to aesthetics, not only a kind of aesthetic occurrence. It also is clear that this idea lies very close to the postmodern sensibility concerning history and its grand narratives discussed in the previous part of this chapter. The following illustrates Lyotard's view concerning the seemingly disruptive effect that the sublime can have:

> Under Diderot's pen, *techne* becomes *'le petit technique'* (mere trivial technique). The artist ceases to be guided by a culture which made of him the sender and master of a message of glory: he becomes in so far as he is a genius, the involuntary addressee of an inspiration that

[7] Silence (*ma*) as an aesthetic concept in traditional Japanese art will be a point of specific focus in the chapter dealing with the musical aesthetic of Takemitsu and how it manifests the sublime feeling.
[8] Here I must note again that the chapter on Takemitsu will deal in detail with the traditional Japanese idea of imperfection as part of the aesthetic fabric of an artwork (*sawar*i). It relates to the way in which I perceive the sublime to be present in the music of Takemitsu.
[9] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 94-95.
[10] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 104.

> came to him from an 'I know not what'. The public no longer judges according to the criteria of a taste ruled by the tradition of shared pleasure: individuals unknown to the artist (the 'people') read books, go through the galleries of the Salons, crowd into the theatres and the public concerts, they are prey to unforeseeable feelings: they are shocked, admiring, scornful, indifferent. The question is not that of pleasing them by leading them to identify with a name and to participate in the glorification of its virtue, but that of surprising them.[11]

Lyotard notes that also in Boileau's view of the sublime, it is described as something that "seizes" [12] the viewer, and that it makes them feel something. He continues to say that the shock effect is of utmost importance as it includes and embraces the presence of imperfections, distortions and even ugliness. Art in this way does not " imitate nature", but creates its own world. In this world, the "monstrous" and the "formless" [13] have their place because within it, they can be sublime.

Lyotard observes the transformation that occurs in the idea of the sublime between the time of Longinus and as he notes also in medieval times, and the later developments is the emphasis in the study of aesthetics to shift from the analysis of the work of art to that of the analysis of the effect the work has on the addressee. The same applies to the sender, or the artist: the sublime constitutes a feeling that he cannot master, but expresses with all the indeterminacy and so called imperfections that the feeling elicits in himself. The transformation of the sublime has then the result of overriding the importance of rhetoric and didactics as areas of which the artist as sender is, or has to be in control. Lyotard concludes that it is no longer a question of how to make a work of art

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[11] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 96-97. Also note that in this quote a relation can be seen to what has been previously noted: that the artist can himself be a subject in the perception of the sublime. The traditional role of the artist as sender and the audience as receiver is thus not necessarily reversed, but definitely made less empirical in its function. for a revealing discussion of the function of the receiver or audience within the totality of communication that exists between the artists and the audience from a postmodern perspective, see Judy Lochhead, "Introduction," in *Postmodern music, postmodern thought*, ed. Judy Lochhead et al (New York: Routledge. Lochhead, 2002): 7

[12] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 97. Also see the comments by Jonathan D. Kramer in his 'origins of postmodern music' in Postmodern music, Postmoden thought (2002). Kramer comments on the requisite of postmodern music to somehow jar the listener because of its qualities of disjointedness or discontinuity. Jonathan. D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," in *Postmodern music, postmodern thought,* ed. Judy Lochhead et al. (New York: Routledge, 2002): 16-17.

[13] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 97.

that is the problem of aesthetics, but a question of how one should "experience an affect proper to art".[14]

Also in relation to the historical development of the idea of the sublime, Lyotard makes a distinction between what he views as the difference between Baumgarten's aesthetics and Kant's idea of the sense of beauty. Where Baumgarten and Kant's views differ is not only in their view of the sense of beauty (Lyotard notes that Kant would say of Baumgarten's work, that it is "simply based on an error"[15] as a result of Baumgarten's confusion of the usage of judgement), but even more starkly in Kant's view of the sublime.[16]

The sublime, as opposed to the calm sense of beauty has as a result a dual feeling of pain and pleasure as we have noted before. The sublime creates a rift between the subject's faculties of reason and imagination. When beholding an absolute idea or a marvel of nature such as a desert or a volcano or a storm at sea, the subject can only succeed in thinking about it, not in representing it accurately. So reason can circumvent the concept, but imagination or representation cannot do the same. The pain that results from this failure of representation can also be felt as a pleasure as Lyotard notes, because as the imagination fails to represent the concept, it also points to its own striving to represent it. Through striving to present even the unpresentable the imagination aims to harmonise that which it imagines with that which reason tries to understand.[17] By this striving the subject becomes aware of the absoluteness of ideas or concepts and thus relates to them through negative presentation or non-presentation as Kant would call it. Lyotard summarises Kant's solution as to how to convey the sublime:

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[14] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 97. James Kirwan concurs with this remark by Lyotard. Kirwan summarises the development of aesthetics by saying that in the eighteenth century the question was what an aesthetic is but in the nineteenth and twentieth century, the question becomes what that aesthetic might be used for. James Kirwan, *Sublimity*: *The Non-Rational and the Irrational in the History of Aesthetics* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 141.

[15] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 97.

[16] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 97. As mentioned before in note 4, the approach to the sublime differs in Kant and Burke's case. Burke, the author that will be discussed next, does however have a common ground to Kant in his disagreement with Baumgarten; both Kant and Burke's analyses of the sublime relies on the precarious relationship between the beautiful and the sublime. See Holmqvist and Pluciennik, "A Short Guide to the Theory of the Sublime", 719.

[17] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 98.

> One cannot […] represent the power of infinite might or absolute magnitude within space and time because they are pure Ideas. But one can at least allude to them, or 'evoke' them by means of what he baptises 'negative presentation'[18]

Lyotard cites Kant's example of Jewish law of banning the making of images. Images thus become a way to contemplate the absoluteness of an idea not through its pictorial representation, but by the lack thereof: "optical pleasure when reduced to near nothingness promotes an infinite contemplation of infinity".[19]

Although Kant writes long before the advent of what we would call the avant-garde, Lyotard observes that through this conceptualisation of the sublime, avant-gardism is already present in a germinal form in Kant's aesthetic of the sublime. Lyotard links the idea of negative presentation or non-presentation to the attributes of minimal and abstract art. Although the aforementioned idea of the sublime (as formulated by Kant), forms part of Lyotard's understanding of how the sublime becomes perceptible in art, he notes that the question of time, of the 'Is it happening?' does not form an explicit part of that analysis. As mentioned earlier in this section, this is an important element in Lyotard's argument for the sublime.[20] A philosopher who does, however, according to Lyotard account for this important aspect of the aesthetic is Edmund Burke.[21] The main reason why Lyotard elects Burke's idea as a valuable addition to the understanding of the sublime, notwithstanding Kant's disagreement with many of the latter's premises, is because Lyotard believes, as does Burke, that "the sublime is kindled by the threat of nothing further happening".[22] In my opinion, the idea of nothing happening is, however,

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[18] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 85.
[19] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 98.
[20] It is important to emphasise here the relation that Lyotard draws to the avant-garde and how this relates to Lyotard's formulation of the postmodern as discussed in the previous chapter. Crowther notes that Kant's sublime is of utmost importance to the definition of the postmodern and links this to the importance of Lyotard's role in this area of scholarship. He also observes, however, that Kant seems to be in service of a greater area of philosophy, and that this might be detrimental to the understanding of Kant's work itself. Paul Crowther, *The Kantian Sublime: From Morality to Art,* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1989), 3.
[21] Clive Cazeaux observes that Lyotard's sublime relates more closely to Burke than to Kant. Burke's concept of privation (as will be discussed momentarily) provides the basis for the operations of the avant-garde which consist of breaking down conventional and long established forms of artistic representation. See Clive Caseaux, ed, *The Continental Aesthetics Reader,* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 585.
[22] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 98-99.

linked to Lyotard's noted observation by Kant of negative presentation. This in turn has ties to the previously discussed concept of silence within rhetoric as a medium for eliciting the profound feeling of the sublime, and as will be shown later, features prominently in the musical aesthetic of Takemitsu.

According to Lyotard, Burke's main idea consists of the premise that beauty gives a positive pleasure. A pleasure greater than this, is however the passion connected to pain and impending death. In the complex relationship between what Burke calls the body and the soul, there can be an exchange of affects exercised by one another upon one another of each of these two parts of the human subject. Pain in the body affects the soul, but the soul can in its turn affect the body by eliciting an *illusion*[23] of pain through representations that would be associated to painful situations. These painful situations which the soul induces are linked to privations of what presumably would be necessary for the subject to function normally. These privations and the pain the subject experiences as a result are termed 'terrors' by Burke. Such are the examples given: privation of light- terror of darkness, privation of others- terror of solitude, privation of objects- terror of emptiness, privation of language- terror of silence, etc. Lyotard observes:

> 'Burke wrote that for this terror to mingle with pleasure and with it to produce the feeling of the sublime, it is also necessary that the terror causing threat be suspended, kept at bay, held back. This suspense, this lessening of a threat or a danger, provokes a kind of pleasure that is certainly not a positive satisfaction, but is, rather, that of relief. This is still a privation, but it is privation at one remove; the soul is deprived of the threat of being deprived of light, language, life'.[24]

This pleasure felt as a result of this secondary privation is called delight by Burke. Lyotard clarifies how art can function within the view of the sublime as posited by Burke. The deprivation that threatens the soul is in essence the deprivation of the possibility of something happening, a phrase we have come across earlier. As a result, the soul is seized

[23] I italicise illusion because it is not stated in the text that it is an illusion, but contextually, and considering the sublime feeling I assume that the threat thus felt is not an actual mortal threat, but rather a feeling connected to the fear and suspense of such a threat being realised.
[24] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 99.

by the event that threatens it, even admires it. As a result, Lyotard notes that the soul is then rendered immobile or stunned, as if it is dead. Art functions as an intermediary between the so called threat and the subject by distancing it from the subject and thus produces a sense of relief in the subject. For Lyotard, Burke's sublime is "no longer a matter of elevation […] but of intensification".[25]

As I understand it, Burke's exposition of the sublime entails that the feeling connected with it has a quality that is deeply rooted within our internal world as human beings; our own personal fears and anxieties. Seemingly, it also links to our collective existence as human beings, as many of these fears are part of a range of emotions that have presumably been present in the human psyche since the earliest form of our humanoid existence. The disjointedness described by Burke that results from the affects that the soul and body exercise upon one another recalls the rift that we have previously observed in Kant, between the faculty of reason and the imagination. This seems to be a similarity between the two views, but Burke's view makes the event or sublime moment, when this fear/ pleasure occurs seem like more of a dramatic and even mind-altering experience for the subject. Because of the temporal considerations related to this event (the initial feeling of the threatening event, having as its possible outcome that nothing happens, and the subsequent suspending of that threat) links Burke's account of the sublime more closely to Lyotard's view than to Kant's. A good way to come to an understanding of these rather obscure and complex concepts, is to look at how art serves as a medium for the sublime as a perceptible occurrence.

Burke was an advocate for poetry as the artistic discipline to succeed most fully in the attempt to induce these intense feelings in the subject. In painting for example, the artist is, according to Burke at the mercy of figurations, of trying to make the viewer recognise the sublime by somehow representing it pictorially. Poetry on the other hand, although by no means free of rules or limitations, affords the writer a certain freedom with regard

[25] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 99-100.

to the use of language and as such can use these freedoms and the inherent power in words to evoke strong feelings necessary to make the sublime perceptible.[26] Burke comments that for poetry or arts using different mediums to succeed in the above endeavour, the artist must search for ways to free themselves from the limitations of models, and through the aesthetics of the sublime, must abandon what is merely beautiful and experiment with "surprising, strange, shocking combinations".[27] The kind of art that is conducive to the aesthetic outlined by Longinus, furthered by Kant and expanded more by Burke, is according to Lyotard a kind of art that would be characterised by making use of the possibilities opened up by the thought processes of these philosophers.[28] The avant-garde artists whom Lyotard mentions; Manet, Cèzanne, Braque Picasso etc, did most probably not read Kant or Burke, but Lyotard notes that the direction their work took and the results are not only in the art works themselves, but also in the way in which the public views them. Of course, there could be added to these many more names, names that are not as well known or maybe never heard of by the broad public. The point is that the avant-garde in whatever guise seems to fit the model of the sublime if one is able to view it in such a way. And I think that being aware of the philosophy linked to the sublime, one's perception of such art work may be enriched. The public view of such art is often characterised by reactions not necessarily as welcoming as I suggest. In the following quote, we find an eloquent summary of what the effect of this kind of art can be, even if it is not welcomed, the viewer, perhaps unwillingly bears witness to the sublime:

> The artist attempts combinations allowing the event. The art-lover does not experience a simple pleasure, or derive some ethical benefit from his contact with art, but expects an intensification of his conceptual and emotional capacity, an ambivalent enjoyment […] The art-object no longer bends itself to models, but tries to present the fact that there is an unpresentable[…] The social community no longer recognises itself in art-objects, but ignores them, rejects them as incomprehensible, and only later allows the intellectual avant-garde to

[26] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 84-85.
[27] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 100.
[28] Holmqvist and Pluciennik mention that before Lyotard and Adorno's efforts to revive the aesthetic principles as applicable to art of the twentieth century, the theory as held by the views of the philosophers already discussed, were seen as being incompatible with the tendencies of modern artistic expression. Holmqvist and Pluciennik, "A Short Guide to the Theory of the Sublime", 720.

> preserve them in museums as the traces of offensives that bear witness to the power, and the privation, of the spirit.[29]

In this quote there is made reference to the fact that the kind of art Lyotard speaks of makes the audience aware that there is something which cannot be presented, it is presenting the unpresentable in that it shows the impossibility of this act. Lyotard emphasises the way in which Barnett Baruch Newman is able to do this in his art by concentrating on the temporal aspects of art.

The present moment as a temporal reference point which has been linked to Lyotard's explanation of the sublime, is present in the aesthetic fabric of Newman's work to a large extent. Lyotard calls Newman's work sublime because his response to the preoccupation with time that is shared by many painters, as Lyotard notes, is that the artwork itself is time. Lyotard compares the way time or the temporal aspect of art differs between Newman's work and that of Duchamp[30]: the viewer is made aware of the fact that they are perceiving something after the event has occurred or that an event has not yet occurred, thus the time it takes to understand the artwork relies on the becoming aware of this temporal aspect. For Newman, however, the instant in which the artwork is seen and contemplated, is the whole of the work. The work's and the viewer's viewing is part of the same aesthetic meaning. Lyotard puts it: "The purpose of a painting by Newman is not to show that duration is in excess of consciousness, but to be the occurrence, the moment which has arrived".[31] Lyotard comments that although Newman's view of Burke's analysis of the sublime is of a criticising nature, that Burke explains aspects of Newman's aesthetic ideals through his thoughts on the "removal of the threat of pain"[32] in the moment in which the sublime is experienced. Lyotard relates this to the way in which Newman presents his paintings as the moment itself:

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[29] Lyotard, *Inhuman*, 101.
[30] For a detailed description of the specific works, see Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 78-79.
[31] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 78-79.
[32] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 84.

> What is sublime is the feeling that something will happen, despite everything, within this threatening void, that something will take 'place' and will announce that everything is not over. That place is mere 'here', the most minimal occurrence.[33]

In this quote it becomes clear that for Lyotard, the sublime feeling is inextricably linked to time. Thus I propose that art which functions on a temporally complex level will bear relation to what Lyotard describes as the sublime aesthetic. As I understand the sublime, taking into account Lyotard's observation that there is a certain element of discomfort involved in asking the question: is it happening?, the discomfort does not only arise from the absence or the awaiting of an event. With reference to Lyotard's comment that the sublime is close to philosophy of existence, the question seems to expand to include the subject themselves in this event: By asking the question is it happening?, one is also asking; am I experiencing it?, am I part of the moment in which this sublime aesthetic becomes perceptible? One can assume that one is part of it when there is the event, but such an event may be so subtle or it might be a non-event, that it would still leave the subject not only unsure of the moment, but of their existence in that moment. This, I think, is what Takemitsu means when he says that he wants to become part of the world through his music, become part of that one eternal moment, and through it be aware, if not assured of his own existence.[34]

The discussion in following chapters explore how temporality (as related to Lyotard's observation of the temporal aspect of the sublime) in music serves as a parameter which can enable the listener to experience the music in a unique way and as such experience feeling of the sublime. It will also become clear that the sublime may be linked to aspects which inspire compositions and that the sublime may then be presented, or referred to as a result of the composer's conception of that inspiration, as in the case of Brouwer. The discussion can now move into the area of musical temporality in order to create a bridge

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[33] Lyotard, *Inhuman,* 84.

[34] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings*, trans. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glen Glasow (Lanham: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 5.

between the philosophical grounds discussed in this chapter and the investigation of how the sublime manifests in the work of Takemitsu and Brouwer.

