Lacan's three orders, the *graphe complet* and music in film: the case of Hitchcock's *Spellbound*

ABSTRACT

This article engages with the Lacanian tradition of film theory in order to suggest some of the ways in which music in film may be understood to contribute significantly to subject identification in filmic experience. Two points are argued: 1) that Lacan's distinction between the three orders - the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic - may usefully be understood in musical terms, and, 2) that the two vectors of Lacan's *graphe complet* – the vector of speech and the vector of drive – provide meaningful insight into the manner in which the three orders shape filmic musical experience. Analysis of Miklos Rosza's score for Alfred Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1945) serves to illustrate such insights.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1900s the writings of Jacques Lacan, psychoanalytic and post-structural thinker, have exercised a marked influence on film scholarship[1]. This influence has been felt in every sphere, ranging as it does from critique of single films, through the recognition of narrative strategies typical of distinctive film genres, to discourse on film in general, and ultimately to the film industry (Hollywood especially) as capitalist institution. Its continued prevalence is the result of the extent to which Lacan's thinking - in conjunction with semiotics, narrative analysis and historical materialism - provides us with the psychoanalytic notion of 'subjectivity' as the basis for a reception theory of film.

In this article I engage with this tradition of film theory in order to suggest some of the ways in which music in film may be understood to contribute significantly to subject identification in filmic experience[2]. In particular I argue for two things: 1) that Lacan's distinction between the three orders – the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic – may usefully be understood in musical terms[3], and, 2) that the two vectors of Lacan's *graphe complet* - the vector of speech and the vector of drive – provide meaningful insights into the manner in which the three orders shape filmic musical experience. Although I shall cite examples from several films, my analysis of Miklos Rosza's score for Alfred Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1945) primarily serves to illustrate such insights. Before proceeding to interpret Lacan's ideas in this context, however, let us first briefly consider his own understanding of the three orders and their place in the *graphe complet*.

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[1] *For reference to the 'forces of modernity' that shaped the common historical, social and cultural background of both film and psychoanalysis, and that to some extent explains the marriage between them, see Barbara Creed's entry "Film and Psychoanalysis" in Hill and Gibson, 1998: 77.*
The marriage of psychoanalysis and film has not occurred exclusively through Lacan's writings. It is also much informed by those of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, and to a lesser extent by those of Carl Gustav Jung.

[2] *A significant body of works devoted to the subject of film music already exists. Few of these engage fully with Lacan, however. Notable amongst those that do are Nancy Wood:* Text and Spectator in the Period of the Transition to Sound *(PhD thesis, University of Kent, Canterbury, 1983) and Anahid Kassabian:* Communication and Competence: How Film Music Works *(PhD thesis, Stanford University). Claudia Gorbman touches on it but briefly (Gorbman, 1987: 62-63; also her entry "Film Music" in Hill and Gibson 1998: 46-47).*
*In addition, there are a number of seminal works devoted to the significance of the auditory realm in psychoanalysis and film in general (of which music would be a part), and to addressing the manner in which this significance is somewhat slighted in Freud and Lacan's own writings. In these works, primary emphasis is placed on the role of the voice, rather than on that of music. These include Didier Anzieu: "L'Enveloppe sonore du soi" (*Nouvelle Revue de psychanalyse *13: 161-179, 1976); also Michel Chion:* La Voix au cinema *(Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma, 1982); also Guy Rosolato: "Entre corps et langage" (*Revue française de psychanalyse *37 (1), 1969) and "La Voix" in* Essais sur le symbolique *(Paris: Gallimard, 1969); also Kaja Silverman' s* The acoustic mirror *and Mary Anne Doane's "The voice in the cinema: the articulation of body and space", both of which are included in the bibliography of this article. Worthy of particular note in exploring the notion of the musical Imaginary and Symbolic, although it does not address music in film* per se*, is David Schwarz's "Listening subjects: semiotics, psychoanalysis, and the music of John Adams and Steve Reich", also included in the bibliography of this article.*

[3] *Although I shall therefore in this article refer to the notion of a musical Imaginary and a musical Symbolic, the same would not apply in the case of the Real, of course. The Real is the Real. Nevertheless, one may identify manifestations of the Real in the way that music is experienced.*

1. *LACAN'S THREE ORDERS AND THE* GRAPHE COMPLET

According to Lacan we are all born into an experience of lack or incompleteness, what he calls the *manque à être* (the 'want-to-be'). Life consists of a series of attempts to fill this lack - to find the eternally lost object (*l'objet petit a*) – but these attempts are inevitably doomed to failure because the object does not in fact exist. In order to expound upon this assertion, he recognises three orders, three 'registers' (Olivier, 2004: 2) or 'formative phases' (Lapsley and Westlake, 1988: 68) that constitute us as members of the human race. Chronologically, they enter our lives as first the Real, then the Imaginary, and lastly the Symbolic. However, one order is not completed when the next begins. Once established, each of these orders is maintained throughout our lives. There is a continuous interpenetration between them, which makes them inseparable in as far as they remain always in what Lacan calls an 'asymptotic' unity (Lacan, 1977:2), that is, they 'will always approximate each other without actually coinciding' (Olivier, 2004: 4). This is what defines each of us as Lacanian subject.

The Real order[4] transcends the subject in time. It is 'that which is there, already there', so that 'when we appear on the scene as subjects certain games have already been played, certain dice thrown' (Bowie, 1987: 116). Furthermore, the Real eludes the subject's ability to fully comprehend it at any one moment in time, and this necessitates defining it negatively from the point of view of the other two orders. In other words, if we cannot say what it is, we can at least say what it is *not.* Thus, the Real is 'what the subject is unable to speak, so it is like a hole in the Symbolic Order'. It differs from the unconscious because 'it is not repression but foreclosure – it is the disaffirmation (rejection) that something exists for the subject' (Hayward, 2000:297). The effectiveness of the Real arises on many accounts. Not least of these is the fact that the Real is the locus both of life and of death, and here 'life' should not only be understood in the physical, bodily sense. Subjective life arises from a need – a desire – to overcome the muteness of the Real, thus giving birth, as it were, to the Imaginary and the Symbolic orders. So the Real is also the locus of desire, the subject's quest towards an 'indefinitely receding goal', a reaching towards a void that serves 'to remind Lacan's would-be omnipotent subject that his [sic] symbolic and imaginary constructions take place in a world which exceeds him' (Bowie, 1987: 116).

The Imaginary begins in infancy, the first moment when a sense of self – a sense of identity - begins to be established. Lacan marks this moment emblematically as the mirror phase[5], that moment when the infant is held before the mirror (usually by the mother) and first recognises its distinctness. But this recognition, says Lacan, is flawed. Although the infant imagines itself at that moment as complete, a 'jubilant assumption' (Lacan, 1977: 2) based on a narcissistic idealisation of self, the subject is - and necessarily always remains - in a constant state of *becoming*, thus of incompleteness. Therefore this self-recognition is in fact a misrecognition. It is also one that may be said to initiate the subject's 'alienating destination' (Lacan, 1977:2) in so far as the recognition 'That's me' also means 'I am (an)*other*', or, 'I am not (m)*other*'. At the same time, 'there is nothing

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[4] *The fullest account of the Real is given in the second of Lacan's series of seminars, entitled "The Ego in Freud's theory and in the technique of psychoanalysis 1954-1955" (Translated from the original of 1978 by J. Forrester; Ed: J.A. Miller. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).*

[5] *See his essay "The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience" in Lacan, 1977: 1-7.*

in the development of the subject that is more fundamental for its sense of self than the *imago* or mirror-image which first imparts to it a sense, however misleading, of coherence and unity' (Olivier, 2004: 3). Moreover, the subject is destined forever after to repeat this moment, to cyclically compound its situation by constantly reliving moments of imaginary, narcissistic self-identification, based on further misrecognitions, and therefore also on further alienation.

Two important concepts arise from the above: firstly, definition of the 'Other/other' as that which lies outside of the subject's (misguided) sense of self or *moi*, as that from which the subject is alienated and which therefore causes its own sense of 'otherness'; secondly, a tension between this (misguided) narcissistic identification of a coherent and united self – the ego-ideal – and the omnipresent experience of lack, which is manifest as desire. To Lacan, thus, 'Other/other'[6] and 'desire' are co-present phenomena. Just as the subject is always *becoming*, so these two phenomena are always changing, thus 'keeping the goals of desire in perpetual flight' (Bowie, 1987:117).