Chapter 2

Temporality as a vehicle for the sublime in music: A bridge between Lyotard's Sublime and the music of Brouwer and Takemitsu.

Lyotard states that: "the aesthetic grasp of forms is only possible if one gives up all pretention to master time through a conceptual synthesis". We must "let things come as they present themselves" and when we do so, "every moment, every now, is an 'opening oneself to'".[1] Lyotard's discussion of the 'now', and in the above quote an eloquent summary of the idea, seems to me to link directly to the movement in avant-garde music starting in the early twentieth century toward different ways of working with time or temporality within a musical composition. If we consider the musical ideas linked with time and musical temporality that developed during the last century in the music and musical philosophy of composers such as Stockhausen, Cage, Reich, Stravinsky and more as discussed in two articles by Jonathan D. Kramer, we could create a bridge between Lyotard's philosophical ideas about the sublime (that for him has an especially strong temporal aspect that pertains to the 'now'), and the work of Takemitsu and Brouwer. By first examining the original conscious efforts to make this kind of thinking about time part of the fabric of a musical art form, I would like to show how these ideas can manifest in various ways in musical composition, as discussed by Kramer, and how temporality and its manipulation in music is intrinsically part of Brouwer and Takemitsu's work. It should become clear that through an investigation of these concepts, one might be able to reach new insights into the work of these two composers.

In his 1978 article, *Moment form in twentieth century music,*[2] Jonathan D. Kramer observes that discontinuity in music can be a most profound experience; that the most memorable

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[1] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 32.

[2] Jonathan D. Kramer, "Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol 64 No. 2 (1978): 177-194.

musical experiences occur when expectation is subverted, when these "magical"[3] moments of discontinuity open up new worlds by destroying complacency. He notes further that after the destruction of triadic tonality after ca 1910 as the main medium for conveying continuity in music, composers such as Schoenberg an Bartók went to great lengths, albeit through very different processes, to retain contextual continuity in their music, but as continuity became an optional part of musical discourse, other composers purposefully minimised its importance within the musical movement and utilised the expressive power of discontinuity. Here Kramer sites Stravinsky's *Symphonies of wind instruments* as an especially remarkable example of this kind of composition. Other later composers have gone in opposite directions and have attempted to remedy the dissolution of continuity; composers such as Henze and Carter are also cited here.[4] The historical importance of this aesthetic concept is highlighted by Kramer as having had far reaching effects, as it questions the notion of musical motion, a metaphor for the Western idea that one event leads to another, for linearity in our view of time: "To remove continuity is to question the very meaning of time in our culture and hence of human existence. This questioning is going on all around us, and it is the strongest statement found in contemporary art".[5]

In this quote Kramer touches on the most important aspect of this questioning in which artists have been engaged through the use of the discontinuity in music since the beginning of the last century. Kramer notes that our culture experiences time differently now than it used to, and that when listening to music that has no discontinuity, the most linear tonal music, one might perceive a contradiction between the musical discourse and what it says about time, and how we, as modern or indeed, postmodern people perceive time. Here it is important to refer back to the earlier discussion and the difference Lyotard perceives in the way in which the modern person periodises time into linear events as opposed to the perception of the classical view of the past, present and future as

[3] Kramer, "Moment Form," 177.
[4] Kramer, "Moment Form,"177- 178.
[5] Kramer, "Moment Form," 178.

part of one meaningful totality. In *New temporalities in music* (1981),[6] Kramer explores the idea of discontinuity in music and the cultural links to our view of time in more detail. The author comments that the ability of Western people to comprehend the movement or directionality implied in tonal music is a result of a learned complex skill, one that we are taught through exposure to this kind of music from a young age.[7] The comprehension is also due to the fact that the linearity in this kind of music corresponds well to many goal-orientated processes in Western life, processes that we presumably take for granted as part of a Western society.[8] In several other cultures, the perception of time has been shown by anthropologists to be non- linear. The Balinese people, whose music, with its seemingly endlessly repeating (at least to most Western ears) rhythmical cycles, correspond to their daily life and view of time, which is not oriented toward climax. The musical performances do not have a specific starting gestures or final cadential movements.[9] This is especially significant in relation to Stockhausen's *momentform* as we shall see later. In Balinese cultural thought, as opposed to the aforementioned Western thought, the process rather than the end is significant; activities are not seen as a means to an end but are rather viewed as satisfying events unto themselves. The existence of such cultures as the one mentioned in the example and many others including southern India, the *Hopi* from the American Southwest and The Javanese culture, in which time is not viewed linearly, prove according to the author that temporal linearity is a cultural creation. He observes as a result of this notion, that a linear view of time is not a necessity for human existence and that therefore, the parameter of temporality in music is subject to manipulation and a means to artistic expression that is expression related to the concept of time.[10]

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[6] Jonathan D. Kramer, "New Temporalities in Music," *Critical Inquiry* Vol 7 No. 3 (1981): 539-556.
[7]Kramer, "New Temporalities," 540. Leonard B. Meyer concurs with Kramer in this observation and explains that the comprehension of harmonic movements, especially the relation between dominant and tonic functions is something that must become a habitual and practiced activity as a result of extended exposure to these musical occurrences, for the subject to relate to this aural experience as one would expect from someone learned in the particular style of music. See Leonard B. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956): 61-62.
[8] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 540.
[9] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 540.
[10] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 540-541.

Kramer notes that Western composers' contact with music from non-Western culture has been a major factor in the development of a non-linear aesthetic within the western avant-garde. This kind of aesthetic is especially clear in the music of Debussy after his exposure to the Javanese *gamelan* orchestra. Others like Charles Ives found their solution for the problem of linearity in music in their own cultural context, making a conscious break from the European tradition, Kramer remarks that Ives felt more at home with an American style of music that would be more suitable for a band performance in a park than the traditional concert hall, this kind of music would not have linearity as a requisite aspect of its aesthetic.[11] In an interview with Steve Reich, he comments that American composers attempting to copy their 'European betters', as he puts it, is the effect of a continual delusion that European music is superior to others and that the future of western music is destined to come from this continent.[12] Reich is in fact reacting to the non linear music of Schoenberg and others. These composers are referred to by Kramer as contributors to the kind of aesthetic is of interest to him and to the argument of this essay, however, Reich's own manipulation of time as a continuum as it manifests in his particular aesthetic, has a similar result as the extreme discontinuity in the music of these European composers. Through this temporal ambiguity and equally importantly through his assimilation of his American context as inspiration for his work, Reich also succeeds in creating discontinuity in his music. The importance of Reich here is to create a link to the composers with whom the argument of the current work concerns itself most specifically; Brouwer and Takemitsu as will become clear in the subsequent chapter when their work is discussed in relation to Kramer's ideas and in relation to the sublime, which I believe to be present in the idea of temporality as an aesthetic concept in music and in the ideas about music as an art form by these two composers. For now it suffices to say that as previously mentioned, non-Western concepts of time in music have been a major factor in the avant-garde and through these two composers' identification with

[11] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 543.
[12] Steve Reich in Frank Scheffer, "In the Ocean," *YouTube video,* 3:43, Posted by wasaexpress, February 2, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0NwiTHIhGM.

their own culture and the aesthetic concepts therein contained, they constitute two appropriate examples of artists whose musical aesthetic is akin to that of Lyotard's sublime.

Before proceeding in the next chapters to discuss Brouwer and Takemitsu as such, a look at how Kramer classifies non-linearity in music and which composers he highlights as important will be useful as a musical theoretical background and a bridge between the philosophical ideas discussed in the previous chapter and aesthetic perceived in the work of these composers. It is important to note at the outset that such a means of classification as Kramer uses is extremely useful and enlightening about aspects of the music, but should not be taken as a rigorous theory or method of analysis, as Kramer himself states in his concluding remarks.[13] The reason I believe the kind of discontinuity Kramer identifies to be so valuable for the argument is because the expressive power gained through the use of it and more importantly, the ability to perceive it, provides an insight into how the aesthetic of the sublime as it links to temporality observed in Lyotard, might manifest in the art of music.

The first category of temporality in music as identified by Kramer is *multiply-directed time*[14]. This classification pertains to music that has a clearly perceptible linearity, but one that is reordered. Because the orientation toward a goal still exists in the music, the placement of these goals is the key to perceiving the multiple levels of time: "in multiple time we encounter such intriguing anomalies as ending in the middle of a piece, several different continuations of a particular passage, transitions that are broken off".[15] Because in tonal music we are so aware of directionality, created by the rules and conventions of tonal harmony, this category is especially significant to music that follows tonal procedures. For this reason, it enables the listener to be aware of the temporality and its manipulation in earlier music that would normally be placed under the blanket term of

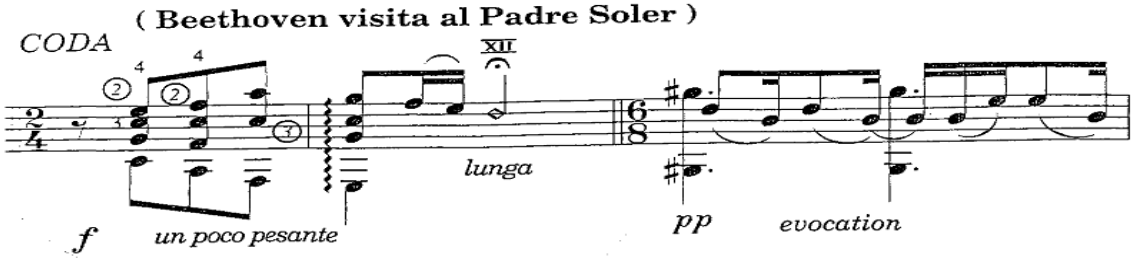
[13] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 556.
[14] All the categories and specific terms used by Kramer are italicized.
[15] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 545.

tonal music. The author gives the example of Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony* and Beethoven's last *String Quartet*. To have the awareness of new concepts in terms of defining time as we do today, such earlier music can be perceived in new ways, ways that coincide with the temporal awareness the modern person has and that pervades modern culture and society. Kramer notes that there are not many examples of this kind of temporality contained in tonal music written in the twentieth century. Neo-tonality and its well-known proprietors is considered by the author to be an unlikely source for example of such an experimental style, but he does note that there are non-tonal examples such as the 1946 *Trio* by Schoenberg that do contain temporal elements akin to this category, although this work presents analytical challenges in terms of directionality that is obscured as a result of tonality being absent.[16]

I would venture to say that the first movement of Brouwer's *Sonata* (1990) would be an example of a kind of piece where the listener can experience multiple levels of time through the subversion of the direction in which the music seems to move. The work contains clear tonal movement, but as a result of Brouwer's specific use of the development of germinal motifs and their continual expansion and contraction, the music never seems to arrive at any clear goal. Rather, it seems to build up to climaxes that somehow become part of the musical movement themselves instead of being clearly defined high points. When there are climaxes they are situated in unexpected places, for example the Beethoven quote (Example 3) at the beginning of the coda:[17]

[16] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 545-546.
[17] Leo Brouwer, *Sonata para Guitarra Sola* (Madrid: Opera Tres, 1991): 10.

Example 3: Brouwer, *Sonata*, bars 113-114.



The directionality is created in this piece as with all but a few of Brouwer's works, is centred around the driving rhythm, that has often been referred to as the Cuban nature of Brouwer's music. These aspects and others shall be discussed in detail in the next chapter, but the brief excursion from Kramer's text already points to the fact that when the listener is more aware of the way in which time can be used and perceived, one gains a novel approach to understanding a work. Throughout the current discussion, preliminary comments about the works of Brouwer and Takemitsu will be made in order to provide an introduction to how the works will be considered in the next chapter in relation to the sublime aesthetic and Kramer's ideas about discontinuity.

The discontinuity created by *multiply-directed time* is different from the kind created by the next category: *moment time*, after the compositional form formulated by Stockhausen as *momentform*. In this kind of composition there is no linearity inherent in the musical procedures as one would find in tonally oriented music discussed above. The sense of time in is entirely different. The contrast between the two classifications is most marked in the way in which a *momentform* piece begins and ends. The explanation of this concept is taken by Kramer from the discussion by Stockhausen in his 1960 formulation of *momentform*. Kramer notes in his article on *momentforn* (1978)[18] that Stockhausen's formulation, appearing in *Texte zur Elektronischen Musik* (Cologne, 1963-71) first and a

[18] Jonathan D. Kramer, "Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol 64 No. 2 (1978): 177-194.

year later in expanded and modified form in *Erfindung und Entdeckung* (Cologne, 1963-71) highlights the ideas and procedures that originate in earlier compositions and articles by Stockhausen and has their conceptual roots on the practices of Debussy, Stravinsky, Webern, Varese and Messiaen.[19] Here a quote by Stockhausen seems fitting in order to make clear the composer's specific ideas about beginning and ending of a *momentform* piece:

> I do not mean when speaking about the infinite form that a performance should have no end. I have made a strict difference between the concepts 'Anfang' (beginning) and 'Beginn' (starting), 'Ende' (ending) and 'Schluss' (stopping). When saying 'Anfang' I imply a process, something rises and merges; when saying 'Ende' I am thinking about something that ends, ceases to sound, extinguishes. The contrary is true with the words 'Beginn' and 'Schluss', which I combine with the concept of caesurae which delineate a duration, as a section, out of a continuum. Thus 'Anfang' and 'Ende' are appropriate to closed development forms, which I have also referred to as dramatic forms, and 'Beginn' and 'Schluss' are suitable for open moment forms. This is also why I speak about an infinite form even though a performance is limited in its duration for practical reasons.[20]

In relation to the sublime as an aesthetic of the moment posited by Lyotard, the following quote bears remarkable significance. Stockhausen states that each moment contains all of eternity just as a moment in moment form contains the entire piece from an aesthetic point of view:

> Every present moment counts, as well as no moment at all: a given moment is not merely regarded as the consequence of the previous one and the prelude to the coming one, but as something individual, independent and centred in itself, capable of existing on its own. An instant does not need to be a particle of measured duration. This concentration on the present moment- on every present moment- can make a vertical cut, as it were, across horizontal time perception, extending out to a timelessness I call eternity. This is not an eternity that begins at the end of time, but an eternity that is present in every moment. I am speaking about musical forms in which apparently no less is being undertaken than the explosion- yes- even more, the overcoming of the concept of duration.[21]

Although Heikinheimo, author of the book in which these quotes appear offers a very critical view of the formal implications that this kind of music by Stockhausen has and indeed refutes the composer's attempts as ideal concepts without practical musical

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[19] Kramer, "Moment Form," 179.
[20] Seppo Heikinheimo, *The Electronic Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen: Studies on the Esthetical and Formal Problems of its First Phase*, trans. Brad Abetz (Helsinki: Sanomapaino, 1972), 121. Bracketed terms are the substitutions for the German used by Kramer in Kramer, *Moment form*,180, added here for the sake of clarity.
[21] Heikinheimo, *Electronic Music*, 120.

results,[22] it can be observed that the philosophical thought contained in Stockhausen's words bears striking relation to the ideas about the sublime moment in the work of Lyotard. Another link to Lyotard is the idea of each present containing all of time as discussed in the previous chapters.

Kramer elaborates the concept of moment form as containing in its extreme application what he calls *mobile form* where different moments or sections of a piece may be put together in a number of different orderings as decided by the performer under certain restrictions of the composer.[23] An example of such a piece exists in Brouwer's oeuvre. In his piece *Tarantos* the performer can select sections from two groups of fragments to play one after the other. The composer gives an example of how this might be done and does require the piece to end with a single final fragment. Other than this, the player is free to substitute any section from the same group for any other and pair it with any fragment from the second group.[24] Kramer notes that moment form is not limited to only music that has no internal linearity as might be created by tonal procedures. Some pieces could be heard as *momentform* pieces in a kind of impure form. The author gives the example of Stravinsky's symphony of winds as a piece in which the different sections feature tonal writing, but create sufficient discontinuity between the different sections that it is possible to perceive it as a moment form.[25]

A third category formulated by Kramer is *vertical time*. Music with this kind of temporality seems to sublimate the idea of moment form in the sense that the entire piece consists in essence of one moment. Kramer puts it: "When the moment becomes the piece, discontinuity disappears in favour of total, possibly unchanging consistency".[26]

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[22] Heikinheimo, Electronic Music, 206-221.
[23] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 547.
[24] See Leo Brouwer, "Tarantos," In *Leo Brouwer: Guitar Works,* ed. Francois Laurent (Paris: Max Eschig, 1972): 52- 53bis.
[25]Kramer, "New Temporalities," 548. A Detailed analysis of part of Stravinsky's symphony can be found in Jonathan D. Kramer, "Moment Form" 184-188, where the author examines the form with relation to the proportional relationship between the moments which he concludes follow a ratio of 3:2.
[26] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 549.