The Symbolic order of language arises in order to mediate between the alienated subject and the Other[7]. Like Saussure, Lacan understood that entry to language simultaneously meant entry to a particular social order. On the one hand, through language the subject is able to articulate or represent itself to the world as 'I' or '*je*', thus becoming an articulating subject *in* society. Yet, on the other hand, in so doing it also becomes subject *to* the laws of society, and must therefore come to terms with the 'Law of the Father'. Thus the ego-ideal escapes all attempts to pin itself down in language. The language of the Symbolic order (that is, the language of the Other/Father) can only account for that which the subject can express of its consciousness. Even this account is limited to some extent by language - either by the nature of the available signifying system itself, or by the command the individual is able to gain over that available signifying chain. Entry to the Symbolic therefore further compounds the cycle of misrepresentation and misrecognition – along with concomitant alienation and repression into the subconscious[8] – already begun in the Imaginary order. In this sense, Lacan's thinking about language is by no means structuralist, despite his reliance on the semiotics of Saussure. In his explanation of the relationship of the subject to language (indeed even in his explanation of the mirror phase) there is evidence of what Olivier calls the 'quasi-transcendental' in so far as the discourse of the *je* 'may then be said to be *simultaneously* the condition of the possibility *and* the impossibility of something else' (Olivier, 2004: 4). In addition, Lacan escapes the synchronic mould into which the subject is cast in Saussure's *langue* as a static social order, by reminding us that the subject is not only constituted by language, but also has the ability to act upon that order as agent of diachronic change, that is, to constitute language. Having established this duplicitous relationship between the subject and language (where the subject is both the constituted and the constituting), he then proceeds to

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[6] *Lacan's distinction between the small* other *and the big* Other *may be understood as a disparity in power. The* otherness *of the ego-ideal indicates its position of weakness in the power struggle, because, in order to be integrated into society, the subject has no option but to repress desire that is forbidden by patriarchal law, the language of power. The subject is thus* other *in the sense that it can never be foully represented in language. The latter, in turn, is experienced by the subject as the powerful '*Other *than itself'.*

[7] *See his essay "The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis" in Lacan, 1977: 30-113.*

[8] *See his essay "The subversion of the subject and the dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious" in Lacan, 1977: 292-325.*

**Figure 1: Lacan's *Graphe Complet***
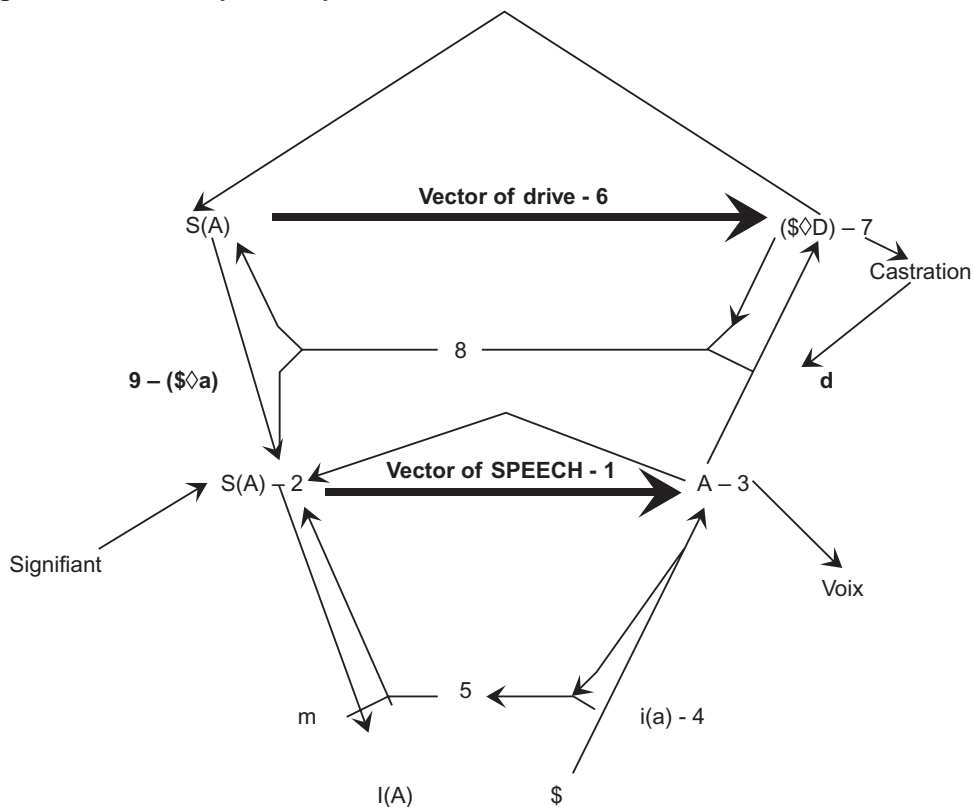
Derived from Lacan, 1977: 315.

explain the relationship by means of the *graphe complet* (Lacan, 1977: 315). The graph revolves around two central vectors: the vector of speech and the vector of drive. It is shown in Figure 1, but amplified by the addition of numbers so as to facilitate explanation.

1 – The vector of speech, the 'I' or '*je*', the subject's signifying chain, located in the Symbolic order and in the subject's consciousness.

2 – This represents the moment when the subject enters the Symbolic order and discovers that it is lacking.

3 – A is *l'Autre*, the Other. This is the synchronic dimension of language, the place where every signifier is stored and where the subject is constituted through language.

4 – This is the diachronic dimension, where the subject constitutes language, where 'meaning emerges in the retroactive contextualizing of signifiers and the anticipatory construction of those to come. In this moment something of what the subject desires is at once expressed and repressed' (Lapsley & Westlake, 1988: 76). Therefore this moment partly represents the barred subject ($).

5 – The fading of the subject - S(A) – prompts the subject to seek compensation in an idealised image – *i(a)* – to attempt to suture or 'stitch up' the conscious and the unconscious and thus create a juncture between the Imaginary and the Symbolic. This creates the 'me' or *moi* (*m*), albeit in a self-image based upon misrecognition.

6 – The vector of drive. The subject is driven by the ever present sense of lack.

7 – In seeking to overcome the subject's sense of lack, the drive addresses a demand to the Other, but discovers this demand to be an impossible one to fulfil. Here $ stands for the barred subject, and D for demand. The sign <> may be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, it may be seen as < + >, indicating that the barred subject is simultaneously both greater than and less than the demand, that the demand is thus impossible to satisfy (because demand encompasses both satisfiable need and unsatisfiable desire). Secondly, it is also a sign used by silversmiths as a mark of authenticity. In this context it may refer to the uniqueness and authenticity of the subject's individual demand(s) (Lapsley & Westlake, 1988).

8 – Because the demand cannot be fulfilled, castration and repression occur, which give rise to desire (d).

9 – Unsatisfiable desire (d) becomes fantasy ($◇a), where $ is the barred subject, *a* is *l'objet petit a*, the eternally lost object, and <> represents the object(s) of phantasy created by the subject to compensate for the absent *objet petit a*.

Figure 3: The *"Graphe Musicales"*
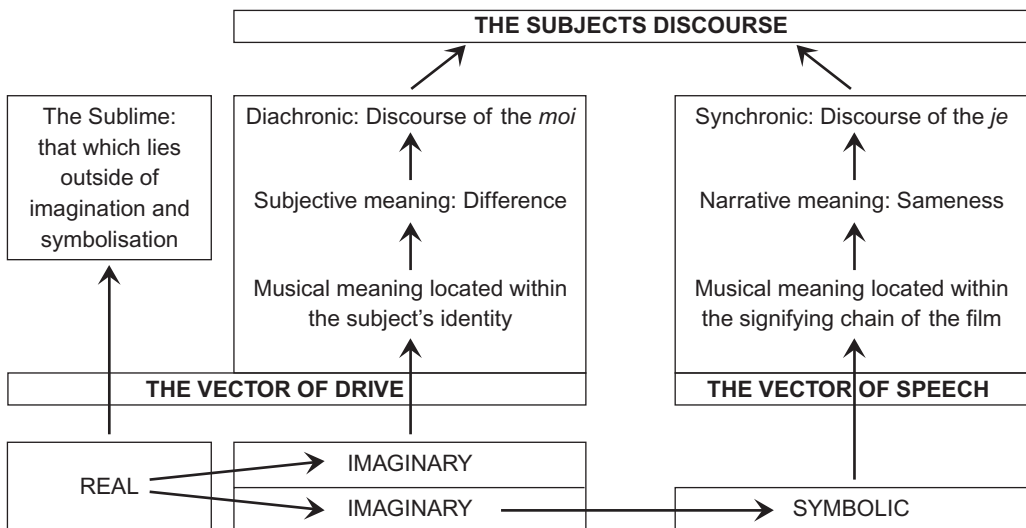
In order to reflect the nature of the proposed musical vector of speech and musical vector of drive respectively, Figure 3 presents - in somewhat facetious homage to Lacan - what I have called a '*graph musicales*', wherein I attempt to capture both the *je* and the *moi* discourses that are at stake when we consider the multiple ways in which music becomes meaningful as cinematic signifier. Further discussion will be based upon both of these graphs.

2. HOW MUSIC RELATES TO THE VECTOR OF SPEECH

On the relations between music and the Real order, and also on the manner in which these relations impact upon the Imaginary and the Symbolic, Olivier has remarked, that

> ... perhaps nowhere more clearly manifested than in music, there is the inalienable moment of rhythm or beat, which I would argue represents or corresponds to Lacan's ... 'subject of the real' ... rhythm marks the locus of inarticulable desire interrupting symbolic utterances as demands ... no less than *moi*-identities [that is, imaginary identities] required by these demands (Olivier, 2005a: 15).