Music such as this is said to not contain phrases, as phrases are according to Kramer, the last remnants of linearity and that they are even part of the musical constructs that could be considered moment forms or multiple time forms.[27] It is tempting to offer Brouwer's *La Espiral Eterna*[28] as an example of such a work, but although the title suggests and the impressions one receives upon first hearing it confirms the assumption that it might be a vertical time piece, the piece does establish and expand a potential vertical sound world, but there remain in the piece a sense of movement toward something. This dynamic quality would exclude it from the category of *vertical time* as a pure vertical time piece would not exceed the self imposed boundaries set up in the establishment of the moment by structurally important deviations as are found in the Brouwer piece.[29] I would however suggest as does Kramer in his formulation of *momentform* and his inclusion of the Symphony of winds to this category as an impure example, that *La Espiral Eterna* displays sufficiently pertinent qualities of a vertical time piece that it might be considered as an impure vertical form. For the listener to understand a piece of music in *vertical time*, they have to give up expectation and enter into the vertical time of the piece. The similarity to this attitude and the one suggested by Lyotard as evident in the opening quote of this chapter that is needed to perceive the sublime is striking.

In relation to the modern sense of time and the temporal awareness that Kramer suggests as being present in the modern person, *vertical time* composition seems to be of a profound significance. It forces the listener to enter into a mode of listening that is opposed to the natural inclination of Western listeners that Kramer defines as teleological listening; to store information about possible implications of the sounds heard and attempt to construct a directional or at least structural logic within the music.[30] We are forced to enter into a new way of perceiving time. An important part of Kramer's argument that has not yet been discussed in detail is his assertion that our

[27] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 549.
[28] See Leo Brouwer, *La Espira Eterna*, (Mainz: Schott, 1973). See example of the opening of this composition in the chapter dealing specifically with Brouwer.
[29] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 549.
[30] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 550.

modern culture is obsessed with time and that our perception of time differs from previous centuries. In our time the art produced reflects this sense of time, and it is this that convinces Kramer of its importance as an aesthetic occurrence.[31] The sense of time is divided in two parts; our perception of and adherence to the extreme linearity and temporal organisation we experience in a society saturated with a constant need for progress and the movement toward goals, but also our inner sense of time that is not well organised and indeed not linear at all. Kramer believes that the discontinuity we perceive in the music he discusses lies close to our own inner sense of time and for that reason has great aesthetic importance. A kind of music not discussed n Kramer's text is the music by Stockhausen that the composer calls intuitive music. In a lecture given by the composer in 1972, he explains the way this music is constructed. The performers are to play 'vibrations' in the frequency of various parts of their own beings: Starting from the closest bodily rhythms of the heart and moving ever outward and into more abstract regions such as the rhythm of your thoughts, consciousness, enlightenment and the universe itself. The kind of temporality that would ensue from this kind of music making is surely the most personal and closest to the performers and perhaps the audience itself, as the music originates from only that origin that is inside the performer himself.[32]

Kramer goes on to explain, after identifying the specific temporal procedures, that an important concept to grasp when working with temporality in music is that the way we listen is dictated by our sense of time and that our deepened understanding of how time can function in music could lead to other ways of perceiving it in relation to our own inner sense of time.[33] In this chapter I have not yet referred to the work of Takemitsu as related to the categories posited by Kramer for the main reason that Takemitsu's music does not as far as my perception of it goes, follow any one of the categories in their entirety, but does to a very high degree rely on the temporal aspect of music to relate the

[31] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 544.
[32] Stockhausen in "Lecture 4 Karlheinz Stockhausen: Intuitive Music" *YouTube video*, 8:09, Posted by Thomas Olano, February 3, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywx49Qf5bW4
[33] Kramer, "New Temporalities," 552-553.

philosophical ideas held by Takemitsu. These ideas are very significant with relation to his Japanese cultural heritage and will be examined in detail in the following chapter. I am not suggesting that Brouwer's music does follow a set of rules to have enabled examples to be present, nor does Kramer in his articles assert an all-inclusive theory of temporal analysis. Instead these categories serve as reference points for an investigation of Brouwer and Takemitsu that will inform a comparison between different forms of temporality in music and very importantly, how these forms correspond to the aesthetic of the sublime I believe to be present in work of these composers.

Chapter 3

The sublime in the musical aesthetic of Toru Takemitsu.

The aim of the following two chapters is to apply the aesthetic and theoretical concepts already discussed in the dissertation thus far to the music of Brouwer and Takemitsu and to thus provide a conclusion to the philosophical argument posited at the beginning of the dissertation. As noted in the introductory chapter, these chapters serve in their application of the philosophical framework as a conclusion to the dissertation in themselves, and as such enables the exclusion of a separate conclusion chapter in which the philosophical argument and its application is reiterated. The two following chapters present an application of the philosophical argument concerned with the sublime, its aesthetic description by Lyotard as a temporal concept, and how this aesthetic manifests in the guitar music of the two composers. The application of the sublime aesthetic will be mediated by the ideas about temporality in music as discussed by Kramer. In respect to analytical discussion, there will be posited a corroboration between my personal understanding of the sublime and temporal manipulation perceived in the music and existing analytical research done on the composers' music. The sources available and relevant will be shown to hold true to the aesthetic perceptual ideas already encountered, and through the respective authors' analytical approach it is possible for me to present an aesthetic and analytic discussion about the music. The insights which the above mentioned aesthetic theory afford the listener, will show how this kind of interpretation of the music can provide a new way of experiencing the music of the two composers as a temporal art form.

For both Takemitsu and Brouwer, there are certain aspects in their music and musical philosophy that relate specifically to the sublime and serve as starting points for the discussion. In the case of Takemitsu, the traditional Japanese aesthetic concepts that inform his art constitute the direct link with the composer and the aesthetic of the sublime. A number of authors agree that a true understanding of Takemitsu's music

cannot be claimed if the listener does not have a clear grasp of two distinct principals in Japanese traditional aesthetic. The first of these is the concept of *ma*. In the article: *The Concept of Ma and the Music of Takemitsu* by Jonathan Lee Chennette (1985),[1] he defines the Japanese word *ma* as an everyday word used to denote space; either physical space or temporal space between events. *ma* as an aesthetic concept is of ancient origin with spiritual connotations and occurs in a myriad of Japanese art forms. It describes the space between events, a space which becomes meaningful when filled with motion.[2] Chennette refers to a summary of an exhibition on *ma* held in Paris. He quotes Arata Isozaki, the author of the exhibition summary (1979), speaking about *ma* as it relates to ancient spiritual practices and belief in the Ancient Japanese deities or *Kami*:

> Sanctified places were sometimes delineated by the setting up of four posts, one in each of the corners of the area. . . . Kami were thought to descend into such enclosed spaces, which were usually totally vacant. The very acts of preparing such a space and waiting for kami to descend into it had immense influence on later modes of space-time cognition. Space was thought of as void-like the vacant holy zone-and even concrete objects were thought to be void within. Kami were believed to descend to fill these voids with spiritual force (chi). Perceiving the instant at which this occurred became decisively important for all artistic endeavour. Space was perceived as identical with events or phenomena occurring in it; that is, space was perceived only in relation to time flow.[3]

Chennette supplies another example of *ma* as it manifests in the traditional Japanese art form of garden design. For this example, he refers to an article by Elliot Duetsch, in which this author discusses the Zen rock garden of Ryoan-ji in Kyoto.[4] The garden consists of fifteen stones arranged within a bear gravel filled space. The unique way in which these stones are arranged never allows a visitor to view all of them at once. The garden then seems to be an invitation to contemplate areas of the garden separately, relating the stones to the empty spaces in between. This contemplation and movement of a visitor then serves to lend meaning to these empty spaces, much like the *Kami* do in their decent into the ancient holy are.[5] This concept of space filled with meaning is

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[1] Jonathan Lee Chenette. "The Concept of Ma and The Music of Takemitsu," *Grinnell College*. Vassar College, 2008. Web. November 1, 2015.
[2] Chenette. "The Concept of Ma," 2-3.
[3] Chenette, "Concept of Ma," 3.
[4] See Elliot Deutsch, "Studies in Comparative Aesthetics," *Monographs of the Society of Asian and Comparative Philosophy* Vol. 2 (Hawaii: University of Hawaii press, 1975), 26-27.
[5] Chenette, "Concept of Ma," 3-4.

linked to the way in which Takemitsu uses space and time in his music, as shall become clear in the discussion that follows. The composer offers an explanation of how he relates to the concept of ma in his music (here specifically pertaining to *Arc for Piano and Orchestra* (1963) in the following:

> Arc is a musical garden that changes with each performance. In this metaphysical garden I tried to create a structure of tempo strongly influenced by the traditional idea of *ma*… by allowing the solo piano to stroll through the garden with changing viewpoints, the piece is freed from a set frame.[6]

Here it is fitting to recall the idea of the present moment, situated between the past and future (as discussed in the chapter one about the postmodern sense of time), the present moment always being the temporal space of the sublime when it manifests. Every different viewpoint as Takemitsu relays, suggests a moment in time where the observer can fill the *ma* with meaning. The non- linearity suggested by the fact that the tempi within the piece are varied and that there are many perspectives of the 'garden', depending where it viewed from in terms of the different instruments, relates to the category of multiple time that Kramer highlights in the discussion of the previous chapter. The reader may already start to see that *ma,* as it is defined above can be a concept closely related to that of the sublime moment: The inviting of the moment, or being open to the sublime in that empty space that would be filled by meaning as soon as the perceiver becomes aware of it. It is also clear that ma forms part of the temporal aspect of the music; when sounds are heard, when they are not heard and what the listener becomes aware of when relating these different moments to one another within the continuum of the musical work. To define *ma* as have been attempted to do above is something that Takemitsu himself seemed reluctant to do, for fear of presenting a restrictive definition of a concept that had to him of an important cosmic and spiritual significance. The manner in which the composer replies in an interview in 1989 suggests this:

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[6] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings*, trans. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glen Glasow (Lanham: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 96.

> 'Ma is not only a concept in time; it is at the same time very spatial, a spatial thing, I believe. Ma is, perhaps … oh, ma is a very philosophical term'.[7]

And further:

> The concept of ma is one special form of recognition in the universe, in the cosmos. Ma is the big universe, and man is very little, small. We feel the big space-ma. This is most primary. Man is part of nature-no less, no more'.[8]

In Peter Burt's (2001)[9] book on the music of Takemitsu, the author devotes the final chapter to the philosophical and traditional Japanese aesthetic concepts he believes contribute to the uniqueness of Takemitsu's personal aesthetic. In addition to his analytical approach and through investigating these aspects of the artist's work, Burt attempts to answer some questions as to why the composer's music does not seem to lend itself to analyses, that it "ultimately resists analytical explanation",[10] to which the composer's avoidance of technical detail of compositional processes in his writing about his own music attests.[11] Burt relates Takemitsu's ideas about *ma* to the philosophy of silence as expressed by John Cage. Burt states that the simultaneous temporal sense as discussed here in relation to the Japanese garden and which Takemitsu applies to the traditional Japanese music of *noh*, specifically relates to the idea of a 'stream of sound' expressed by both Cage and Takemitsu. In the same interview as cited earlier, the interviewer quotes Takemitsu: "To make the void of silence live is to make the infinity of sounds. Sound and silence are equal".[12]

Burt relates this equality between sound and silence to Cage's idea that silence is a space full of activity, full of sounds.[13] It is important to recall here the previous point that *ma* is a space that is filled with meaning by the sounds around it and the space it occupies in the continuum, this relates to both the postmodern ideas concerning time as a continuum of single moments and the moment in relation to the sublime aesthetic. Of Cage's music

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[7] Toru Takemitsu, Tania Cronin and Hilary Tann, "Afterword," *Perspectives on New Music* Vol. 27 No. 2 (1989): 214.
[8] Takemitsu et al. "Afterword," 215.
[9] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (New York: Cambridge University press, (2001)
[10] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 3.
[11] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 3.
[12] Takemitsu et al. "Afterword," 212.
[13] Burt, *Music of Takemitsu*, 237,

Takemitsu has said: "John Cage shook the foundations of western music and, with almost naive clarity, he evoked silence as the mother of sound. Through John Cage, sound gained its freedom".[14] In Burt's view, these similarities between Takemitsu and Cage are factors that allow Takemitsu to move freely within a Western idiom whilst retaining Japanese elements ingrained in his Japanese artistic identity.[15] He goes on to say that the similarities in aesthetic ideals go further than the relationship between Cage and Takemitsu and extend to aesthetic aspects of Western avant-garde music relating to timbre and the complex manifestations of sounds and their physical properties. This is something that preoccupied Takemitsu's compositional ideals throughout his life and is evident in his use of timbre as an aesthetic principle inseparable from his music. The Japanese aesthetic concept to which this area of Takemitsu's music pertains is the Japanese concept of *sawari*.[16] For a discussion of this concept and furthering the argument, it is opportune to move on to the main source in the investigation into the occurrence of these Japanese concepts in Takemitsu's guitar music. Vineet Shende's (2001) thesis[17] on the subject provides a detailed look at the aesthetic concepts and applies them to the composer's guitar works. Thus, the source is indispensable to the argument in both an analytical and aesthetic sense of the current work.

Shende draws attention to the fact that although Takemitsu is not viewed as primarily a guitar composer, his compositions including the instrument and solo works for it occurs throughout his compositional career and outweigh the output of other composers who are considered to be guitar composers. The list of compositions includes a total of seventeen works.[18] Within his works for guitar, Japanese aesthetic principles play an

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[14] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence*, 137.

[15] Also see Timothy Koozin, "Toru Takemitsu and the Unity of Opposites," *College Music Symposium* Vol 30 No. 1 (1990): 35. Koozin points out that it is important to be aware that there are parallels to the Japanese aesthetic concepts as mentioned here, in the West. He highlights Webern's use of temporal discontinuity and relates it also to Ligeti's observations about this occurrence.

[16] Burt, *Music of Takemitsu*, 238.

[17] Vineet Ashok Shende 2001. "Part I. A Portfolio of Four Compositions: "Snarl", "Struwwelpeterlieder", "Seven Mirrors", and "to Musique" (Original Compositions). Part II. Traditional Japanese Aesthetics in the Solo Guitar Works of Toru Takemitsu." (D.M.A., Cornell University 2001),

[18] Shende 2001. "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 7.

integral role. To illustrate this, the author does an in-depth analysis of *Folios* (1974), Takemitsu's first work for solo guitar and incorporates the same approach into an overview of two other compositions, *All in Twilight* (1987) and *Equinox* (1993). Shende identifies two aesthetic principals that are most prevalent in the guitar music. The first of which, *ma*, has already been discussed, and Shende's explanation concurs with the one already given. The author uses the same example of the Zen Rock garden in Kyoto to illustrate the concept of *ma* in traditional Japanese art. In Takemtsu's music the characteristic silences and pauses between seemingly disjointed phrases is according the Shende illustrative of the concept of meaningful space between events.[19]

Sawari, the second principal and one which is of concern at this point, is translated as inconvenience or obstacle. In terms of its aesthetic meaning it is linked to the tradition of *Biwa* (a kind of traditional Japanese lute) playing. The physical construction of this instrument causes a buzzing noise when played. Instead of trying to avoid this seemingly unwanted sound, traditional *biwa* players artistically employ it as part of the unique aesthetic quality of the instrument. The author emphasises this as the aesthetic meaning of the word; that through an inconvenience or obstacle, an artist is given an opportunity to reach greater artistic heights and links the principal of *Sawari* to the 'structural underpinnings' of the guitar music.[20] To briefly return to Burt, it is important to note that the author sees a close relationship between what he calls Takemitsu's "two most important aesthetic ideas";[21] *ma* and *sawari*. With the noise element that is present in *biwa* playing which invokes the concept of *Sawari*, the sound heard is closer to the sounds surrounding us in our everyday lives and thus links to the 'stream of sound idea'; silences and sounds intertwined within a continuum, this is a link to the first concept discussed, *ma*. Burt comments on the composer's idea that this kind of sound aesthetic is very different from the traditional Western ideal of a purity of tone and closer to the Japanese

[19] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics,"9-11.
[20] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 12-13.
[21] Burt, *Music of Takemitsu*, 238.

ideal incorporating these aesthetic concepts.[22] When viewed in this way, it is possible to say that like *ma*, *sawari* can also be a temporal concept; a way of situating the present within the 'stream' of existence. A similarity exists also between the concept of *sawari* and the sublime with relation to an overcome obstacle, resulting in higher aesthetic expression. Here can be recalled the description of Burke's idea of the sublime by Lyotard: a psychological threat resulting in a spiritual release, or the privation felt as a result as described by Burke, seems to be closely akin to the idea of an inherent obstacle within an artistic act and when it is overcome, the very obstacle itself contributes to the aesthetical poignancy of the result.[23]

To illustrate how Shende perceives these Japanese concepts in the 1974 work, *Folios*, a summary of the analysis is helpful.[24] The analysis in question is extremely detailed and deals with the pitch material in either, a pitch set, altered scale or altered tonal approach. Incorporated into the analysis is how the pitch material relates to itself in sections within movements and across the entire piece by means of what the author calls 'referential sonority'. The author also comments on the variance of timbre employed by the composer by means of advanced guitar techniques. Attention is also given to the functionality of pauses and points of rest.[25] As mentioned before, for the purpose of the current work, this analysis, will serve as an analytical reference point to practically illustrate the aesthetics at work in Takemitsu's music. These ideas can then be linked with the musical temporality discussed in relation to Kramer and in turn to the aesthetic of the sublime which has been the aesthetic and philosophical framework for the discussion throughout. Thus I rely on the detailed analysis of another author, whose aesthetic perception supports mine to enable me to incorporate an analytical element into the philosophical nature of this thesis. Here then follows a summary of the main

[22] Burt, *Music of Takemitsu*, 238.
[23] Refer to p 25-29 of chapter 1 part 2, Lyotard's aesthetic of the sublime of this dissertation for the full description of Burke's idea as read by Lyotard.
[24] For the full and detailed analyses, including copious musical examples which do not accompany the current text, see Shende, *Traditional Japanese Aesthetics*. 17-34.
[25] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 18.

areas under which Shende demarcates the music and how the author links the Japanese concepts already discussed to the musical structure.