Olivier's perception of rhythm as a primal musical phenomenon, located in the Real or 'speaking body' (Lee, 1990:82), is perhaps something of an oversimplification[9], unless we are to understand the term rhythm here in a broader *metarhythmic* sense. We find one instance of the latter, for example, in Jan La Rue's 'rhythmic concinnities', giving rise to such terms as textural rhythms, harmonic rhythms, the rhythms of melodic profiles and melodic density, etc. In La Rue's case all musical parameters would thus be reduced to a complex network of fluctuating levels of intensity, to what he respectively calls levels of stress and lull (La Rue, 1970: 94-102). A similar notion underlies many other approaches to musical meaning, those that may be collectively described as inclining to the perception of music as a series of *tension spans*. Leonard B Meyer's implication-realisation model for tonal melody springs to mind as another example (Meyer, 1973). Indeed La Rue and Meyer's theoretical systems are but two members of a whole family of approaches, reaching back at least as far as the nineteenth-century 'University of Vienna school of absolute music' (Parkany, 1988: 265), and represented by the aesthetic and theoretical views of Eduard Hanslick, Guido Adler and Ernst Kurth. In this 'school' there is a direct correlation between the notions underlying Hanslick's reference to 'tönend bewegte formen'[10] (Hanslick, 1858: 38), and those which culminate in Kurth's understanding of music as 'essentially a flux of moving lines, which generate and dissipate tension and which offer a pale surface manifestation of interplays of forces within the human psyche'[11] (Chew, 1991: 171-172). To Terrence Mc Laughlin, this is the basis for the ontological analogy between music and a whole spectrum of psychologically and physiologically related experiences:

> ... if we consider the tensions and resolutions communicated to us in music, it is clear that they are only examples or representations of a far larger class of similar experiences - all circulating in our brains in the same electrical language and all reduced to the same terms. Hunger and thirst followed by satisfaction, pain and its relief, expectation culminating in the arrival of the desired object, sexual excitement and its fulfilment, bowel retention and evacuation, all have their own patterns, yet with a family likeness which is unmistakable.

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[9] *Indeed he has since admitted as much, conceding the point made by Stephanus Muller that Barthes's notion of 'grain' might be more apposite, since this notion would include not only rhythm, but all musical parameters. See footnote 19 in Olivier, 2005a: 15.*

[10] *Sounding, moving forms.*

[11] *See Kurth's* Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts: Bachs melodische Poliphonie *(Berne: Dreschel, 1917),* Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagners 'Tristan' *(Berne: Haupt, 1920), and* Bruckner *(Berlin: Hesse, 1925). It is interesting to note in this context that Freudian psychoanalysis had a marked influence on Kurth's theories of musical meaning.*

> Some of these impressions form our earliest experience: before our eyes have learnt to focus or our fingers to grasp, we have experienced one particular cycle over and over again - tension from lack of oxygen in the blood, followed by relief as we breathe in, then tension from the effort of raising the rib-cage, followed by relaxation as we lower it to breathe out (Mc Laughlin, 1970: 80-81).

The idea of tension/resolution pairings marking off moments of time, of 'interrupting utterances as demands' - the cyclic occurrence of patterns of demand for fulfilment followed by a fulfilment which is at the same time the moment of the arousal of further demand - may thus, in terms of McLaughlin's explanation, be understood to be located deep within the recesses of the Real as 'speaking body'.

In the sense that the Real order is that order which 'the imaginary seeks to image and the symbolic seeks to symbolise', whilst always 'remaining outside imagination and symbolisation' (Lapsley & Westlake, 1988: 69), we recognise, furthermore, the necessarily contingent nature of the attempts of scholars such as La Rue, Meyer and Kurth to pin down the experience of musical tension spans - both at the level of imagination and at that of symbolisation – in totalising theoretical systems. By virtue of the very process of translating it from one order to the next, something of its true nature within the Real order immediately fades. The extent to which its perception can be imagined or recognised in a coherent manner, already points (as does primal recognition in the mirror phase) to a certain measure of misrecognition, in the sense that it represses that part of the perception which defies coherent imagination. Similarly, the extent to which its perception can be symbolised by means of a system of signifiers – a musical *langue* or a theory of musical meaning – further exacerbates the extent to which it is misrepresented, or at least only partially represented, in the sense that any one music theory represses that part of the perception which defies signification.

These flawed '*moi*' (imagined) and '*je*' (symbolised) positions notwithstanding, the notion of musical tension spans is nevertheless frequently employed as an effective narrativising agent in film. Musical tension followed by musical resolution is a musical means of bringing about moments of narrative closure. Although it may well occur at the level of the film in its entirety, it is most immediately perceptible – and therefore most effective - at a small-scale (in the sense of individual scenes) or intermediate (a limited sequence of scenes) level within the filmic narrative, rather than at the level of the entire film. Composer Alex North has said of his music for the film *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), for example, that he deliberately worked to counter the lack of marked tension spans in the popular jazz tunes used for the night scenes that make up a large part of the beginning of the film. Since popular music does not rely for its effectivity upon the build-up of significant spans of tension and subsequent resolution, North sought to express musically the tension between the characters in the initial scenes – those between Stanley (Marlon Brando), Blanche (Vivien Leigh) and Stella (Kim Hunter) - by means of what he calls 'underscoring' of the popular tunes in question.

> I tried to make the transitions from the source music (popular tunes) to the underscoring as imperceptible as possible so that one was not completely aware of the transition ... I ... believe strongly in tension and relaxation (as applied to absolute music) in functional music. Because of this you may find strident string chords over an innocent melody which

is definitely going some place, to punctuate an emotional response; or brass figures interspersing a melodic line to convey the ambivalent nature of human behaviour (North in Prendergast, 1992: 105).

At the level of the individual scene, the closing off of a musical tension span (with musical resolution) can also be done in a humorous way in order to defuse tension temporarily between characters in the narrative, usually to defer this tension to a later moment in the film. In *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), for example, there is a particular scene between Fred (Dana Andrews) and Peggy (Virginia Mayo) that finds Fred waking in a strange bedroom (Peggy's), wondering what happened the night before and how he came to be in these obviously feminine surroundings. He wakes to see Peggy quietly entering the room in order to gather up some of her things, in an obvious attempt not to wake him. This scene is accompanied by the sinewy, sensual Gershwin-type theme – music loaded with subtle melodic, harmonic and rhythmic tension – created by composer Hugo Friedhofer to represent their relationship at the start of the film, a relationship apparently tenuous, yet with an undertone of passion. They converse briefly, after which she leaves him to go and prepare breakfast. Fred stumbles about the room in search of the bathroom, inadvertently opening one wrong door after another. We are amused by his embarrassment and by his attempts to escape this compromising situation, because we share with Peggy (unbeknown to him) the knowledge that his presence there is the result of a perfectly innocent gesture of hospitality on the part of Peggy and her parents. When he finally finds the right door and reaches the safety of the bathroom, the music confirms our amusement by resolving the subtle tension of the Gershwin-type theme into the closing phrase of the musically simple folk melody *There's no place like home*, whereupon the scene closes.

Typical tension/resolution musical pairings can sometimes be most effective in the filmic narrative when they are imposed on the scene for ironic effect, when they in fact run counter to dramatic undercurrents in a scene. David Neumeyer and James Buhler point, for example, to the first long café scene in the film *Casablanca* (1943), one laden with different tensions between Rick (Humphrey Bogart), Elsa (Ingrid Bergman), her husband Victor Laszlo (Paul Henreid) and Captain Renault (Claude Reins):

> Throughout, consonance and dissonance are not slavishly tied to major and minor, and the strongest affirmation of tonality, the cadence in D flat at the end, is ironic: this is exactly the point in the film where the principal characters are least certain of what will happen next (Neumeyer & Buhler, 2001: 22).

Appreciation of metarhythmic tension/resolution pairings in music – such as those described above - in terms of parameters like complex/simple, dissonant/consonant, minor/major, chromatic/diatonic, etc., relies upon the recognition of what Neumeyer and Buhler call 'culturally constructed' 'affective categories' (2001:21). In other words, they are but one instance of what Claudia Gorbman has called 'cultural musical codes' (Gorbman, 1987:3) that impart a particular type of meaning to filmic narrative. In the case of the films discussed above, their efficacy derives from our understanding of 18th- and 19th-century tonal music. Thus, although we might argue that the notion of musical tension spans as a metarhythmic phenomenon is located at the level of the Real or 'speaking

body', clearly our discourse surrounding its use in film is dependent on our entry to the Symbolic musical order, to the language(s) of music(s), and to an understanding of individual musical signifiers in the latter context. To communicate our understanding of the musical *parole* of a particular film, we need to be what Meyer would call 'stylistically competent' (1956:34-35), that is, we need to become subject to the laws of the musical 'society', the musical *langue*, from which the *parole* takes its meaning. In the case of classical narrative cinema, this *langue* is invariably the late-Romantic symphonic idiom, but other typical musical *langues* are the avant garde in the case of the science fiction and horror film genres, stylised and dissonant jazz in the case of the American films from the 1950's onwards that explore themes related to the realities of inner-city decadence and despair, as well as many others.