The first movement is divided by Shende into four sections for which the development and variation of the original motif; characteristically chromatic, functions as the structural bases. The climax of the movement occurs as a chromatic expansion of the original in the last designated section.[26] It is shown that in the different sections as demarcated, the motivic variances serve as bridging material between these sections and at times as in the case of the second and last section, the material foreshadows musical gestures of later movements in the piece. The second section, which begins in the last line of the first page as shown by Shende provides an example for the author of the pitch material and texture that Takemitsu would have heard in the gamelan music during his visit to Indonesia in the same year of *Folios's* composition. The author comments that the musical language found in much Balinese music, characterised by an interlocking texture is mirrored here by Takemitsu's use of the same textural device.[27] It is interesting that Kramer uses Balinese music and culture to comment on the difference between the way in which Western music and Balinese music incorporates temporality in their musical language. Although Shende is referring to a textural device, it remains an interesting observation that the kind of music that served as an inspiration to Takemitsu, adheres to a similar temporal complexity as is being shown to be present in Takemitsu's own music. Important to note is Shende's observation that Takemitsu uses textural and timbral variation specific to the guitar (in the form of harmonics) as both devices to link motivic material and to create a sense of slowing down or halting within the context of otherwise forward moving musical material, as is present in the second section mentioned above.[28] The continuum that seems to be created here recalls the idea of temporal continuity from a postmodern view. The moments in which Shende shows Takemitsu to be referring to musical material that only appears later in the work, points to the idea that in each

[26] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 19-20.
[27] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 22-23.
[28] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 20-23.

moment, or section, the entirety of time and its meaning is contained. This links to moment form as seen in relation to Kramer, but as the interconnectedness of sections would disallow the movement to be viewed as moment form, one could reason that the temporal aesthetic that is created through the use in such a way of ma, constitutes at least some of the requirements of moment form, and to a large extent the criteria of *multiple time* (Kramer) as the listener is made aware of many areas in terms of temporal space within the work.

As opposed to the sense of continuum in the first movement, the second movement contains bar lines to demarcate sections, something which is absent in the first movement as Shende observes. The movement is also cast in a seemingly more conventional formal structure, a balanced ternary with a short coda. Similarly to the first movement's forward moving material, the author observes that the first section of the second movement contains a kind of driving musical material, here using a reoccurring octatonic pattern. The second section is characterised as markedly more fragmentary than the first, employing frequent textural and rhythmic variation, within the same octatonic setting, although in a different pitch area. As the author observed in the first movement, there is material foreshadowing the music that is to come in the second movement, when this does occur in the second movement however, it is presented in an altered timbral manner, in the form of harmonics.[29] Within the sections' differing material are in addition separated further from one another by the use of rests, the silence that ensues, observes Shende, relates to the aesthetic concept of ma.[30] Even further fragmentation is created according to the author by the use of three distinct octatonic patterns; on respectively the pitches of E, F and F#. These collections of pitches serve as the harmonic framework of the movement and the forward moving quality of the music is created by the frequency with which the composer moves between the different pitch

[29] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 24-25.
[30] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 24.

collections.[31] It seems then through these observations as if Takemitsu creates a sense of discontinuity in terms of timbral textural variation, but still lends to the music a semblance of harmonic drive, sectionalised and interrupted as noted, by meaningful moments of silence. Thus the music is at once continuous and driving, but also jarring and temporally complex. These observations recall the ideas of Kramer's discussion of temporality in music.

Shende views the form of the third movement in *Folios* as a rondo. The two bar rondo theme remains intact throughout the movement, but is expanded in each section and constitutes the harmonic basis of the movement with major and diminished triads juxtaposed with an ascending chromatic line.[32] From the outset of the movement there is a distinct interlocking rhythmical quality to the music, whenever the rondo theme appears and is expanded, this quality is highlighted. Shende remarks that this kind of rhythmical texture and ostinato bass patterns occurring therewith, and the 'stratified' quality of the rhythm, is another link to Balinese music, specifically a vocal genre called *Kecak*.[33] This provides unification between the movements in terms of influence and for the argument of temporal complexity in Takemitsu, it serves as another good example. A section of this movement that seems to contrast starkly with the kind of music one would hear in Bali is the direct quote from *Choral no. 72* from the *St Mathew Passion by* Bach. For Shende, the quote and Takemitsu's subsequent re-harmonisation serves as an illustration of the movement's harmonic basis; here relating to the use of D minor and related B diminished chords, previously referred to. This chordal relationship in combination with chromatic lines bears great significance in the movement's overall harmonic substance. Harmonically analysing this section of the piece, he comments on the way these chords serve as a "conduit" linking the composer's dense and chromatic musical language to that of Bach's functional tonal one.[34] Shende sees the final note of the piece as a direct link to

[31]Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 25-26.
[32] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 27.
[33] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 27-28.
[34] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 30-31.

the Japanese aesthetic practice of *biwa* playing. *Folios* ends with a bend note which the performer is instructed to bend (moving/bending the string on the fret with the left hand to raise the pitch). The author notes that the *biwa* frets are much higher than those of guitar and performers would often pull down on the string between frets to create a *portamento* sound. The guitar technique of bending thus imitates the sound. The author further asserts that the opening rhythm and melodic shape of the first movement resembles very closely that of the musical patterns found in *gagaku* music. Thus the author concludes that the entire piece is in fact 'bookended' by traditional Japanese musical practice and elements.[35]

In continuing the discussion of *Folios* as an illustration of Japanese aesthetic concepts Shende points to the afore-mentioned use of rests and fermatas in the first and second movements as a musical manifestation of the concept of *ma*. By the structural placement of the points of silence, the silence becomes a factor contributing to the aural expectation of the listener, and of the general structure of the sounds in between the silences.[36] Where silence interrupts it might be jarring, where it concludes a section it gives a sense of fulfilment. It is clear that the way in which *ma* can be experienced in the work, has an effect on how the listener perceives the temporal aspect of the music. As noted earlier, *ma* is a spacial and temporal concept. In music, an art form that exists in time more than in space, *ma* affects the way in which the listener perceives this element of the music.

A large part of the author's argument for the presence of *sawari* in the music lies in the overall intervallic plan that the author believes lies under the surface of the music of *Folios*. The author notes rather poetically that through *sawari* "order and creation within chaos, is invoked".[37] By regarding the physical limitations of the instrument in terms of fingering and the resulting sonority of chords and lines including open strings (especially pertaining to extreme technical demands Takemitsu's guitar music in general requires

[35] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 32.
[36] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 34-35.
[37] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 35.

from the performer in this respect), the author reaches the conclusion that the intervallic plan of the entire piece can be reduced to the perfect fifth and minor or major second relationship between structurally important points in the music. The interval of a perfect fifth being especially important in terms of the "human perception of sound" and it being "at the core"[38] of the composer's own musical perception as Shende illustrates by quoting the composer.[39] In addition to the prominence of perfect fifth as an underlying intervallic structure of Folios, the author comments on what he terms 'referential sonority'. This is expressed in a particular pitch set which constitutes the basis under the guise of octatonic patterns or other pitch collections of the entire piece, creating a unity which is not at once perceptible, but is ever present under the surface of the music.[40] This seems to recall the idea of negative representation posited by Lyotard. The formal aspect that the prominence of the interval lends to the music is presented under a concealing layer of complex sound, not being immediately perceptible, but there as a hidden presentation of the sublime. As supported by Shende's analytical investigation, I think it follows that the sublime can occur in multiple aspects of the music; as a hidden aesthetic below the surface, or as a clear defining aspect of the music as evident in the periods of meaningful silence.

Shende concludes that the concepts of *ma* and *sawari* as they have shown themselves to be manifest in the music are integral to the musical aesthetic of the composition. By extension and in relation to the argument of this thesis, these concepts have been shown to relate to temporal manipulation in the music as discussed by Kramer also as such to the sublime, which is perceptible in moments of shock, anticlimax, silence or as an impression of a moment lasting the entire piece under the surface, just clear enough to make the listener aware of it.

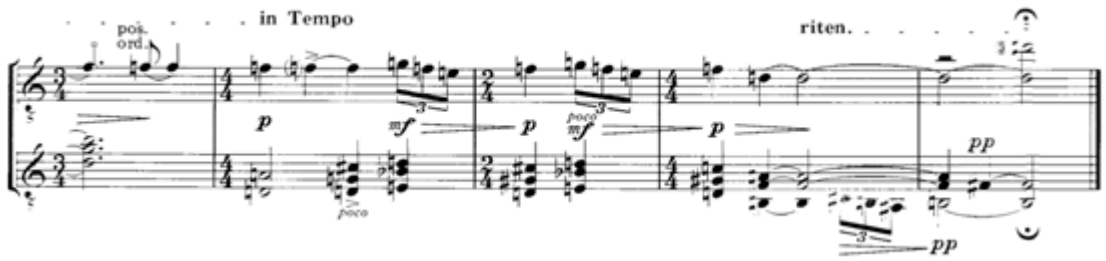
[38] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 37.
[39] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 37.
[40] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 40-45.

A summary of the rigorous and inventive analysis of *Folios* by Shende has shown that the author links the use of *ma* to silences (as rests or periods of decay of sound), and *sawari* to the hidden structures under the surface of the music as a unifying factor and a means to create clear uniformity in an otherwise complex sonic context. The author goes further with this kind of analysis, although more in the way of an overview of two of Takemitsu's other solo guitar works; *All in Twilight* (1987) and *Equinox* (1993). He also makes reference to*12 songs for guitar* (1977), Takemitsu's very interesting and technically demanding arrangement of popular songs for solo guitar.[41] There remains one composition not discussed in detail, *In the woods* (1995). This composition, dedicated to three virtuoso guitar performers with whom Takemitsu had worked closely over the thirty years of his guitar writing, was the second last piece he would compose before his death.[42] As part of the Masters degree toward the completion of which the current thesis is written, I have performed the last mentioned work. It is as a result of the study of this piece that the idea of Japanese aesthetics in relation to a postmodern formulation of the sublime occurred as a topic for a thesis. As a conclusion to this section then, I wish to remark on a few points that seem important from the viewpoint of a guitar performer in relation to the sublime in Takemitsu's guitar music

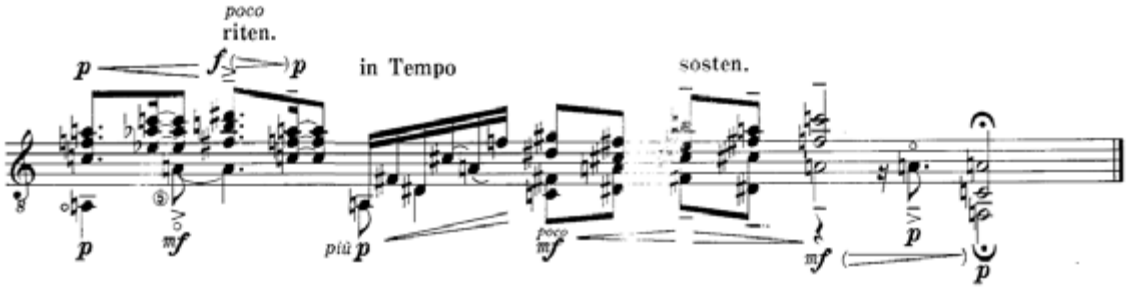
The guitar is a very soft instrument when compared to the dynamic capabilities of other western classical instruments. This is often viewed by performers and audiences as an obstacle in terms of the instrument's projection in a large hall for example. Aesthetically speaking, however, if a composer is aware of this aspect, they can use this seeming obstacle to great effect. *In the woods* is predominately written in a soft dynamic, only allowing for eruptions of sounds at specific points. Each movement also ends with either soft or very soft dynamic markings as seen in examples 4, 5 and 6 from the closing bars of each of the three movements; *Wainscot Pond*, *Rosedale* and *Muir Woods*.[43]

[41]Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 47.
[42] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 60.
[43] Toru Takemitsu, *In The Woods* (Tokyo: Schott, 1996): 5, 8, 11.

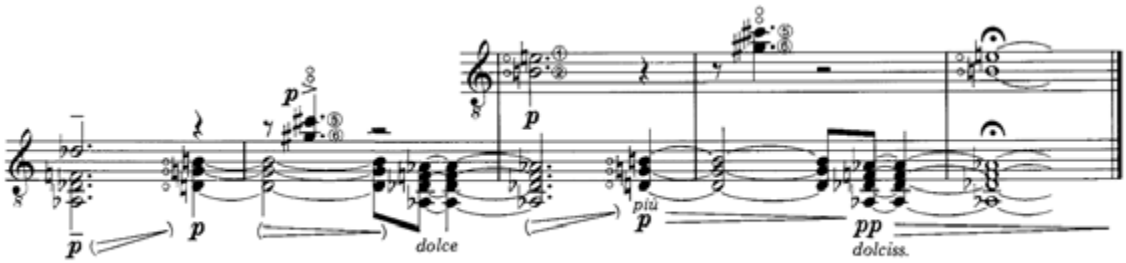
Example 4: Takemitsu, In *The Woods- Wainscot Pond*, bars 63-67.



Example 5: Takemitsu, *In The Woods- Rosedale*, Last line of the movement (no bar lines).



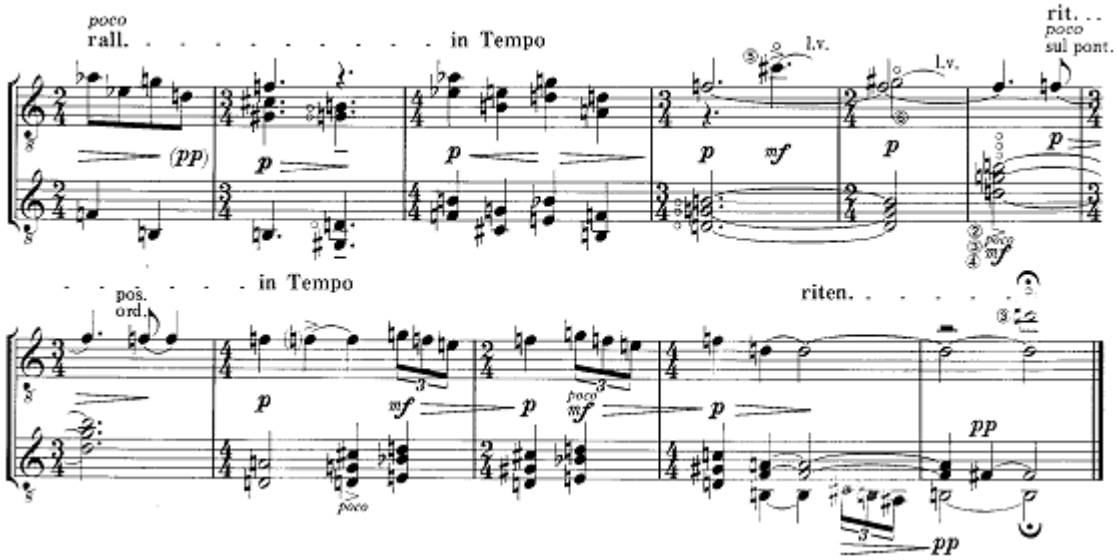
Example 6: Takemitsu, *In The Woods- Muir Woods*, bars 94-98.



The result of a sensitive performance in this respect is that the listener is forced to enter into that dynamic ambit and can be surprised, even shocked when it is exceeded, sometimes forcefully. Instead of being submerged in a lot of sound, the listener is made

aware of the subtleties of timbre that can be achieved on the instrument. This leads to the next important point of Takemitsu's writing for guitar, his specificity in terms of tone colour. *Sul ponticello* and *sul tasto* markings regularly accompany dynamic and fingering instructions, both of which also affect the tone produced greatly. Here example 7[44] shows the last two lines of the first movement, *Wainscot Pond*, in which the use of tone colour is used in the directions of Takemitsu. Also refer to the previous example of the last line of the second movement, *Rosedale*.[45]

Example 7: Takemitsu, *In The Woods- Wainscot Pond*, bars 56-67.