It is stylistic competence, then, that places the film music scholar around points 1 through 5 of the *graphe complet*, that is, around the vector of speech, thus providing an available signifying chain through which discourse about music in film may be articulated. In musical terms, this same vector is shown as the right-hand column of Figure 3. For the stylistically competent spectator, discourse of this nature is most likely to begin with perception of some kind or another of musical and dramatic narrative coherence, that is, s/he will consciously set out to look and listen for reasons why the music 'suits the movie'[12]. However, like Imaginary coherence of the subject's *moi* identity (the mirror image), this perception will inevitably concentrate on those parts of the musical score that support such a perception of coherence, whilst at the same time (at least initially) suppressing those parts that do not[13]. One may nevertheless be content to pursue and mediate such a perception (or partial misperception) in terms of the language of the 'Other' – in fact one may really have no choice in the matter - because, like the necessity of language acquisition for communication and socialisation, entering the Symbolic signifying chain of the film is a necessary means of pointing to a number of things about music's place in it. One may show, firstly, how music parallels other cinematic signifiers in the unfolding of the narrative. Secondly, one may show that musical signifiers often contribute to the narrative - or even create narrative - not immediately perceptible through other cinematic signifiers. And thirdly, one may show how such musical signifiers often either valorise or oppose the underlying ideological agenda of a given film.

Classical narrative cinema (that is, Hollywood films from the late 1930s until the early 1950s), of which Hitchcock's *Spellbound* is an example, is typically set to music deriving stylistically from the nineteenth-century symphonic idiom, often (although certainly not exclusively) relying on an organic narrative coherence whose immediate predecessor is probably the *leitmotiv* of Wagner's music dramas[14]. In this context, purely musical signifiers take on the role of cinematic signifiers by virtue of their repeated association with particular cinematic signifieds. Once this association has been

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[12] *Gorbman, for example, speculates on the effect of different musical accompaniments to the opening scene of the film* Le Tourbillon*, and concludes that in each case meaning (albeit different meaning) will be imposed accordingly. See Gorbman, 1987: 17-19.*

[13] *Towards the end of this article, I shall return to reconsider 'those parts that do not'.*

[14] *The notion of organicism encompasses a very long history of (predominantly German) musical composition, and obviously cannot be said to have been invented by Wagner himself. The seminal composers of music for classical narrative cinema - Steiner, Korngold, Rosza, and others - all hailed from Europe, and were themselves trained in the German (organicist) symphonic tradition. This tradition, in turn, had a marked influence on the American composer, Bernard Herrmann, arguably the most prolific composer for classical narrative cinema.*

established, the musical signifier may begin to manipulate the cinematic signified in various ways. For example, its presence on the soundtrack may remind us of the signified when the signified is iconically absent, similarities between different musical signifiers may point out associations between different cinematic signifieds, the musical signifier may be musically developed or transformed to reflect change (apparent or otherwise) in the nature or circumstances of the signified, etc.

A closer look at Miklos Rozsa's score for *Spellbound* will serve to illustrate some of the above. Figure 2 shows a number of the prominent musical themes, or musical signifiers, in the film. Before examining these more closely, however, a brief synopsis is necessary, so that the meanings of the musical themes can be understood accordingly.

The film is set in a psychiatric clinic where Dr Constance Petersen (Ingrid Bergman) and her (male) colleagues treat their patients with the aid of psychoanalysis. Enter John Ballantyne (Gregory Peck), who is suffering from amnesia, and who has been mistaken for the new superintendent, Dr Edwardes. As he and Constance fall instantaneously and 'madly' in love, his own particular 'madness' is also increasingly revealed to Constance and her colleagues. He experiences disoriented spells, as his memory is jogged each time he notices the colour white, especially when the colour is marked with long parallel lines[15]. It is still sketchy, barely enough for him to realise that he is not in fact Dr Edwardes and that some dreadful ill has befallen the real Dr Edwardes, but not enough for him to know who he really is, how he came to have lost his memory in the first place, or what part he might have played in the ill that befell Dr Edwardes. Suspicious of himself and his own possible complicity, he decides to flee the clinic in order to find out the truth. Constance follows him. She finds him hiding in a hotel room and convinces him to seek help from her former teacher and 'father-figure', Dr Alex Brulov (Michael Chekhov). Meanwhile, the hospital staff have discovered the deception and have alerted the police. The hunt is on, both for the 'paranoid impostor', as well as for the whereabouts of the real Dr Edwardes.

Hidden with Constance in the safety of the home of Dr Alex Brulov, John is persuaded that hypnosis and psychoanalysis may reveal those events deeply suppressed in his unconscious and provide the answers he seeks. Under hypnosis John talks about his recurring dream[16] – in the film a striking surreal depiction, with sets designed by Salvador Dali[17] – and from this dream Constance and Alex are able to piece together some of the trauma which caused his amnesia. The remainder of the puzzle, however, lies somewhere on the (white) slopes of a snow-covered mountain resort.

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[15] *In her voice-over commentary on this film, included as a special feature on the 2002 DVD re-release by The Criteria Collection, Hitchcock scholar, Marian Keane, gives a telling analysis of the significance of the various visual manifestations of parallel lines as phallic symbols throughout this film, and further points to its significance as authorial sign in all of Hitchcock's oeuvre.*

[16] *The significance of the analysis of dreams as a means of unlocking the unconscious is central to psychoanalytical technique. See Sigmund Freud:* The Interpretation of Dreams *(J. Strachey, Trans. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1977).*

[17] *Bowie comments on the significant connection between Lacan and the Surrealist movement. He notes: 'Lacan was decisively influenced by Surrealism in the late 1920's and early 1930's; he had members of the group among his friends; he contributed articles on paranoia to the review* Minotaure *... There is little doubt that the newcomer to Lacan who already has some experience of Surrealist writing will hear many familiar notes being sounded in his work; and such a reader will be well equipped to understand how it is that nonsense may be thought of as a plenitude rather than an absence of sense and given a special role in exploring and proclaiming the truths of the unconscious' (Bowie, 1987: 127-128).*

Apprehensive of what they might find, yet determined to ascertain the truth, Constance and John begin a frightening descent of this mountain on skis. The speed of their descent threatens to get out of control as they hurtle ever closer to the mountain precipice. We fear thus that John may be so mentally 'out of control' as to intend Constance to come to harm. This climactic scene is typical Hitchcock, as descents and high camera angles visually force characters down to threats of disaster and to memories of past catastrophes. In the nick of time, however, John is finally able to bring them to a dramatic halt, as repressed memories are brought back to his consciousness: from the horrors of a childhood accident sliding down a white stone banister, to the reactivation of this horror when he is forced to bail out of a falling aeroplane during the war (which was how he came to be the patient of Dr Edwardes, who brought him to this mountain resort as part of his therapy), and finally to his witnessing Dr Edwardes falling down this very precipice to his death (which, along with John, we assume to be the result of a tragic accident). All is resolved, we are led to believe, as the fugitive lovers are finally able to reveal themselves - and the 'truth' - to the police. The colour white, once a symbol of John's psychosis, is now the symbol only of the consummation of their love in marriage.

But, in typical Hitchcock fashion, there is a twist to the tale. When police recover the body of Dr. Edwardes on the mountain, they discover a bullet hole in his back. Despite the pleas of Constance on his behalf, John is convicted of murder. Shattered, alone and defeated, she returns to her position at the psychiatric clinic. Resolution and closure, we are now led to believe, are to be found in the words of her 'father-figure' Alex, who advises her that 'you cannot keep bumping your head against reality and pretending its not there ... In time you will forget ... and you will work hard. There is lots of happiness in working hard, maybe the most'.

However, Hitchcock provides us with yet another twist when Constance subsequently stumbles on and outwits the true murderer, Dr. Murchison (Leo Carroll), the former superintendent of the hospital, now happily reinstated in the position he was unwilling to relinquish (so unwilling, in fact, that he eliminated his successor rather than give it up). John is thus freed from his incarceration, and we are finally able to rejoice with the lovers as they find their happy ending.

The music enters the Symbolic signifying chain of the narrative by virtue of its association with the central themes of the film, in particular that of love and of mental instability, which are musically represented by the 'love' theme (Figure 2.2) and the 'madness' theme (Figure 2.3) respectively. Also shown in figure 2 are two subsidiary themes, the pleading theme (Figure 2.4) and what I have called the 'Once upon a time' theme (Figure 2.1). From these four examples it is clear to see how, in true German organicist fashion[18], a very dense motivic coherence is presented in the musical score of this film[19]. Aside from the prevalence of motives 1, 2 and 3, as well as of their increasingly

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[18] *Rosza was born in Hungary in 1907. He studied at the Leipzig Conservatory where he learnt to master the German Romantic symphonic style. For more on Rozsa's life history and compositional career, see Prendergast, 1992: 68-69; Brown, 1994: 271-280; and Maxford, 2002: 203.*

[19] *Demonstrating the density of this thematic-motivic coherence to the extent that it is shown in the accompanying examples may seem to some readers a somewhat superfluous stating of the obvious. It is given as such in this instance, however, in order to present a perception of the musical Symbolic order as a corollary of the similarly dense semantic and syntactic units of language. In so doing, I do not mean to suggest that organic motivic coherence is the only sense in which it is possible to speak of a musical Symbolic. Indeed, there are many ways of doing so. It is singled out in this particular case only because of its connection with the Symbolic signifying chain of the filmic narrative.*

interrelated variants and subvariants[20], a quasi-Retian analysis of the respective opening gestures of these four themes shows that they also share a common thematic kernel[21]. Although this kernel presents itself in several intervallic and rhythmic guises, it centres on the idea of melodic motion by sweeping descent, culminating onto a punctuating note of relatively long duration (B-D in the case of Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2, but with intervallic contractions to B-F and A-G in the case of Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4 respectively), where this descending outline is interspersed with melodic elaboration in two central quavers (Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3, but rhythmically expanded in Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.4, and rhythmically contracted in the latter part of Figure 2.3). Not shown in Figure 2, furthermore, are several musical ideas that are more motivic than thematic in nature.

Figure 2.1: The 'Once Upon a Time' Theme from *Spellbound*

Figure 2.2: The Love theme from *Spellbound*

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[20] *The latter motives are distinguished here predominantly on the basis of their melodic characteristics, thus as pitch sets. Along with each of these goes also a particular rhythmic and metric design. At the level of subvariants, it sometimes becomes very difficult to assign such a unit to any one motivic 'parent', however, because of the way in which Rosza cleverly marries the melodic design of one motive with the rhythmic design of another. Motive 2.2, for example, is related to motive 2 by virtue of its melodic design as stepwise ascent. Yet it has precisely the same metric and rhythmic design as motive 1, motive 1.3 and motive 3.2.3. A more apposite motivic analysis may therefore have been to distinguish, from the outset, between Rosza's use of pitch sets and rhythmic sets.*

[21] *For more on the idea of the thematic kernel, see Chapter 4 of Reti, 1961.*

Figure 2.3: The theme of Madness from *Spellbound*

Figure 2.4: The Pleading theme from *Spellbound*

The first of these motivic rather than thematic musical signifiers is taken from motive 1.1 and its subvariants, the tritone, the quintessential 'diabolus in musica'. Rosza elaborates upon the tritone motive to create two kinds of musical passages: either a melodic filling of the interval with equidistant steps, thus creating wholetone scales, or passages based upon the 'verticalisation' of the interval into diminished chords. Both wholetone-scale passages and diminished-chord passages abound in this film score. Sometimes they act merely to accompany themes, as in the madness theme, and sometimes they stand alone. The diminished-chord passages, for example, are used alone to very dramatic effect as John descends the stairs of Alex's house in the middle of the night. The sense of impending drama is almost tangible. Of course the tritone is in itself a 'leitmotiv' which joins together several of the themes shown in Figure 2. It is most apparent in the madness theme (not only as motive 1.1.2, but also as the intervallic outline of the kernel), linked, as it is, most directly with scenes of mental instability and uncertainty; but the effects of that instability permeate the love between Constance and John, and ultimately determine the course of the narrative. Therefore, it noticeably interjects in the love theme and in the 'Once upon a time' theme. In whatever guise, the role of the tritone, of wholetone-scale passages and of diminished-chord passages in the musical discourse is clear. Just as they function as introversive musical signs of tonal ambiguity, instability and uncertainty, so they simultaneously point extroversively to dramatic ambiguity, instability and uncertainty.

The second prevalent motivic idea is one I call the 'motive of suspicion'. It is marked by several variations, but essentially comprises a dotted or double-dotted repeated-note figure followed by a dramatic sustained note at varying pitches. It is used to punctuate 'looks' that mark unspoken feelings of suspicion: from those on John's face when he agonises over his own possible complicity, to those directed at the fugitive lovers by the paper boy at the door of the hotel room and the ticket salesman and conductor at the station. It is dramatically announced when their identities become known to the police. Finally, when Constance inadvertently discovers the true murderer, it is the motive of suspicion - rather than any of her words or deeds - that first alerts us to her growing realisation of the true state of affairs. As she revisits her notes on the analysis of John's dream, the motive of suspicion is transformed assume characteristics of the melodic thematic kernel, particularly as found in the madness theme. With this (musical) knowledge we are able to gain a special understanding of the subsequent action she takes towards the murderer's unmasking: not only was the identity of the murderer to be found in the apparent madness of John's dream all along, but the real 'madman' is now dramatically revealed.

Returning now to the examples shown in Figure 2, we note, first of all, that the 'Once upon a time' theme (Figure 2.1) - its close motivic association with the other themes aside - has a character suggesting an almost carefree, frivolous merriment (an almost Prokovievian neoclassicism) that strongly contrasts with the romantic style of the rest of the music of this film, and indeed with the film as a whole. I call it the 'Once upon a time' theme because it is heard only at the beginning of the Overture[22] which precedes the start of the film, and again, on completion of the Overture, as the music which accompanies the opening credits of the film proper. One possible interpretation of this apparent mismatching of musical characters may be found in what David Sterritt has called 'that key Hitchcockian characteristic, the love of a good (or bad!) practical joke, be it on the people *in* his films or the people *watching* his films' (Sterritt, 1993:6). Such an interpretation is borne out – with noticeable symmetry - in the similar atmosphere of absurd merriment depicted in the closing scene of the film, when Constance and John are seen boarding a train, presumably to embark on their honeymoon. They are waved away by Alex, who makes the somewhat silly parting remark to John that 'any husband of Constance is a husband of mine', at which they all laugh heartily. As film ends, the camera shows us the bemused look on the face of the train's conductor (the same conductor, in fact, whose eyes had followed them suspiciously on their previous visit to this very station)[23]. Thus, even as Hitchcock is the master of suspense, the 'tormented creator working out inner anguish on the screen', so, says Sterritt, should we ask ourselves:

> Are his films really angst-ridden exercises in spontaneous self-expression, or rather – more realistically, not to mention more entertainingly – are they elaborate jokes by a master manipulator who likes to fill the air with flamboyant flourishes before pulling yet another dead rabbit from yet another cinematic hat? (Sterritt, 1993: 15).

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[22] *The Overture and Exit Music, included in the DVD re-release of this film by The Criteria Collection in 2002, was composed by Rosza for live performance at the premiere of the film in 1945. Although based on themes taken from the film, it is therefore not strictly speaking a part of the film score, and would not have been heard by audiences once the film was disseminated after the premiere.*

[23] *From this point of view we may understand the character of the conductor as a typical instance of Hitchcock's inclination to include lookers-on in his films that stand in his own stead. Sterritt, 1993 discusses this aspect of the Hitchcock films at some length. In this film, it is (inter alia) the conductor who 'presides over the image as a clear surrogate for the impassively observing filmmaker' (Sterritt, 1993:46).*

The love theme (Figure 2.2) presents itself[24] when Constance and John are introduced, the first moment, in fact, that music is heard in the film once its events begin to unfold. This is a poignant moment when the camera focuses on their faces only. The outer narrative comes to a halt: words and actions become superfluous because neither would be able to capture the depth of feeling with which they are instantaneously overwhelmed. From this point onwards the love theme pervades many of the scenes in the drama in order to remind us that the Constance we meet at the start of the film - dowdy and prim, detached, socially awkward, focused only on her career and the desire to be accepted by her male colleagues as their equal - is not the Constance we encounter thereafter. Now her love for John motivates her every action, leading her on a course that flaunts and eventually despises the very authority whose approval she once aspired so desperately to gain. It follows her up the stairs to the library; it drives her to linger outside his bedroom door at night; it overwhelms her when she finds a letter slipped unobtrusively under her door; and, it finds musical consummation in the full orchestra in those scenes depicting the consummation of their love. It explains to us why Constance refuses to accept that John is capable of violent actions, despite the many filmic cues that Hitchcock provides to lead us to suspect the contrary. This musical explanation is succinctly and effectively given when themes rhetorically mimic the dialogue between John and Constance following one of his disoriented spells:

John: *Are you afraid of me?* (madness theme)
Constance: *No* (love theme).

In addition to its own prominent use in the film, the love theme enters into close association with subsidiary themes. Consider first the theme of pleading shown in Figure 2.4. This latter theme is first heard when Constance begs Dr Alex Brulov not to report John to the authorities, but instead to help her uncover the cause of John's psychosis: true to the belief of psychoanalysis, she is convinced it lies in a repressed childhood memory. In this scene she is, of course, pleading not only for John, but also for herself. For Alex, 'Women make the best psychoanalysts, until they fall in love. Then they make the best patients'. In order to get Alex to go along with what she believes to be the best treatment for John, therefore, she must play up to his expectations, she must adapt her strategy. As the pleading theme mingles with the love theme, she assumes a somewhat pathetic position on the carpet at the feet of his chair. The pleading theme is gentle, almost childlike, as Alex, having remarked that 'the mind of a woman in love is operating on the lowest level of the intellect', patronisingly concedes to her pleas 'if she will make the coffee'.

The pleading theme features strongly in one other scene, namely, after the body of Dr Edwardes is discovered and John is arrested for murder. The use of this theme accompanies a sequence of close-ups of Constance's face wherein she is seen to mouth her protest, although the camera shows us neither to whom it is directed nor how her protest is received. She is effectively silenced by a patriarchal establishment that sees her not as Dr Constance Petersen, psychoanalyst, but as the accomplice of a deranged killer. Throughout, a dramatically scored and transformed pleading theme emphasises the urgency of her dilemma. As the shadows on the wall reveal John being led away to prison, the camera fades to a scene in which she has returned to the clinic to take

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[24] *Although it is heard earlier in the musical Overture that precedes the start of the film, at this point it has yet to establish a referential connection as filmic signifier. In any case, as already indicated, the Overture should not be seen as a part of the film score proper.*

up her work. The pleading theme follows her there, and in so doing its narrativising role is particularly striking. The full orchestral setting of the theme is gradually thinned, until all that is left is a lonely solo violin. From the moment of John's arrest until this moment, Constance is made to feel increasingly powerless and alone. Alex encourages her to accept her lonely fate, but even as he does so, the love theme interjects, and she responds by saying that she will never give up.