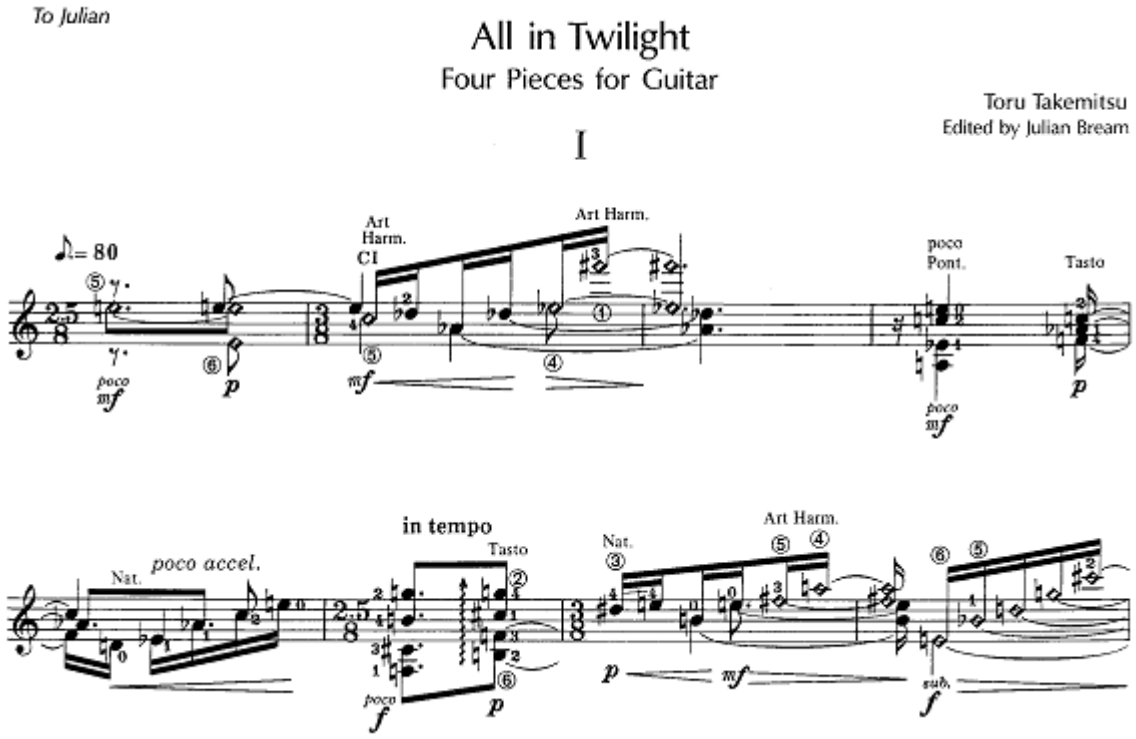
The three dedicatees of *In the woods* are all very different players in terms of their use of colour on the instrument, thus it seems that Takemitsu was acutely aware of what the performance might sound like when considering this uniqueness of performers. This is especially clear with relation to Julian Bream, the dedicatee of the last movement of *In the woods* and *All in twilight*. This specific performer is known for his extreme tonal variation on the instrument. The aesthetic qualities of *All in twilight* seems to take heed of this in relation to *Folios*. As Shende notes:

[44] Takemitsu, *In the woods*, 5.
[45] Takemitsu, *In the woods*, 8.

> *All in Twilight* is Takemitsu's musical reaction, expressed in four different readings, to painter Paul Klee's pastel-touch picture of the same title. Immediately, what strikes one upon hearing this piece is Takemitsu's attention to timbre. Just as a pastel-touch picture is replete with subtle shadings of nuance and colour, so is Takemitsu's impression of such an artwork.[46]

In example 8 below, the extensive use of timbral variation, in this case with natural notes, natural harmonics and artificial harmonics is evident.[47]

Example 8: Takemitsu, *All in Twilight*, bars 1-8.



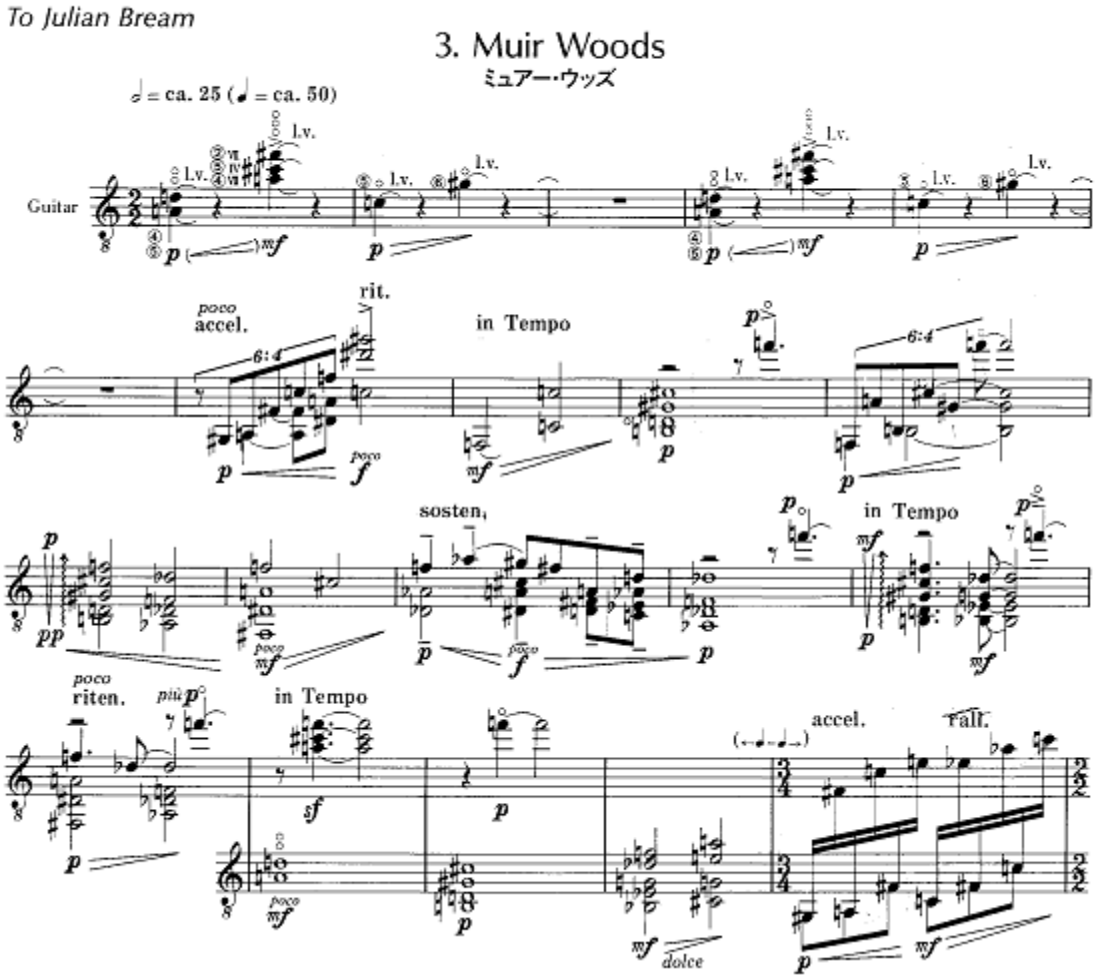
This attention to the timbral quality, something that Burt also notes,[48] is directly related to the concept if *sawari*. In overcoming the obstacle of the guitar's limited dynamic range, the composer relies on other inherent qualities to enrich the aesthetic qualities this has a result. As a result of this the sublime is perceived in its temporal aspect with relation to

[46] Shende, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," 47.
[47] Toru Takemitsu, *All in Twilight* (Tokyo: Schott, 1989): 4.
[48] Burt, *Music of Takemitsu*, 238.

the ever changing sound world of the music. When timbre is varied to a great extent the moments can be as jarring as would be expected from something eliciting the sublime experience. Lyotard comments that in music, timbre functions similarly to how colour in painting. In relation to the aesthetic of the sublime, a specific timbre, in the moment the listener perceives it and identifies it as something that is happening, becomes a kind of immaterial medium for the listener to experience the sublime and is forgotten as soon as the timbre has been experienced. Lyotard notes: "[…] an event of a passion, a passibility for which the mind will not have been prepared, which will have unsettled it, and of which it only conserves the feeling- anguish and jubilation- of an obscure debt".[49] In connection with *ma*, the rests and sustained decaying chords have already been shown to invoke this concept in *Folios. In the woods* contains the same aesthetic technique. Another manifestation of this concept is present in the very frequent *accellerandos* and *ritardandos* in the composition. These often lead to points of rest, but in themselves invoke a sense of space and moving time often followed by a moment of rest and silence. Hence the musical stream of sound exists in silence and sound, both becoming equal in the movement intensified by the rate at which these points are approached. Again this bears relation to the complexity of temporality that can exist in music that employs this aesthetic. In example 9, taken from the opening four lines of third movement, *Muir Woods*, [50] this temporal complexity is evident in relation to the use of the above described devices. Also note the timbral variances as in the previous example.

[49] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 141.
[50] Takemitsu, *In the Woods.* 4

Example 9: Takemitsu, *In The Woods- Muir Woods*, 1-20.



I perceive that the aesthetic of the sublime pervades Takemitsu's music when considering it in the way in which have been done here: The temporal aspect of the sublime is a concept ingrained in the traditional Japanese aesthetic of *ma*, and in the way Takemitsu has imbued his art with it suggests that he is indeed a composer whose work belongs to the aesthetic of the sublime. Furthermore, his preoccupation with timbre and the way in which he is able to incorporate the notion of *sawari* in to the sound world of his compositions, links him to another aspect of the sublime as discussed by Lyotard, where

the author posits that by embracing imperfections, the aesthetic of the sublime becomes present. In the last hours before his death, Takemitsu heard, "by some uncanny synchronistic coincidence" a radio broadcast of his beloved *St Mathew passion* by Bach.[51] One hopes that this last musical experience of the composer would have given to him the sublime feeling that, surely scores of performers and listeners have felt when listening to his own music.

[51] Burt, *Music of Takemitsu*, 216.

Excursus:

A biographical link between Brouwer and Takemitsu

Before proceeding to a discussion of Brouwer, I would like to first link Brouwer with Takemitsu on a biographic level in order to show the similarities in musical philosophy between the two composers and in so doing bring the two together as composers who both evoke the sublime in their music. According to Shin-ichi Fukuda, a guitarist with whom Brouwer and Takemitsu were closely affiliated, Brouwer considered Takemitsu to be his "life's teacher".[1] Brouwer has shown his admiration for Takemitsu in two substantial pieces for guitar. Both of these compositions are dedicated to Shin-ichi Fukuda. The first, *Hika In memoriam to Toru Takemitsu* (1996), was written for the performer after Brouwer had attended the Japanese premier by Fukuda of Brouwer's *Sonata*. On the same occasion a performance of Takemitsu's *Folios* was given. Brouwer and Takemitsu attended the performance together, after which Brouwer commented that he intended to write a piece for the performer. Fukuda writes "he mentioned that he was thinking about writing, when he had the opportunity, a work on the theme of 'The important culture of Japan' which stems from his interest in Japanese traditions such as Kabuki and Noh".[2] The work has the same title (*Hika* meaning elegy or mourning song) as a piece for violin by Takemitsu, but musically its function as an elegy resembles *Rain tree sketch 2* (1992), a work that Takemitsu wrote in memoriam of one of his great influences, Olivier Messiaen. Fukuda observes the further connection to this work and earlier work by Brouwer; *Tres Apuntes* (Three sketches), of which the third movement's theme, a Bulgarian folk theme, occurs in *Hika*. (See the example of this theme as it occurs in both compositions on p of this chapter).Fukuda relays this theme's dramatic success within *Hika* and likens it to a '*Dies Irae*' in a requiem.[3] A more pertinent musical

[1] Shin-Ichi Fukuda, "Foreword", Leo Brouwer, *Hika: In Memoriam Toru Takemitsu* (Tokyo: Gendai Guitar, 1997), 3.
[2] Fukuda, *Foreword,* 4.
[3] Fukuda, *Foreword,* 4.

reference to Takemitsu's work in *Hika* exists in the *scordatura*[4] required for the performance of the piece. Fukuda observes that by retuning the guitar, Brouwer makes reference to the tuning principle used by Takemitsu in *Equinox* and in doing so, creates a "mixture of Takemitsu's favourite Lydian scale and the darkest minor key G minor".[5] In addition, the composition resembles the aesthetic character of Takemitsu's music through its use of two aesthetic concepts Fukuda observes in Takemitsu; "Sea of tonality and Dream and number".[6]

In the second work written in memoriam of Takemitsu, the *Concierto da requiem,* Brouwer wanted to pay tribute to his great friend with a *requiem*, which he comments "is not a *lachrimae*… it has sadness, meditation and also anger- let's say it's a protest against unnecessary death. Takemitsu's- and why not?- innocent death too".[7] It seems clear through these touching words that Brouwer admired Takemitsu and felt an intense loss at his death. Brouwer has said that the reason he identified so much with Takemitsu is because he wrote for guitar like he would for orchestra, an approach which Brouwer says, he shares when composing for guitar.[8] On a purely biographic level, these composers were both self taught and both avid admirers of the subtle and intriguing sound of the guitar. Takemitsu has said of the guitar:

> Sometimes composers are afraid to use guitar because of its "small sound". People are not so concerned with loud sounds, but they will listen carefully to soft sounds. The guitar is actually a small orchestra of colours.[9]

These comments about the nature of the guitar relates to what was discussed in the previous chapter in relation of Takemitsu's use of the subtleties of the guitar as a manifestation of the sublime and also brings together the composers' views about the instrument as it relates to the sublime. Lastly, both the composers made arrangements of popular music for the classical guitar. As mentioned earlier, Takemitsu's *12 songs for*

[4] The A string is tuned down to G and the B string is tuned a half step lower to B flat, to create a G minor triad in the four middle strings [standard guitar tuning: E A D G B e]. See Fukuda, *Foreword,* 3.
[5] Fukuda, *Foreword,* 4
[6] Fukuda, *Foreword,* 4.
[7] Thérèse Wassily Saba, "Leo Brouwer's New Guitar Concerto: An Interview with Leo Brouwer and Shin-Ichi Fukuda," *Classical Guitar* Vol. 26 No. 8 (2008): 37.
[8] Wassily Saba, "Brouwer's New Guitar Concerto," 38.
[9] Wassily Saba, "Brouwer's New Guitar Concerto," 38.

guitar is such a work and corresponds to Brouwer's arrangement of Beatles songs in his From *Yesterday to Penny Lane, Seven songs after the Beatles for guitar and orchestra*.[10] This coinciding of interest in broadening the repertoire by including references to popular music is of special significance to the postmodern approach I connect to Brouwer's artistry and will be discussed in the following chapter.

[10] Wassily Saba, "Brouwer's New Guitar Concerto," 38.

Chapter 4

The sublime in the musical aesthetic of Leo Brouwer.

As noted before, this chapter constitutes a conclusion in its function as an application of the philosophical premises introduced at the outset of the dissertation. In this chapter, the philosophical ideas are discussed in relation to the work of Leo Brouwer. As shown in the previous Chapter on Takemitsu, the aesthetic of the sublime manifests in his music through the Japanese aesthetic concepts of *ma* and *sawari*. When looking at the music of Brouwer, whose output in terms of guitar music is much larger and stylistically much more varied, it is more difficult to find a tangible element to reconcile the unique and specific element that constitutes his musical aesthetic. There is however, constancy in his varied compositional oeuvre that makes the music sound like only his music can. This common thread in his aesthetic can be attributed to his strong ties to Afro-Cuban cultural aesthetics and his context as a Cuban artist.[11] The predominating influence of Cuban and African traditional aesthetics, points to an element of something unpresentable in the music; these influences are presented in the music, but only as part of an integrated style that is uniquely Brouwer's own, thus not only as quotations and not as self-conscious exotic elements within a conventional Western idiom. The attempt of presenting the unpresentable is, as shown by Lyotard and as discussed earlier in this dissertation, the evoking of the sublime.[12] In an interview with Constance McKenna (1988), Brouwer states the following in relation to using national or traditional elements in music:

> The National element is something which is recognizable in the deepest way… For example, the *balalaika* does not represent Russia. Some medieval chants, some strong rhythms of dance in central Asia, or some cadential devices are more Russian than the *balalaika*. I think in different levels of nationalism; the most superficial element of music is colour. You can have bad music with a beautiful dress, but if you undress the music- if you take out the *balalaika* or the maracas

[11] Clive Kronenberg, "Cuban Artist, Leo Brouwer, and His Solo Guitar works*: Pieza Sin Titulo* to *Elogio De La Danza*. A Contextual-Anylitical Study." (Master of music, University of Cape Town, 2000)

[12] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffry Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 85 & 98.