The love theme also enters into a close association with the madness theme (Figure 2.3), a theme that is introduced when John experiences his first disoriented spell. Each time these spells return, the theme also recurs. In addition, it enters the drama at various other moments to remind us of his psychotic state. Along with the prevalence of the tritone idea, previously discussed, the music of this theme effectively depicts a sense of John's mental instability through Rosza's clever use of a little-known and very eerie-sounding musical instrument called the theremin[25]. The close thematic-motivic as well as dramatic connection between the madness theme and the love theme needs some further explanation. This association is not a mere matter of a wish on the part of the composer to maintain a musically organic, motivic coherence. Rather, it points to a narrative association that addresses the ideological agenda of the film, an association which, at the surface of the drama, is perhaps not that immediately apparent[26].

In keeping with the film's thematisation of psychoanalysis, one might say that, essentially, this is a story about the opening up of the closed unconscious, symbolically depicted in the film by an emphasis, at significant dramatic moments, on the opening or closing of doors. It is about a conflict between the language of the Other (the Symbolic, the Law of the Father) and the 'language' of the (m)other (the repressed, the unspeakable, the unconscious). It is about a search for *suture*, for a 'stitching-up' of these two languages, in search of the ego-ideal. The discourse of the film is thus a gendered one, perhaps inevitably so given its Freudian foregrounding. Constance, of course, becomes the protagonist for the language of the (m)other. She represents what Freud called 'the dark continent of female sexuality'. Upon entering the Oedipal phase, says Freud, the girl's ensuing crisis is somewhat different to that of the boy's. Hers is not a mere matter of recognising the castration of the mother and subsequently identifying with the father as possessor of the phallus. Instead:

> She is faced by three options: either to give up on sexuality altogether because she cannot compete, or to seek to acquire the phallus herself, or to take her father as love object (Lapsley & Westlake, 1988: 74).

For Lacan the situation is further compounded by recognising that the very entry into the Symbolic order – into the realm of language – is conditional upon acceptance of the 'Law of the Father'. Women's 'exclusion' from language thus has to do with their difficulty in occupying a *je* position. They become an *object in* language (society) at the very moment that they attempt to become a *subject through* language (society). We should not be too hasty in accusing Lacan of chauvinism here, though. Lacan does not endorse the disadvantage of women in the Symbolic order; in fact,

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[25] *See Prendergast 1992: 69-70 for more on Rosza's experimentation with the theremin, as well as on its subsequent use in film music.*

[26] *Marian Keane, for example, suggests that John's madness stands in opposition to Constance and her love for him. See footnote 15 for reference to Keane's commentary on this film.*

quite the opposite. What he does do is to expose (and therefore to lay open to criticism) the complicity of language in a patriarchal social order that places women at a disadvantage. Thus 'there is nothing missing in the real. It is not a question of women being denied access to the symbolic, of being deprived of speech, but of a lack arising from the symbolic itself, of which they are a part' (Lapsley & Westlake, 1988: 75).

So, what has this to do with Constance? When we meet Constance at the start of the film she is smack-bang in the middle of the Oedipal phase. In fact, as the narrative unfolds, it becomes apparent that what she took upon herself in order to get there was not only one, but all three of Freud's options.

- In the opening scene of the film she is clearly depicted as having 'given up on sexuality', the first of the three options. She is therefore presented to us as an almost androgynous character, starkly contrasted with the hysterical femininity of her patient, Mary Carmichael. Constance is quite indifferent to the advances of her male suitor, whereas Mary loves and hates men all at the same time. But what Constance gains in return for the sacrifice of her sexuality, is power. Constance is the one who is sane, Mary is not. Constance is the competent analyst, and Mary the dysfunctional patient.
- Very soon thereafter we see Constance take matters into her own hands, we see her defy the social order, and announce to John that from now on 'I am going to do what I want'. From this point onwards she becomes the author of the narrative, the possessor of the film's 'pen/phallus'. In so doing she has taken up Freud's second option. We see this even in her newly-found femininity in relation to John, for she is the one who largely dictates the conditions of that relationship[27].
- Later in the film, when we are given a glimpse of the fact that Constance's most intimate relationship with a member of the opposite sex (prior to meeting John) has been with her 'father figure' Alex, it is clear that she has also occupied the position of Freud's third option all along. Of course in the scenes we are given to witness, this intimacy is increasingly challenged by John's intervention in their lives. John has now supplanted Alex as the 'love object', hence the underlying animosity between the two men.

What Constance is faced with in this film is a challenge to practice what she preaches to her patients: to open up her repressed unconscious, and – in her case – to reverse the Oedipal position in which she finds herself. This requires her to oppose the phallocentric discourse of the film (be it that of her male colleagues, of Alex, of the police, of the flirt in the hotel lobby, etc.), in effect thus to extricate herself from her own complicity in the language of the Other (Father) and to embrace instead the 'language' of the (m)other. The problem of course, is that language per se **is** the language of the Other (Father). How is the film to express this seemingly hopeless impasse?

This is where music comes in. If the unconscious, the feminine, is excluded from language, then music is made to speak for it. Throughout the film, therefore, those scenes dominated by the (male) discourse of the established order are presented without music. As soon as the film begins to

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[27] *Marian Keane succinctly remarks on Constance's phallic position throughout the film, not only in relation to John, but to all the male characters with whom she interacts: 'None of the men in the film are her equal. All are beneath her. All of them feel it, and announce it to her as a criticism of her character, demeanour and femininity'. See footnote 15 for reference to Keane's commentary on this film.*

present the (feminine) discourse of the unconscious[28], when words no longer suffice, it does so most effectively when music takes over. This male (non-music) versus female (music) dialectic is strictly maintained throughout the film, until the moment of synthesis and suture at the end, when Dr Murchison - the 'proprietor' of John's dream, the true murderer who has been posing all along as a paragon of psychoanalytic propriety and patriarchal order - realises that Constance has found him out. Accompanied by a dramatic orchestral *tutti*, he turns on himself the gun he has been pointing at her (a phallic symbol if ever there was one), a gesture of impotence, and commits suicide.

John is the one exception to the 'male vs. female / non-music vs. music' dialectic of the film. But this is because his amnesia exonerates him from any complicity in its gendered discourse. Even though he is a man, he cannot be held accountable for a social order which excludes women, because, by virtue of his amnesia and his psychosis, he is himself excluded from this order. Socially impotent and trapped in a pre-Oedipal or preconscious state, the only identity or subjectivity that is truly his exists in fragmented dreams, deeply locked in his unconscious. This places him alongside Constance in the feminine discourse of the film. And this is also why the madness theme and the love theme are motivically so closely related. Together they speak for the unspeakable. Love and madness, after all, have a great deal in common.

3.   HOW MUSIC RELATES TO THE VECTOR OF DRIVE

If, as in the case of Hitchcock's *Spellbound*, we are able to equate music with the feminine discourse of the unconscious, a discourse that in some respects opposes the Symbolic language of the Other (Father), then one important point about music in film in the context of Lacan's *graphe complet* is the extent to which it is music, more so perhaps than most other types of cinematic signifier, which addresses not only filmic characters but also the individual spectator as barred subject ($). In so doing, furthermore, it steers the discourse of the spectator as subject away from the vector of speech and towards the vector of drive (points 5 through 9 in Figure 1, and the left-hand column of Figure 3), thus facilitating the very repositioning from 'sameness' to 'difference' upon which recent scholarly contributions in this field insist[29]. We may examine this assertion by looking at two points, both of which derive from the nature of musical signification itself. The first

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[28] *In this article, the language of the unconscious is understood as a feminine discourse, contrasting with the male discourse of the Symbolic order. In a broader context, however, there is much more to the notion of the feminine than only this. Tania Modleski, for example, states that 'not only is it possible to argue that feminist consciousness is the mirror of patriarchal consciousness, but one might argue as well that the patriarchal un*conscious *lies in femininity (which is not, however, to equate femininity with the unconscious)' (Modleski, 2005:4). Furthermore, there is an additional sense in which the language of the unconscious may in fact be thought of in terms that appear to be quite the opposite of the above. In his later works, Lacan increasingly refers to the unconscious as being structured as 'the language of the [big] Other', that is, of patriarchal society. However, what Lacan means to convey here is that the mores imposed by society largely determine the process of repression into the unconscious, thus the unconscious becomes structured by the Other. In this regard, see Olivier, 2005b: 10-15; also Homer, 2005: 70-71.*

[29] *Lapsley and Westlake distinguish the older scholars of psychoanalytic film theory (Jean-Louis Baudry, Christian Metz and Laura Mulvey) from more recent contributions in the field on the basis that 'in the first, structuralist phase ... the emphasis was on the constitution of the ego in the mirror stage ... In the second, post-structuralist phase ... the emphasis was on desire and fantasy ... Another way of distinguishing the two phases would be to say that the first was concerned with sameness and the second with difference.' The need to accommodate the notion of 'difference' arises from 'the fact that different cinema goers react differently to the same film' (Lapsley & Westlake, 1988: 77; 90).*

of these has to do with the extent to which music draws the spectator into the emotional world of the film, and then, more pertinently, draws the events of the film into the emotional world of the spectator. The second point, which is related to the first, revisits music in relation to the Lacanian Real, this time as locus of the Sublime.