> or the bongo- what is left? Something poor, good, or great. But if you want the greatest thing, do not put cheap clothes on it. It is better to be naked with a beautiful body.[13]

It is useful to recall the discussion of the presence of the traditional concept of *sawari* in Takemitsu's music here; the concept manifested as an element of the music that was only perceptible (as it related to the structural and tonal elements of the music according to Shende) under the surface, as a hidden manifestation of the concept. This is similar to the way in which Cuban traditional aesthetics manifest in Brouwer's music: it is always there, but so integrated into the musical language, that it becomes an integral part of what constitutes that language's aesthetic. I believe this to be a representation of the sublime in his music.

Brouwer creates continuity throughout his compositional periods by relying on a "deep recognisability" of the "National"[14] in his music and thus presents something that is not readily quantifiable as foreign influence, by means of its integration into the overall aesthetic of the music. In this way, the traditional influence in its integral but sometimes hidden role in the music, can be seen as an element able to illicit the feeling of the sublime. To clarify, the Cuban influence in the music, linked to the manifestation of the sublime is aurally and analytically apparent, but it is not presented as a foreign element introduced into an already established aesthetic. So when I mention unpresentable, I do not mean that traditional musical elements are unpresentable in themselves in general, (in fact, they are all too easy to represent in an exoticist manner), but in complete fusion with modern advanced musical practice, constitute a new unique aesthetic. Clive Kronenberg[15] refers to Brouwer's aesthetic as a universal language in which Afro-Cuban elements combined with avant-garde practices constitute a unique musical language, an aesthetic onto itself relying on the deep recognisable factors linking it to Cuban culture. The unpresentability of the traditional material lies in the way it is presented:

> An inspection of the composer's guitar works, especially, reveals the presence of elements of African sacramental song and ritual music, features he regards as 'something absolutely abstract' and 'fundamental' that can only be 'distinguished in the deepest' way.[16]

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[13] Constance McKenna, "An Interview with Leo Brouwer," *Guitar Review* 75 Fall (1988): 15.
[14] McKenna, "Interview with Leo Brouwer," 15.
[15] Clive Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer: The concept of a 'Universal Language'," *Tempo* Vol. No. 245 (2008), http://www.jstor.org/stable/40072820.
[16] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 30-31.

As seen in the above quote in which Kronenberg is paraphrasing Brouwer, and the one used earlier from the McKenna interview, Brouwer has a great respect for the Cuban tradition and as such, I perceive a notion of sublimity in the way the composer views the material and the way in which he uses it in his own music.

It is important here to refer to the discussion by Lyotard in *The postmodern condition* (1984).[17]Lyotard explains the difference between the aesthetic of the sublime in what he perceives as modernism and postmodernism, a difference that seems to clearly have a link to the way in which the traditional influence, which I have related to the sublime, manifests in Brouwer's music:

> Modern aesthetics is an aesthetic of the sublime, though a nostalgic one. It allows the unpresentable to be put forward only as the missing contents; but the form, because of its recognizable consistency, continues to offer the reader or viewer matter for solace and pleasure. Yet these sentiments do not constitute the real sublime sentiment, which is in intrinsic combination of pleasure and pain: the pleasure that reason should exceed all presentation, the pain that imagination or sensibility should not be equal to the concept.[18]

He further describes postmodern art as that which has essentially the same aesthetic function as modern art, but it conveys the aesthetic without allowing itself "the solace of good forms"[19]. Postmodern art cannot rely on sharing the nostalgia of the unpresentable through a "consensus of taste".[20] Thus, Lyotard places the postmodern artist in the role of a philosopher, who must formulate new rules and categories as the art he produces is not governed by pre-established rules or categories and cannot be judged by them.[21] Some misunderstandings surrounding Lyotard's work as observed by Keith Crome and James Williams in *The Lyotard reader and guide* (2006)[22] are useful to examine here. According to them Lyotard is not a philosopher of postmodern art in the sense that it is a form of art part of a historical period after modernism or that has a set of fixed characteristics such as the commonly associated traits: lack of clear unity, multiple heterogeneous styles and

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[17] Jean François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge.* Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).
[18] Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 81.
[19] Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 81.
[20] Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 81.
[21] Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 81.
[22] Keith Crome and James Williams eds., *The Lyotard Reader and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).

a simulated fake quality. Art that features these aesthetic principals is in fact often criticised by Lyotard as lacking inner movement and emotional power. The reference that Lyotard does make to heterogeneity in art is not necessarily related to the content, but rather to the resistance such art poses to any form of set values or discourses through its embracing of multiple effects linked to the artist's own desire.[23] The second mistake about Lyotard's work is that the author does not view the avant-garde as modernist works that go beyond tradition with an unprecedented innovation:

> For Lyotard, the avant-garde does not imply a relation to an artistic tradition, or a particular capacity to scandalise, or very marked novelty. Instead it means works that challenge a very open set of discourses, rather than a specific artistic tradition. It also means shock, not only on the grand scale, but also as a disturbance of well- ordered relation between perceptions, tastes, values, economic exchanges and forms of knowledge. The avant-garde creates disturbance through new desires and sensations, rather than merely through 'new' artistic forms.[24]

It seems that for Lyotard, the innovation perceived in a work of postmodern art is not so much linked to the work itself, but perhaps more to the artist's desire to create a new sensation through whichever means his own perspective and context allows him to do so. If one considers the vast diversity that exists in the artistic oeuvre of Brouwer in terms of stylistic periods, one can draw the conclusion that through the artist's desire to create new sensations, he is not limited to one specific genre, whether it be of fashionable nature at the time or not. This seems to tie in well with how Brouwer presents Cuban elements in his music. He does not only rely on recognisable themes or rhythms as they appear within the context of a pre-existing aesthetic, but creates the music around the elements and as a result, posits a new form, not the combination of autonomous elements to create a whole where one is always conscious of the disparate elements, but an integration or fusion of these elements into a new aesthetic.

To illustrate how the sublime can be seen to manifest in Brouwer's music, it will be shown in the following discussion how Cuban traditional musical elements are incorporated in the work of Brouwer as part of his musical aesthetic, through its integration within various styles throughout his career, and how it can be linked to

[23] Crome et al, *Lyotard Reader*, 284.
[24] Crome et al, *Lyotard Reader*, 285.

presenting an unpresentable, the sublime. Furthermore, as a composer who has linked himself with the postmodern, a discussion of how postmodernity affords Brouwer the opportunity to navigate a multitudinous array of influences while maintaining the aesthetic he has captured from his earliest work will show clearly the composer's close ties with a postmodern attitude towards contemporary art. As a composer who has a postmodernist approach to art, Brouwer can be situated into that category and as such, is likely to have elements in his music linking him to Lyotard's postmodern view of the sublime. As a continuation of the music philosophical grounds of the current dissertation, the previously used model of complex temporality as described by Kramer will still be incorporated into the discussion which will include an analytical component as done before with Takemitsu.

Brouwer's music can be seen as part of the aesthetic of the sublime as a temporal concept by examining an analysis by John Brian Huston[25] of *Paisaje Cubana con Rumba*, a piece that seems to contain the manipulation of time through rhythm and gesture that enables the listener to perceive it temporally and so, to glimpse the sublime. In addition, Clive Kronenberg's[26] discussion of the salient features of Brouwer's three compositional periods in which the author shows how Afro Cuban elements contribute to Brouwer's own aesthetic world by being used in an integrated way as to create a universal style. Something like the striving toward a universal style through the mixture of diverse elements is what one would expect to find in music that could be termed postmodern. This leads to the argument that Brouwer's music can be situated under the name of postmodernism as Kramer describes it.

Huston investigates how Cuban musical aesthetics in the form of rhythm and gesture informs Brouwer's musical expression throughout all his artistic periods. He examines four works in this dissertation which are representative of Brouwer's perceived three

[25]John Bryan Huston, "The Afro-Cuban and the Avant-Garde: Unification of Style and Gesture in the Guitar Music of Leo Brouwer." (D.M.A, University of Georgia, 2006).
[26] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 30-31.

compositional periods. *Danza Characteristica* from the first most overtly folk inspired period, is examined in view of Brouwer's desire to write a piece for guitar that resembles the folk inspired music of Bartók, but using Cuban elements to do so. Special attention is given to the rhythmical structure and the Cuban folk song on which the melody is based.[27] *Paisaje Cubano con Rumba*, for four guitars, contains the signature rhythm and character of the Cuban *Rumba* dance. The author traces the dance's history in Cuba and shows how this composition captures the unique character of this dance form and combines it with modern minimalist practices.[28] *Decameron Negro* serves as a model for Brouwer's period commonly referred to as postmodern for its reliance on a multitude of styles including romantic, minimalist and as always, Cuban styles. Huston pays specific attention to the programmatic content of the piece, which is based on African folk tales. He traces the influence of both African and Cuban drum music in the composition.[29] The last composition in his discussion is *Rito de losOrishas*, for which the author provides a detailed history of *Santeria* in Cuba and examines the piece in view of these ritual practices, referring to the origins and characteristics of the music in West Africa and how it manifests in Cuba. The musical analysis takes into account the rhythmical and melodic characteristics of this complicated musical tradition as it is evoked in this composition by Brouwer.[30]Of these in depth discussions and analyses of Brouwer's works by Huston, I would like to focus on the discussion of the guitar quartet, *Paisaje Cubano con Rumba.*

Huston situates the genre of the *rumba* historically and culturally and concurs with Brouwer's own description that it is a genre existing as the result of the cultural merging of Spanish and African traditions occurring within Cuba since the nineteenth century. The complex cultural mixture is referred to by Huston as the "*rumba* complex".[31] The *rumba* is a collective name for three variants: *guaguancó*, *yambú*, and *columbia.* The *rumba*

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[27] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 45-55.

[28] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 23-24.
[29] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 56-77.
[30] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 78-104.
[31] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 23-24.

genre includes percussion, singing and dancing with very versatile instrumentation. Huston describes it historically as forming part of the common musical practices of poor working class people in Afro-Cuban communities within urban areas. These people were originally of African slave heritage. The genre, in the past served to unite people under such oppression and enabled them under colonial rule to retain their common African heritage.[32] Throughout its history the *rumba*'s instrumentation has remained versatile. Proper drums were not always available or were banned as the result of oppressive rule so the players would often use any material available to play the music: three pitched drums and a clave providing the rhythmic structure. [33] The vocal part would consist of a solo singer and a choral refrain, serving as a formal structurally important component of the music with verses by the soloist singing one section and choruses interact to form a call and response in between these sections. The vocal part uses improvised melodies and lyrics and most often a fixed poetic meter. The history of the *rumba* has been traced as mentioned to its nineteenth century origins and has remained an important musical practice in Cuba, one which has evolved from an isolated Afro-Cuban cultural practice into a national metaphor for Cuban heritage and one which has been cultivated as such in the country since the revolutionary government.[34]

Huston links Brouwer's contribution to the genre to the composer's involvement in various cultural ministries and even his own participation in the informal street *rumbas* occurring in Cuba to this day. The composition *Paisaje Cubana con Rumba* further evolves the genre into that of art music, resituating the performance in terms of participants and performance venue into a context that is thoroughly more related to Western art music than Cuban tradition.[35] By doing so, Brouwer fuses two seemingly disparate worlds into one musically profound art form that could be seen as a postmodern approach to artistic endeavour. Huston equates the stylistic features of the composition, as does Brouwer in

[32] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde,"24.
[33] See Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 23-44 for the detailed analysis and musical examples not included in the current dissertation.
[34] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 25-27.
[35] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 28.

his own words relayed by Huston, to the practice of minimalism. By presenting the Cuban dance form within the modern aesthetic framework of minimalism, Huston comments that Brouwer has removed the composition completely from its traditional function and aesthetic world, but the author maintains that is still constitutes an Afro-Cuban art work and as such, I believe will manifest the aesthetic of the sublime. Here then follows a look at Huston's analysis of the work through which will be shown how the sublime as a temporal concept and in its link to the Cuban traditional influence within the music that I have tried to establish thus far manifests in the music of Brouwer.

Huston asserts that a very important aspect of Brouwer's own description of the composition is that it is described as not just one *rumba*, but all three traditional forms combined into one piece.[36] This combination of different styles of the traditional *rumba* itself and the modern aesthetic of minimalism, already in its concept, without any analytical evidence as yet, points to the discontinuity and complex temporality described by Kramer and to the affiliation this kind of temporal complexity has been shown to have to the sublime aesthetic. It is then with this observation in mind that I proceed to summarise and interpret Huston's analytical findings to illustrate the views on the postmodern sublime and temporality already shown in the dissertation thus far. Huston highlights the clarity with which the "sonic landscapes"[37] created in the composition resemble the aesthetic associated with minimalism and makes an interesting comment about how the timbre of the opening passage might be the most interesting sonic effect. The entire first section of the piece is played with mutes inserted in between the strings of the guitar and Huston comments that on first hearing, the listener might not realise that they are listening to a guitar ensemble playing.[38] Huston comments that whatever kind of mute is used, the effect is that of changing the listening experience into something more akin to hearing a percussion ensemble and that this relates clearly to the traditional percussive quality of the *rumba*, also to the practice of using improvised

[36] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 29.
[37] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 30.
[38] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 30-31.

instrumentation or whatever might be available to the performers. The author also points out that the opening of the composition departs in important aspects from the traditional *rumba*. The tempo is slower than even the slowest of the *rumba* variants and there exists no clave rhythm initially. Huston concludes that the opening of the work has more in common with the aesthetic associated with minimalism than with the traditional *rumba*.[39] This already shows how Brouwer uses traditional practice in a transformed way to create a modern representation of the deepest aesthetic quality present in the traditional form itself. Another observation that is important to make here is the specific aesthetic role that timbre plays in the aesthetic of Brouwer's piece, this is clearly illustrated by the use of mutes to create a very specific timbre. This innovative use of the guitar's timbral possibilities is similar to the way Takemitsu evokes the sublime as was shown in the previous chapter.

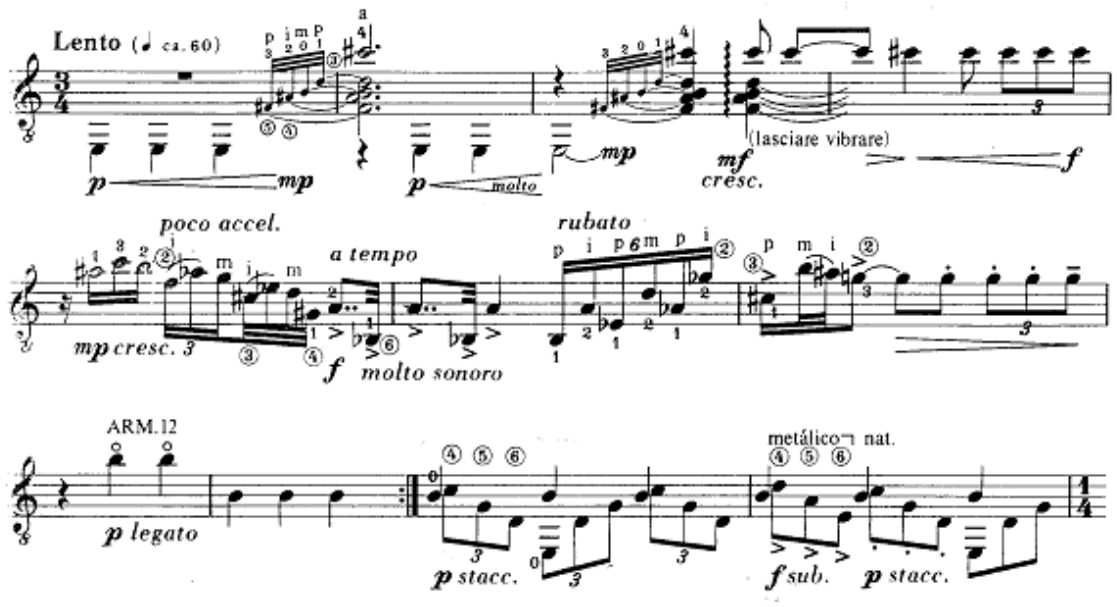
The minimalist aesthetic is, according to Huston,[40] achieved in Brouwer's composition through the pitch material used. The progression of smaller to larger pitch class sets as the piece progresses and the occurrence of symmetrical and pentatonic sets is made clear by the table provided in Huston's analysis.[41] He points out that the first half of the composition is pan-diatonic with an implied tonal centre of A. Although Huston attributes the pitch material used by Brouwer to a minimalist influence, the Afro-Cuban influence is according to him very much present in the rhythmic structure of the piece. After the initial regular pulsating rhythm, this aspect of the music becomes more complex through the use of syncopation and rhythmic expansion; features the author links to Afro-Cuban rhythmical devices.[42] The first instance of this and a very important one, structurally, is the syncopated entry of the second guitar at measure nine. The specific rhythm here (a dotted quaver to semiquaver beat division) is described by Huston as the 'corner stone' of the Cuban habanera rhythm. Although not present in its

[39] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde,"32-33.
[40] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde,"35.
[41] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde,"34-35.
[42] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde,"35.

entirety, Huston notes that this rhythm serves as one of the small cells out of which Brouwer grows the composition additively and developmentally.[43]

Another significant rhythmical feature that is identified at this point is the lack of a down beat in some of the performers' parts here. This device is according to Huston integral to African and Afro- Cuban music and through this feature of musical discontinuity, a sense of polyrhythm is created progressively in the work.[44] I would like to add here that from the viewpoint of a performer of Brouwer's music, including the work discussed here, the silent down-beat that occurs in many of the composer' s works has been to me the single most significant device in creating a sense of temporal complexity, an illustration of which appears in example ten. Here the silent down-beat in bar five, which forms a climactic point if one considers the crescendo and rushing forward of the rhythm in bar three, serves as a device of extreme discontinuity and hence temporal complexity. Example10 is taken from the opening lines of *Elogio de la Danza* (1964) [45].