Let us return for a moment to that scene in *Spellbound* where Constance and John first meet. This is a moment when the unfolding of the narrative is suspended. Like the 'jubilant assumption' associated with the mirror image, the moment of sheer *jouissance* that this sequence attempts to capture is not a moment which belongs to the Symbolic order of language. At the level of the Imaginary, their respective *moi* identities are instantaneously transformed (although for John, who lacks any clear sense of his own identity, at any level whatsoever, the matter may be somewhat more complex than that). Here, I have argued, it is music that speaks for Constance and John[30].

But how, one may well ask, does music actually speak? How do we know *what* music is saying? The pursuit of a semiotics of music, as Kofi Agawu reminds us, is in fact not one wherein we can ever attempt to answer to what music is saying, but rather only to *how* music becomes meaningful (Agawu, 1991: 5). We have seen that one of these ways, one of these *hows*, certainly, is in the extroversive or referential sense. Music can accumulate referential significance within particular contexts, as was demonstrated previously with regard to the symbolic signifying chain of this film. But, in addition to this, there is the aesthetic principle: there is an introversive, non-referential dimension to musical signification and its pleasure principle which exists in some respects as an *autonomous* signifying world, even if it does impact upon, or may be affected by, the referential or extroversive dimension. In other words, extraneous factors notwithstanding, there is simultaneously a dimension where each of us may have what we might call a 'just-me-and-the-music experience'. It is in this sense that Gorbman describes music as 'a non-representational discourse' (1987: 60)[31], or that we might describe it in Barthesian terms as 'a signifier without signified' (Barthes 1977:61). In this dimension of musical signification, music of itself it can do little more than 'reflect the morphology of feeling' (Susanne K. Langer in Brown, 1994: 26)[32], or function as 'quasi-natural representation' (Addis, 1999: 76).

As Addis goes on to argue, however, music as 'quasi-natural representation', the uncertainty of its meaning notwithstanding, is nevertheless a 'lawful representation'. This lawfulness derives from the isomorphic connection between music and certain 'states of mind'.

> ... fundamental connections involved in the representation *to* humans *of* certain states of consciousness *by* music is *lawful*. That is the very notion of a quasi-natural sign, for reference to the natures of the entities involved – sounds and minds, the latter as both

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[30] *The reader can no doubt name any number of other films wherein such moments of jouissance are articulated primarily through music.*

[31] *In so saying Gorbman is highlighting the arbitrary nature of referential musical signification, although she does not mean to deny that, as a form of introversive rather than extroversive semiosis – that is, as what she calls a 'purely musical signifier' (Gorbman, 1987: 12-13) - autonomous musical meaning is derived from a rich and highly complex network of self-representational or self-referential signifiers.*

[32] *Quoted in Brown, 1994:26 from S.K. Langer:* Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art *(Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1957:209).*

that which is represented and that to which the representation takes place – is ultimately to be understood by way of capacities to enter into certain lawful connections. Does a connection which is such that, by certain laws of nature, certain sounds and complexes of sounds considered in all their qualities present certain states of mind to humans who listen to those sounds presuppose some kind of isomorphism between those sounds and those states of mind? It seems clear to me that it does ... But ... isomorphism is only the derivative notion, lawful connection the fundamental (Addis, 1999:76).

He then expounds on the nature of music as quasi-natural representation and its place within a triadic 'representing relation':

Quasi-natural representations ... are such that their having the representative function they do have depends on the natures of all three terms of the representing relation: in this case music, certain states of consciousness, and human nature as characterized by the structure and composition of the human brain. Music is, therefore, usefully conceived as being "between" language and thought in its intentionality. On the one hand, while language is purely conventional in many of its aspects, and consciousness is natural in its intentionality, music like language requires a "third" in order for the representation to take place; on the other hand, music achieves this affect largely independent of human choice and will, as does consciousness itself. In another sense, however, music as it were stands "outside" both language and thought and nearer dreams and the symbols of ritual and religion in that, like them, we are not ordinarily consciously aware of what is being presented to us even though we are profoundly affected by the fact of the symbolism (Addis, 1999: 76-77).

If for Addis musical pleasure is likened to a state of mind wherein 'we are not ordinarily aware of what is being presented to us even though we are profoundly affected by the fact', this is what psychoanalytic scholars have likened to the 'auditory space', the 'first psychic space', also called the 'sonorous envelope' or the 'oceanic feeling', wherein the infant is bathed in the womb of its mother before its birth[33]. The connection between the incoherent sounds it can perceive from within the womb (incoherent in so far as it has yet to learn their 'meaning') on the one hand, and the pleasure it derives from the safety of the womb and oneness with its mother on the other, may thus be likened to the 'incoherence' or 'quasi-real' nature of the musical signifier and its ability to recreate the oceanic feeling, which is a pleasurable[34] experience in so far as, throughout its life, the subject never loses the desire to be one with its mother, to be, as it were, enveloped by the voice of its mother[35]. Furthermore, its likeness to the apparent incoherence of dreams, as Addis has also remarked, would suggest again that it be seen in some respects as a 'language of the unconscious'. Contrary to orthodox Lacanian interpretations, therefore, it is clear that there is an auditory Imaginary order (even an auditory preconscious and unconscious) which precedes the visual Imaginary associated with the mirror phase, and which is therefore in a sense more fundamental to subjectivity.

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[33] *See again footnote 2 for reference to various contributions to this topic.*

[34] *This is assuming of course that the subject has positive associations with its mother. See Schwarz, 1993: 49 for a discussion of the possibility that this may not be so in the case, for example, of pathological development that is the result of severe neglect, and where in fact we encounter 'the possibility for the sonorous envelope to be experienced negatively - as a structure of terror and entrapment'.*

[35] *Herein lies the rationale that music is the quintessential feminine discourse.*

However, what exactly constitutes the 'oceanic feeling', what exactly these 'states of mind' may be or how any given music may elicit them, cannot ever be fully apprehended or determined[36]. Although there may always be some measure of social or cultural consensus in this regard[37], ultimately such isomorphisms remain unique to each individual. Seen in this light, music is probably a most extreme example – quasi or otherwise – of what Lacan meant when he talked about the ability of the subject not only to be constituted by language (and here I include music as a language, or at least a system of signification comparable to language)[38] but also to have the ability to constitute language, thus to create and *change* meaning. He thus reworked Saussure's semiotics to capture what he believed was an eternal slippage of meaning, a slippage which can only be momentarily arrested when, at any given moment, the subject assigns to a given sound or signifier a particular signified as its meaning (Lacan, 1977:303)[39].

It is precisely this visceral nature of musical signification – its functioning as 'quasi-natural representation' - that is the source of its important contribution in film, a contribution which stands in a somewhat ambivalent relationship towards the subject's vector of speech on the one hand, and its vector of drive on the other. In fact, this ambivalence towards the subject is connected to a similarly ambivalent position music also assumes towards the filmic narrative. Whilst other cinematic signifiers are mostly located within the diegesis of the film (that is, they happen, or at least appear to happen, onscreen)[40], film music is predominantly nondiegetic (that is, it does not 'happen' onscreen)[41]. Like the spectator, thus, music appears to be *on the outside looking in*. By this sleight of hand it becomes the spectator's ally, as it were, and, in so doing, is able to fulfil two functions: At first it must surrender to the greater good of the narrative, as it functions to mediate between the spectator and the screen. It must momentarily 'disappear' in order to draw the spectator in, to 'stitch up' or *suture* the distance between the spectator and the screen, and to ultimately stitch the spectator into the narrative and promote the film's vector of speech. In this regard Gorbman notes of film music that

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[36] *Although there have been several attempts to do so. Meyer (1956) is probably one of the best-known examples of such an attempt to define musical meaning by linking specific structural tonal procedures with specific human mental responses.*

[37] *We know of the existence of this type of consensus as far back as the history or theory of music has been recorded, and we can safely assume that it existed before then, as of course it does to this day. An extreme example would be the Affektenlehre and associated Figurenlehre of the Baroque.*

[38] *Although, admittedly, Lacan himself did not have anything beyond language itself in mind when he considered the nature of signification in this context.*

[39] *Lacan is not alone in recognising the eternal slippage of meaning. It is characteristic of the notion of plurality which underlies much post-structuralist thinking. In Barthes' notion of 'text', and especially in Derrida's notion of* differance*, for example, such slippage is taken to greater extremes.*

[40] *Of course there may be exceptions, such as the voice of a narrator who is not part of the diegesis.*

[41] *Again, this is not necessarily always the case. There are many instances where music participates in the diegesis (when musicians are seen or heard to perform in the film, or when someone turns on a radio, etc.). Nevertheless, film music is predominantly encountered as nondiegetic signifier.*

> ... if it is in the background it works on the spectator-subject most effectively, fusing subject to film body ... In practical terms this means a deeper sleep, a lowered threshold of belief, a greater predisposition for the subject to accept the film's pseudo-perceptions as his/her own ... (Gorbman, 1987: 64).

Music is able to fulfil this role within the Symbolic order of the film only in so far as, in the first instance, it can recreate the oceanic feeling or 'deeper sleep', and, in the second instance, the visceral nature of its signification makes it ripe for semantic manipulation; that is, once the deeper sleep has been achieved, it then proceeds to allow the film's meaning to be imposed upon it.

But this is not all music does. The significant moments of *jouissance* in the film are its cue to 'change gear', as it were, and intrude upon the narrative in a far more noticeable way (consider again the 'intrusion' of the cited *jouissance* scene from *Spellbound*). As a result, two things happen. Firstly, music's respective relationships with the spectator and the narrative, described above, get switched. If at first it has moved from the outside in (from the spectator and the nondiegesis towards the narrative), now it turns and moves from the inside out (that is, from the narrative back towards the spectator). Secondly, the *joissance* moment is also the moment when the spectator switches subjective positions, abandoning the film's vector of speech in favour of his/her own vector of drive. In his 'mood-cue approach' to the understanding of emotion in film, Greg Smith would describe this kind of moment, not in psychoanalytic terms, but as an 'emotional marker' or 'emotional cue', one that is 'densely informative' rather than 'sparse', encouraging the spectator to move from a position of merely 'feeling *for*' an onscreen character, to one of 'feeling *with*' that character (Smith, 2003: 41-64). And these moments are brought about, if not exclusively so[42], then at least through the significant agency of music. The extent to which the music may be seen to have changed 'direction', then, is precisely dependent upon the extent to which the spectator has succeeded in changing from a state of 'feeling *for*' to one of 'feeling *with*'. What this implies is that the emotional response is no longer confined to the way the filmic character feels, but, through mediation of the music, may become something 'felt' by the spectator. By no means are these 'feelings' necessarily identical however. Music mediates this transferral, yet again, by virtue of the visceral nature of its signification, and therefore allows for the creation of individual 'states of mind', so that meaning is no longer located in the narrative, but – for that moment at least - it exists as meaning in the private world of the individual alone.

The above two types of filmic/musical strategies will tend to alternate through the course of the film; now giving preference to the one, then to the other; now placing the subject in the vector of speech; then urging a return to the vector of drive; now giving rise to 'sameness', then to 'difference'.

If we follow the notion of musical 'difference' somewhat further than we have thus far, however, then, before we may conclude, we must return to address two related points this article has made, but has yet to clarify in terms of the Lacanian position it takes.

Firstly, in my explanation of the process of musical cognition through the vector of speech, I argued that the film music scholar, in seeking coherence between film and music at the level of the Imaginary, would begin his/her efforts by concentrating on those parts of the musical score that support such a perception of coherence, whilst at the same time '*suppressing those parts that do*

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[42] *Music does nor act alone to articulate the* jouissance *moment in* Spellbound, *to which this discussion refers. Other emotional markers in this particular moment include the suspension of dialogue and the camera's exclusive focus on close-up views of the enraptured expressions on the faces of Constance and John.*

not'. One very significant scene in *Spellbound* is an example of just that: namely, the scene that depicts Constance and John rushing down the snow-covered slopes of a mountain-resort on skis in one last and desperate attempt to 'unlock' his unconscious. This scene is an important dramatic and emotional climax, bringing together our worst fears about John's sanity (or lack thereof) and the danger in which Constance has placed herself. The music that accompanies it is similarly dramatic and climactic, and thus highly effective. If it has not been discussed thus far, it is because this music bears little or no similarity to the dense thematic-motivic connections maintained elsewhere throughout the film, and therefore cannot be properly understood from the point of the Imaginary and Symbolic orders on which my engagement with this film and its music has thus far mostly focussed. In the discussion which follows, I shall consider this scene from the perspective of the Real.

Secondly, it has been suggested that isomorphic relations between musical experiences and 'states of mind' produce 'feelings' as 'quasi-real representations', but that such meaning cannot ever be fully comprehended or determined. Is it enough to say this much about the matter and simply leave it at that, or can Lacan's notion of the Real provide greater clarity?

The first of the above two instances of musical 'difference' is a difference of meaning which appears to arise from (or, more properly, as a result of its incongruity with) the signifying chain of the narrative (the vector of speech), whereas the second is a musical difference that is the result of the idiosyncratic nature of the *moi* identity of each spectator (the vector of drive). They are nevertheless remarkably similar in that they both, in their own way, function as instances of the Sublime. In this sense, in fact, they both may be said to reside in the order of the Lacanian Real, rather than in that of either the Imaginary or the Symbolic[43]. For just as Lacan's Real order reminds us that our 'imaginary and symbolic constructions take place in a world which exceeds' us (Bowie, 1987: 116), not by 'repression' (which is the domain of the unconscious), but by 'foreclosure' or 'disaffirmation' (Hayward, 2000: 297), so, Kirwan explains, may we understand the origins of the notion of the Sublime:

> If the enthusiasm of the sublime could not, as enthusiasm, be called "reasonable", then, implicitly confined as it was within the domain of aesthetic pleasure, neither could it be termed "unreasonable", It was a matter of the non-rational, not the irrational (Kirwan, 2005: 35).

The Sublime is a term which denotes, on the one hand, the often paradoxical nature of things to which human beings feel irresistibly drawn, and, on the other, the extent to which they are simply not able to fully account in rational terms for their attraction. Hence Kirwan describes the host of seventeenth-century writers, where this notion first took root in Western thinking, using definitions as varied as 'passion', 'elevation', 'enthusiasm', 'astonishment', 'ecstasy', 'delightful horror', 'indescribable awe', etc. (Kirwan, 2005: 3). Although the term was first used to denote nature in all of its 'delightful horrors' (storms, mountains, earthquakes, etc.), it very soon came to be applied to a much wider spectrum of human experiences, such as the secrets of science and mathematics, the characters of exceptional people, and also to the mysteries of the arts.

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[43] *My singling out of these two instances of the Sublime as being located within the Lacanian Real is in no way intended to present a full picture of what is at stake in either the Real or the Sublime. They are singled out in this instance only because they are examples of these concepts that feature strongly in the case of this particular film. For a fuller account of the various dimensions of the Real, see Olivier, 2005b: 13-17, and for that of the Sublime, see Kirwan, 2005.*

If there is one distinguishing trait in the oeuvre of Hitchcock, then it is precisely his obsession with the 'delightful horrors' of the Sublime, of which *Spellbound's* mountain scene is a typical example. In this scene Hitchcock confronts us with nature (human and otherwise) that is at the same time both frightening and fascinating: we are simultaneously appalled and enthralled by power that is beyond our control. Musically speaking, the dramatic scoring and climactic harmonies of the mountain scene create a 'densely informative', 'feeling with' moment, at once akin to the *jouissance* moment (since here music is also foregrounded in the virtual absence of dialogue), but also infinitely more than that. Here the complexity of its paradoxical mood cues (the many conflicting dramatic undercurrents and the life-threatening danger posed by the mountain itself) transcends the Imaginary moment of *jouissance* and coherence, even as its absence of thematic-motivic connection with the signifying chain of the narrative transcends the Symbolic.

On the other hand, that level at which musical signification is visceral, those 'quasi-real representations' whose meaning can neither be fully comprehended nor determined, but which are nevertheless defended as 'lawful' (Addis, 1999:76), and which impose themselves on us most noticeably in the musical 'feeling *with*' moments of the film, are accounted for by Kant when he states that:

> ... even the illusion [-] wherein the subjective element of ... [an] ... intellectual determination of the will is held to be sensuous and an effect of a particular sensuous feeling (an "intellectual feeling" being self-contradictory) [-] partakes of this sublimity (Kant in Kirwan, 2005: 60)[44].

Thus music, in the non-referential, purely aesthetic sense that is intended in pointing to its 'feeling *with*' moments, is not a non-meaning as much as it is a meaningful 'illusion' – a sublime paradox - which, in psychoanalytic terms, resides in the Real. At this level music escapes the Imaginary and the Symbolic; as Bowie has said, 'the real may be structured – "created" even' (hence Addis' suggested structure in isomorphisms) - but in the end 'it cannot be named', remaining instead 'an indefinitely receding goal' that is 'the vanishing point of the symbolic and imaginary alike' (Bowie, 1987: 116).

4. CONCLUSION

Given all that has been noted in respect of music here, I venture to suggest that we may understand music's role in film (as indeed in many of its other contexts) not only as effective narrativising agent in the vector of speech, but, ultimately, within the vector of drive, as standing for the sign ◊ at point 9 of the *graphe complet* as shown in Figure 1, where it places itself midway between the barred subject ($) on the one hand, and unsatisfiable desire (d) on the other, and where it functions as the medium for and mirror of fantasy, in order to offer compensation for the absence of *l'objet petit a*.

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44 *Quoted in Kirwan from Emmanuel Kant:* Critique of Practical Reason:*121 (1788. Transl: L.W. Beck, (Stet) Indianapolis, 1956.)*

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