Example 10: Brouwer, *Elogio de la Danza*, bars 1-11.



[43] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 36.
[44] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 36.
[45] Leo Brouwer, *Elogio de la Danza* (Mainz: Schott, 1972): 2.

Through the use of this traditional element that has been integrated into the aesthetic of so many of the composer's works, he creates a discontinuity in the music akin to the processes described earlier in this dissertation in the discussion of Kramer's ideas about temporally complex music. [46] It is possible to observe what Kramer calls *multiple time/ multiply-directed time* here, as it relates to sections of the music starting or stopping abruptly. The effect of a silent down beat is two- fold; it confuses the direction of the line before the silent beat when the music seems directed towards a climax at this point, and it serves as an abrupt start to a section if the musical direction proceeds from the silent beat.

Huston observes in the next section of *Paisaje Cubana con Rumba* how Brouwer moves between different forms of *rumba* within the same section. By combining different variations of clave rhythm usually designated to one form of *rumba*, Brouwer holds true to the statement that his composition is all the different *rumba*s at once, and as such the composition is in this way too, clearly related to the type of temporal complexity that Kramer discusses: Multiple temporal directions is created simultaneously by using multiple forms of the *rumba* at once. Huston relates the section starting at rehearsal mark B of the composition to the traditional form of *rumba* with reference to the roles the different percussion instruments play and how they interact with each other. While the second and third guitar are syncopated and forming a one bar loop, with the third highlighting the *habanera* rhythm, the fourth guitar has a two bar repeating pattern. The two bar pattern is of special significance in the Cuban *rumba* as Huston observes. The first guitar plays the role of the *quinto* player in this section, the lead player who improvises regularly in traditional *rumba*. The first guitar's rhythmical pattern is three bars long and with a strong downbeat in the third bar of this pattern, confirms its role as the 'improvising' lead player as related to the traditional *rumba*. In this section of the piece,

[46] See: Jonathan D. Kramer, "New Temporalities in Music," *Critical Inquiry* Vol 7 No. 3 (1981): 539-556, and Jonathan D. Kramer, "Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol 64 No. 2 (1978): 177-194.

Huston identifies the two bar *yambu* clave pattern and comments that one is only able to perceive this through the strong downbeat on the first beat of the second bar of the rhythmical cycle. Huston observes that Brouwer achieves this not through an overt presentation of the traditional clave pattern, but by combining the pitch and rhythm to form a two bar rhythmic cell that relates strongly to the traditional *yambu*.[47] It is important to note here the way in which Huston shows Brouwer to use the traditional material is subtle and almost hidden beneath the surface, similar to how Takemitsu's traditional aesthetics were presented in his music. Thus, it is clear that the way Brouwer presents the important tradition of the *rumba* is integrated into his aesthetic, in such a way as to evoke a sense of the unpresentable nature of the true spirit of traditional aesthetics and in this way, also the nature of the sublime as an aesthetic.

For a transition to the next section and to another form of the traditional *rumba*, Huston observes that Brouwer uses a one bar pattern with a clear resemblance to the syncopated Cuban *cinquillo* rhythm. This rhythmical complex predominates the transitional material before the new section at rehearsal mark C. Huston identifies the *guaganco rumba* to be present in the eight bars of this section, which is repeated in its entirety. Again, Huston observes that the clave rhythm featuring in the traditional version of the *guaganco rumba* is not presented in this section of Brouwer's work as an overt pattern immediately discernable and he relates the importance of the idea of implied *clave* or the '*clave* feel' in traditional Cuban musical practice.[48] In the subsequent sections, D and E, Huston observes the most polyrhythmic and least cyclical rhythmic material, with only the second guitar providing the implied *clave* through its repetitive line. The author notes that in section E the other three guitars act as the first guitar has done previously, as improvising players. This part of the composition can be seen as the climax for the music thus far as it contains the greatest rhythmic variety and widest range of pitch material as yet, as Huston illustrates. The music comes to a stratified and abrupt rest at the end of

[47] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 36-38.
[48] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 39-40.

this section.[49] Until thus far in the music, Huston has shown that Brouwer uses a number of rhythmic devices with Afro-Cuban origins and within the *rumba* tradition.

A marked contrast ensues when the music recommences after the grand pause. Now with the removal of the mutes, the listener hears for the first time the unaltered sound of the guitar. Huston comments that the pure form of guitar timbre is highlighted by the use of the 'prototypical' technique of an arpeggiated chord being played alternately through the quartet. Additional contrast is created by the polyrhythm created between the first and fourth guitar now playing in 12/8 time and the second and third guitar remaining in common time. Huston links this device to Afro-Cuban practice, specifically to that of the *columbia rumba* style. The rhythm shifts gradually to a point where all the players are in the same metre and a forward moving drive is created by an increase in pitch variety and rhythmic density. Afro-Cuban rhythmical references still abound in the form of the *cinquillo* rhythm, which has already occurred throughout the piece.[50] The contrast in this section to the preceding musical material recalls the discontinuity Kramer discusses in music with complex temporal aspects.[51]

In the last section of the music, Huston remarks that further contrast is created in terms of texture by the use of a pulsating *forte* unison A in all the parts. As the section progresses, Huston observes that Brouwer is now moving away from the *rumba*. Afro-Cuban rhythmical cells are much less common and no *clave* rhythmical pattern is present, although rhythmical complexity still exists. Huston also relates the complexity of the music here to the pitch material used; in some cases the pitch classes, all of a highly chromatic nature at this point, changes in each bar. The work ends in scalar passages leading eventually to a stratified ending with the upper harmonic register of the

[49] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 40-41.
[50] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 41-42.
[51] See: Jonathan D. Kramer, "New Temporalities in Music," *Critical Inquiry* Vol 7 No. 3 (1981): 539-556, . And Jonathan D. Kramer, "Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol 64 No. 2 (1978): 177-194.

instruments.[52] Here I would like to add as an observation from Huston's analysis, that it is interesting to note that Brouwer has framed the composition with two sections that both lack significant Cuban elements and have more in common with the minimalist aesthetic described to be present by Huston. Thus, formally Brouwer presents the *rumba* as a style integral to Cuban culture in the context of a contemporary musical aesthetic. Huston concludes his analysis with the following:

> In *Paisaje cubano con rumba*, Brouwer has fused the musical traits of minimalism and Afro-Cuban *rumba*. In summoning the percussive sounds of *rumba*, Brouwer creates new sounds and textures for guitar quartet. His use of familiar Afro-Cuban rhythms (*habanera*, *cinquillo*), implied *clave* lines, and *rumba* cells (*yambú*, *columbia*, *guaguancó*) is a vital part of his compositional process and style.[53]

The combination both within an Afro-Cuban context with regards to the multiple *clave*s within one *rumba,* and in relation to the minimalist aesthetic fused with subtle and original Cuban elements illustrates how Brouwer is able to create an integrated aesthetic that is at once Cuban and modern. Also, the temporal implications as a part of the musical aesthetic is of a complex nature. *Claves,* here in the form of the three different *rumba* styles, are in their simplest form complex to understand if the listener is not prepared for a non-linear musical experience. By using elements of multiple *claves* and other Cuban rhythms as noted and presenting it in a minimalist fashion, as Huston observes, Brouwer is creating a temporal complexity as part of the fabric of the musical construction. It has been noted before that minimalism can be linked to the area of *vertical time* or even *momentform* in its function as a temporally complex musical medium in the Kramer discussion. The temporal complexity is thus clearly a large part of the composition's aesthetic function and as such can be seen as a sublime work with relation to its temporal aspect. Furthermore, the way the traditional elements are present as an integrated part of the musical aesthetic points to Brouwer's deep understanding of how these elements can form part of a thoroughly postmodern way of musical expression, one

[52] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 42.
[53] Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 44.

which can in his case evoke the feelings of the sublime through the attributes of these traditional aesthetics.

It is of utmost importance to note that although Brouwer's musical artistry is completely defined by his deep understanding and appreciation of traditional music and folk idioms of Africa and his native Cuba, the composer still holds fast that almost everything he writes is original and not simply quoted or reworked. From his earliest work he had a sense of authenticity or what he calls a sense of antiquity, linked to the traditional folk elements in his music.[54] This element in the music is what I believe constitutes the sublime aesthetic, an aesthetic that is as Huston describes it a unification of the Afro-Cuban and the avant-garde. There is a substantial amount of folk material used in his music as for example the syncopated rhythms of Afro-Cuban origin in much of his early work, which Kronenberg stresses as a very important feature linking the music to Afro-Cuban aesthetics.[55] The traditional elements in his music are more than just rhythmical devices, but seem to stem predominantly from his assimilation and internalization of elements which cannot be represented in the artistically interesting way they are, if the composer is not conscious of their quality of unpresentability. It seems clear that through the assimilation of many styles and the artist's desire to evoke a sense of authenticity and unpresentability of the folk traditions he finds inspiring, he creates art that is not necessarily avant-garde for its musical innovation only[56], but for the his desire to represent something that is unpresentable; the sublime.

Clive Kronenberg highlights the three compositional periods of Brouwer and shows that during that entire time-span, not just the early period in which Cuban inspiration abounds perhaps most obviously, Brouwer is fusing elements from various sources to create his unique musical aesthetic, which Kronenberg calls his 'universal language'. Kronenberg highlights *Tres Appuntes*, a composition referenced before in its relation to

[54] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 37.
[55] Kronenberg, "Cuban Artist Leo Brouwer," 265-273.
[56] Recall what Crome and Williams have observed in the work of Lyotard earlier.

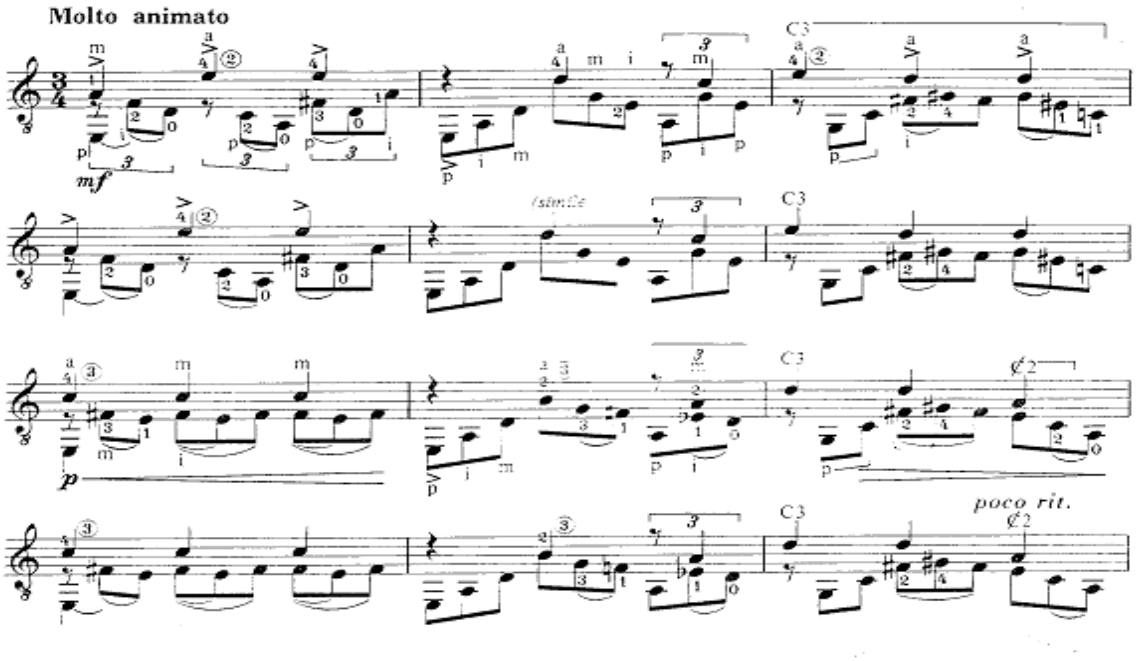
Brouwer's tribute to Takemitsu, as a composition from the first period in which, yet again, the use of Afro-Cuban rhythm contributes to the aesthetic fusion one finds in Brouwer's music, here specifically how it functions within a piece that draws from other early sources as well:

> Though characterized by changing rhythmic activities, Tres Apuntes incorporates a basic arrangement of the Cuban-Spanish folk dance rhythm the guajiro, with its alteration of 6/8 and 3/4. The regular alter- nation of 6/8 and 3 /4 of the guajira dance is however not engaged but occurs sporadically. Apart from the composer's manipulation of metric changes, individual pitched are assigned accentuations both on and off the beat. Furthermore, melodic lines start in one metre and continue in another, features which contribute to both a precision and a displacement of a variety of rhythms the composer derived from his cultural roots. In sum, of special relevance is the fact that the grouping of two (or more) regular pulse figures, known commonly as polyrhythm or polymeter, is prominent throughout West and Central Africa, something that over time became a notable attribute of Afro-Cuban folk culture.[57]

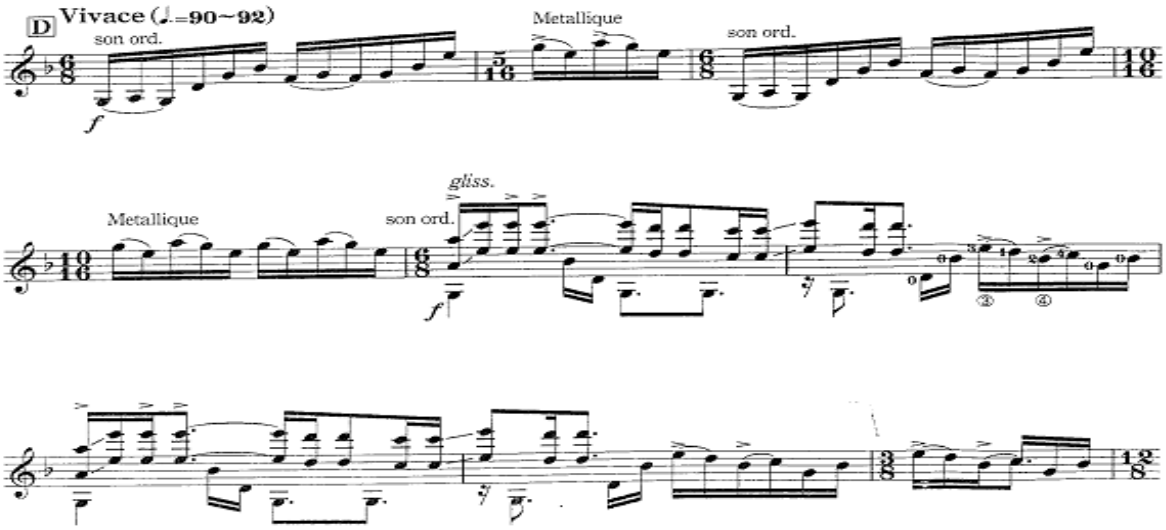
The rhythmic devices which Kronenberg points out were also present in the work examined earlier by Huston, and it is clear that Brouwer shows a consistency throughout his first and last compositional period in which he fuses Cuban aesthetics with that of the contemporary to create a new style. This is evident if one looks at the different way he presents the same original material, in this case a Bulgarian folk melody, within different aesthetic contexts; In *Tres Appuntes* from the third movement*; Sobre un Canto de Bulgaria* and in *Hika,* the latter has already been discussed in Fukuda's remark about the dramatic success of thy theme within *Hika*. See examples 11[58] and 12.[59]

[57] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 41.
[58] Leo Brouwer, *Tres Appuntes* (London: Schott, 1972), 5.
[59] Leo Brouwer, *Hika: In Memoriam Toru Takemitsu* (Tokyo: Gendai Guitar, 1997), 7.

Example 11: Brouwer, *Tres appuntes-Sobre un Canto de Bulgaria*, bars 1-12.



Example 12: Brouwer, *Hika, In Memoriam Toru Takemitsu,* bars 23-31.



Kronenberg further notes that in addition to Brouwer's deep understanding of Cuban and African musical aesthetics, the composer has shown to be avidly drawn to philosophies of mathematics, culture, religion and other forms of art such as painting and dance.[60] In Brouwer's second period, his most abstract musical language is predominant. Kronenberg comments on this period:

> Brouwer's guitar works from his second period (1968-1979) take on definitive styles from the international avant-garde, revealing the great impact of the 1961 Polish Festival on his artistic development. Ground- breaking works like Canticum (1968), La espiral eterna (1970), Per Suonare a due (1972), Parabola (1973-74) and Tarantos (1973-74) are designed to expose the performer and listener to successive chromatic clusters, strident non-tonal clashes, imprecise note-durations and numerous novel percussive sounds not commonly encountered on this scale on the concert guitar before. The style of this period similarly illustrates the inspiration from diverse sources, such as Paul Klee's art work, mathematical formulae, spiral structures, and the like.[61]

Even though Kronenberg observes here that Brouwer's compositional preoccupation has shifted from a Cuban-inspired style to one which coincides more clearly with the European avant-garde, he notes that the extra musical influences are still multiform and contribute to the specific aesthetic which has already been described. This aesthetic has in common to the *rumba* that was discussed earlier a complex temporal aspect, created here in these works by devices commonly occurring in non-tonal avant-garde music. The composition also referred to here, *La espiral Aeterna*, has been mentioned earlier as a possible link to Kramer's vertical time category (at least in part). This work takes notable inspiration from a book on astrophysics by G. J Withrow in which the author describes the correlation between the spiral structures found throughout the universe to the physical laws that govern elements in all life forms on this planet.[62] It is clear that the aesthetic of this composition as many others of the second time period derives from influences outside the realm of music, but of a nature similar to the elements Brouwer uses in the other periods. The elements of the second period seem to also be linked to the concept of unpresentability and the sublime especially relating to natural phenomena,

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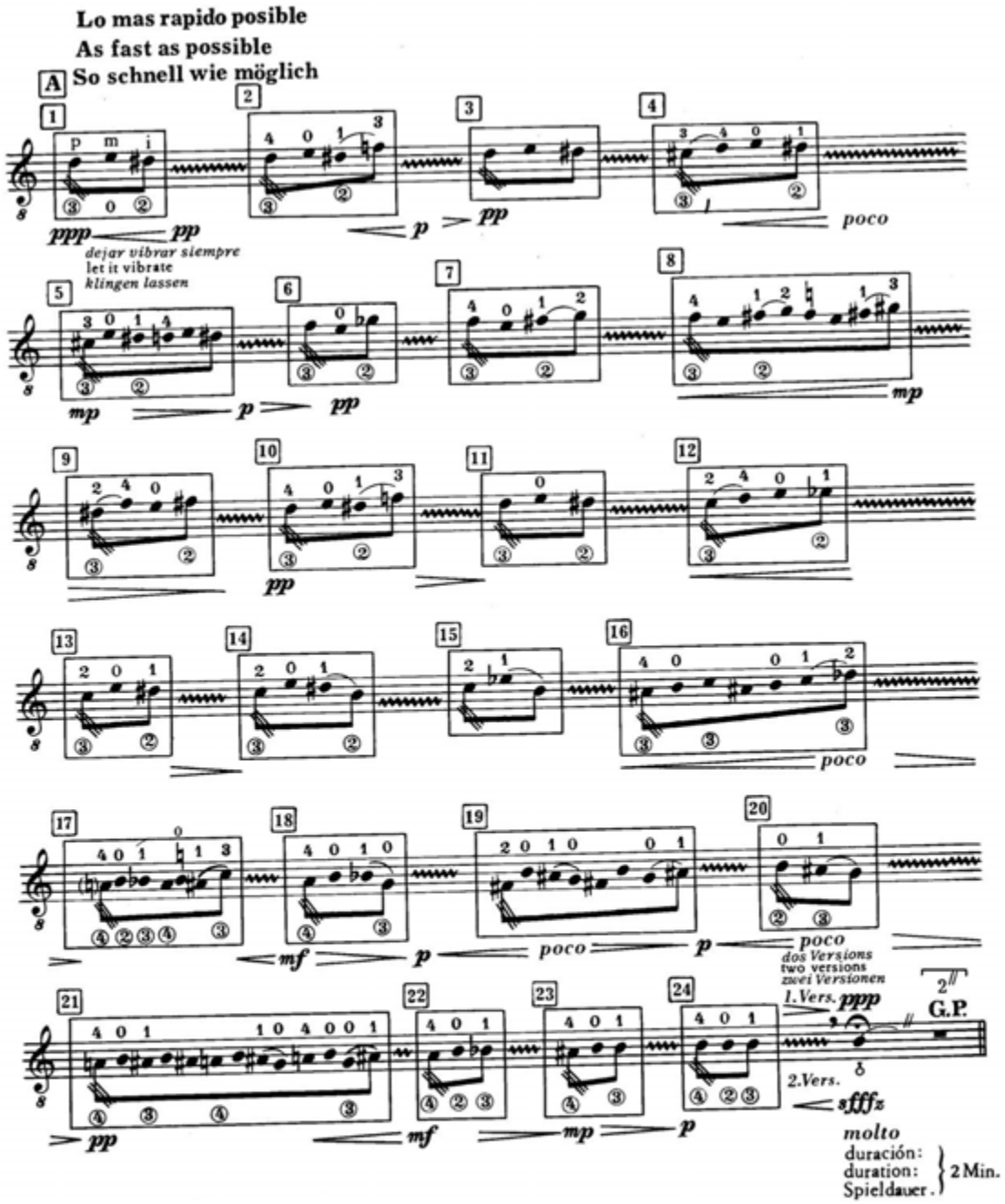
[60] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 36.
[61] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 43.
[62] Eduardo Fernández, "Cosmology in Sound: On Leo Brouwer's *La Espiral Eterna*, *Guitar Review* No. 112 Spring (1998): 7.

as we have seen in Kant's formulation of the sublime, such as the spiral structures that occur in the galaxy. See example 13[63] from the first section of *La Espiral Eterna* in which it is clear how Brouwer evokes the image of an unending spiral using very idiomatic writing for the guitar.

[63] Leo Brouwer, *La Espiral Eterna* (Mainz, Schott, 1973), 1.

Example 13: Brouwer, *La Espiral Eterna*, first page (no bar lines).



In relation to Brouwer's third compositional period, Kronenberg remarks similarly to Huston, on the composer's return to more tonal idioms and highlights the *Sonata* and *El Decameron Negro* as works which are some of the most substantial both in length and complexity of the modern guitar repertoire.[64] Marthinus Christoffel Boshoff [65] examines the idiomatic quality of Brouwer's composition s for guitar and makes the comment that in the *Sonata* (1990), there are no discernable Afro-Cuban elements, but that the combination of material in the composition and how this constitutes the aesthetic, is typical of Brouwer's compositional approach.[66] Boshoff points out that Brouwer's description of his music at this point of his career as combining two seeming disparate worlds, those of the avant-garde and modern popular music, is especially clear in the *Sonata*[67]. This is significant when examining the musical aesthetic of Brouwer as it points to the composer's seeming consciousness of elements, not necessarily Cuban, but traditional in the sense of originality and the ties to the unpresentable of such elements. Boshoff quotes Brouwer's own description of the thematic material of the work where the composer notes that "the principal characteristic is the interaction, cross-relation and superimposition of different worlds or epochs".[68] Boshoff concentrates on the Beethoven quote, to which reference has been made earlier in the current dissertation (Example 3, p 37), as a pertinent example of the combination of different epochs. It is clear that Brouwer has the kind of approach to history as one totality of temporality instead of a linear progression of events in this example of his compositional style. In Kronenberg's concluding remarks regarding the universality of Brouwer's aesthetic, he states:

> In his desire to create a 'universal language', he brings to fruition his aspiration to draw stimulus from both the time-honoured African tradition, implanted since the 1500s in the New World, and from feted styles and techniques from far beyond his regional precincts. In this sense Brouwer endeavours to eliminate the contradiction which usually exists between the 'high arts', centred on structural complexity, and 'the popular' which, in his words, 'are easily recognised so as not to disturb the intellectual faculties of the listener'. Through this universal undertaking,

[64] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 44.
[65] Marthinus Cristoffel Boshoff, "Idiomatiek in Geselekteerde Solo Kitaarwerke Van Leo Brouwer" (Master of music thesis, University of Pretoria, 2010), 59.
[66] Boshoff, "Idiomatiek", 57.
[67] Boshoff, "Idiomatiek", 57.
[68] Boshoff, "Idiomatiek", 59.

> Leo Brouwer remains accessible to the general listening audience, embracing and promoting aspects of 'people's culture' while at the same time raising their critical dimensions.[69]

In close relation to the argument presented and eloquently summarised in the above quote, I posit that the presence of the sublime in the work of Brouwer, in relation to his incorporation of diverse influences is, as mentioned earlier, situated in the observation that his music can be described as postmodern, and as such possesses the likelihood to manifest such an aesthetic element, the aesthetic of the sublime. As shown earlier, Brouwer's use of traditional material seems to recall the way in which postmodern art presents the sublime as described by Lyotard. Brouwer's own view on postmodernism illustrates further how the composer can be seen as an artist of the sublime aesthetic. In a conference paper given by Brouwer entitled *Music, folklore, contemporaneity and postmodernism* (2004),[70] he discusses what freedoms the artist is afforded by the context of postmodernism. Here I offer two quotes, translated by Huston, that illustrate better than I would in my own words, how Brouwer's ideas seem to coincide with postmodern thought and with Lyotard's idea of the unpresentable through the way in which Brouwer seems to view folklore as a source that can remain contemporary even though it is part of history:

> Folklore? Yes. Because a great part of the folklore from the Caribbean and from our geographic areas is still alive, unchanged, without adulterations, and the best of it is still unknown thanks to the fact that its roots are not fully susceptible to tourist commercialization. Contemporaneity? Because it is the damned topic in a century that ends convulsed and burning with theses, styles, aesthetic currents following each other in rapid succession, stylistic births and sudden deaths, fashions and modes, rites and myths; all of them seen from a European perspective many times too removed from our American home. Postmodernism? As a recently refurbished concept that allows us to deal with this moment, a moment brimming with the absolute freedom that generates pluralism in terms of artistic culture.[71]

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[69] Kronenberg, "Guitar Composer Leo Brouwer," 44.

[70] Leo Brouwer, "Música, folklor, contemporaneidad y postmodernismo" *Gajes del oficio* (Habana: Letras Cubanas, 2004), 46-48. Translation by Huston in Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 20-21.

[71] Original text by Brouwer in: Leo Brouwer, "Música, folklor, contemporaneidad y postmodernismo" *Gajes del oficio* (Habana: Letras Cubanas, 2004), 46-48. Translation by Huston in Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 20-21.

In the following words it becomes clear that Brouwer is familiar with postmodern thought processes as seen in the work of Lyotard and many others and that through these thoughts, the artist might be free to approach his work in a truly new way.

> The modern results neither from novel classifications or schemes nor from a purposeful search for rupture. The modern results from a new way intimately found —of dealing with languages and codes that might or might not be part of our historical culture. The contemporary offers to the artist a wide variety of options in diverse modules or patterns, whether national or universal. These options become influences only when the artist chooses them and uses them in his oeuvre.[72]

To apply Lyotard's thoughts of the unpresentable conveyed without the support of accepted forms and tastes to the work of Brouwer could perhaps seem problematic. Brouwer does use forms that are recognisable in the sense that his music relies in many areas on the systems of Western tonality in combination with for example the rhythmical structure of Cuban traditional music. It is my opinion however that Brouwer's practice in all his stylistic periods of merging different aesthetic ideals with the result of a unique personal aesthetic, constitutes a postmodern art work. One stylistic influence does not seem to overshadow another in his work and this symbiotic fusion does not seem to recall recognised forms or tastes to 'enjoy them but in order to impart a greater sense of the unpresentable'.[73]

Jonathan D. Kramer, whose work has been cited in this dissertation as very important to the concept of temporality in music as a link to the sublime aesthetic, presents a list of factors that could contribute to the classification of a work as postmodern in two articles: *The nature and origins of musical postmodernism*, 2002,[74] and in *Postmodern concepts of musical time*, 1996.[75] The two lists are slightly different in wording, but both contain the elements which can be traced in Brouwer's music. The list he gives as an introduction to

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[72] Original text by Brouwer in: Leo Brouwer, "Música, folklor, contemporaneidad y postmodernismo" *Gajes del oficio* (Habana: Letras Cubanas, 2004), 46-48. Translation by Huston in: Huston, "Afro-Cuban and Avant-Garde," 20-21.
[73] Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 81.
[74] Jonathan. D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," in *Postmodern music, postmodern thought,* ed. Judy Lochhead et al. (New York: Routledge, 2002).
[75] Jonathan D. Kramer, "Postmodern Concepts of Musical Time," *Indiana Theory Review* Vol. 17 No. 2 (1996).

the 1996 article, highlights the use of temporality in music as an aesthetic within the music. For ease of reference, the entire list is quoted here:

> While postmodernism is a difficult concept to define rigorously, it is possible to characterize postmodern music by the some or all of the following traits. It
>
> 1. is not simply a repudiation of modernism or its continuation, but has aspects of both;
> 2. is, on some level and in some way, ironic;
> 3. does not respect boundaries between sonorities and procedures of the past and of the present;
> 4. seeks to break down barriers between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" styles;
> 5. shows disdain for the often unquestioned value of structural unity;
> 6. refuses to accept the distinction between elitist and populist values;
> 7. avoids totalizing forms (e.g., does not allow an entire piece to be tonal or serial or cast in a prescribed formal mold);
> 8. includes quotations of or references to music of many traditions and cultures;
> 9. embraces contradictions;
> 10. distrusts binary oppositions;
> 11. includes fragmentations and discontinuities;
> 12. encompasses pluralism and eclecticism;
> 13. presents multiple meanings and multiple temporalities;
> 14. locates meaning and even structure in listeners, more than in scores, performances, or composers.[76]

When considering the aesthetic elements given in this list, it becomes immediately clear that, through the foregoing discussion, Brouwer's music can indeed be placed into the category of postmodern music. Kramer makes specific reference to the 'blurring' of past and present in the aesthetic of postmodern music and relates the concept to the complex nature of the tenants of postmodernism. Kramer explores the origins of postmodern music by proceeding from the premises of both Lyotard and Umberto Eco that postmodernism should not be viewed as an occurrence linked to a historical period but rather a way of approaching art that can be present at any time. He describes postmodernism as an "attitude that influences not only today's compositional practices but also how we listen to and use music of other eras".[77] He cites Lyotard's view that for a work of art to be modern, it must first be postmodern; a postmodern challenge of an

[76]Kramer, "Postmodern Concepts of Musical Time," 21-22.
[77] Kramer, "Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," 16-17.

existing modernism must first take place before it returns to the original modernist state.[78]

What seems to be most striking here is the timelessness that Kramer perceives in the way in which Lyotard views postmodern art. Kramer observes that if postmodernism is then not defined by its historical placement, one should be able to trace its origins, as Lyotard's view could suggest, in art that reacts or refines aesthetic ideals of earlier work. Here the author notes that to follow such an approach would be to rely on the assumption that art progresses linearly as a series works being influenced by their precursors and in turn influencing forthcoming works.[79] The idea of universality and multitudinous influence available to the artist as discussed by Brouwer is referred to by Kramer as a condition of the postmodern,[80] and ties in with the idea of Lyotard that the postmodern sense of time is one of viewing all time as one totality. In listening to Brouwer's music, one can perceive this notion of time, and as it has been shown, this element forms part of the structure of the music as in the guitar quartet, but also in the nature of the combination of Afro-Cuban elements with modern aesthetics. Kramer notes that to listen to music from a postmodern standpoint, is to listen to it with great regard for the temporality in the music.[81] In Brouwer's music, both in the structure and the composer's approach to music, the temporal aspect in both these areas attest to the postmodern way of viewing time. It makes the listener aware of each moment through the devices of discontinuity as has been illustrated and the complex and multitudinous influences combined to form the aesthetic fabric of the music. As such the music elicits a feeling of the postmodern sublime.

[78] Kramer, "Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," 14.
[79] Kramer, "Nature and Origins of Postmodern Music," 17.
[80] Kramer, "Nature and Origins of Postmodern Music," 21
[81] Kramer, "Postmodern Concepts of Musical Time," 23

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