



Illusion, musicality, and evanescence

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Illusion, transference, countertransference

I explore some similarities between experiences of music and of analytic sessions. I focus on qualities of evanescence, the way that music – in contrast to many other arts – in one perspective only lasts as long as it is actually being played. Then it's over. The analyst-patient discussion in a session is similar. Yet the psychic reverberations of some transient, fugitive moments may last a lifetime. And even when no verbally profound understanding is occurring, nevertheless the patient-analyst encounter is emotionally significant. I illustrate this with a clinical example. I explore transference as illusion, and the relationship between truth and illusion in terms of Bion's O. I end with thoughts about the paradoxical value of the illusoriness of aesthetics and nature as considered by Freud in his short paper "On Transience" (1916), and the grin of Lewis Carol's Cheshire Cat, left hanging in the air.

Musicians might often look with envy upon the aesthetic works of many of the other arts, because they are so solid, so enduring. Architects design buildings, houses, even castles. Sculptures tend to be here to stay, and are essentially tangible. Paintings: you go to an exhibition, and you don't only have your first reaction, whatever it may be; you can stay with the painting. You can go up close, examine it, then walk away and look on it from afar; you can go away and look at other paintings and then come back to it. There is a quality of "is-ness" about it, an existential quality: it is. You can then carry it around in your mind, as a perfectly conscious memory, or it can surprise you when it suddenly re-emerges, in response to some psychological trigger, or even in comparison with another visual clue. It's a joy to revisit paintings over many years. You have different responses, you remember previous ones, you compare and contrast different responses separated by time. But the painting itself is a solid object; it's there, you can see it, it doesn't change – which can be paradoxical, if the depiction is of some fleeting moment, a particular instance caught in time, perhaps with extraordinary delicacy, yet the painting itself can endure for a very long period of time. Think of the amazingly immediate, lifelike drawings of horses from tens of thousands of years ago on the walls of caves ...

By contrast, you go to a concert, you hear some music, and – it's gone! No sooner is the sound produced than it has stopped. Sometimes you can even hear it evaporating, if the music is being made in a sufficiently resonant building. You hear the echo, you hear the

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music receding, until, eventually, silence. And this is the case whatever the music, whether it's popular street music, religious music, bells from mediaeval churches or bells in Javanese or Balinese gamelan music, chamber music whether Schubert in the Wigmore Hall or a sitar recital in Bangalore. It's also the case whether the musical piece is extremely short – just a few seconds long – or Wagner's Ring cycle. It's the same if the music is banal, or witty, or serious, even tragic. Bach's St Matthew Passion, an iconic masterpiece of Western classical music of utmost and tragic seriousness, of duration about three hours, is over as soon as it's over. Each movement, each recitative, aria and chorale is over at the end of each movement: indeed, every single note, every utterance by voice or musical instrument is over as soon as it's over. You could say it's hardly begun, when it's over.

There could be a subtle difference between “it's gone” and “it's over.” The fear that the music has quite gone, lost forever, oscillates with a sense that it's suddenly over, which leaves room for the possibility that something might be remembered. The feeling is ambiguous: it can tilt optimistically or pessimistically, waywardly, out of one's control.

Yet the psychic resonance of each moment, of each movement, or of the St Matthew Passion as a whole, can be intense and immense. A child might hear this work, say, when they are 11 years old, for the first time. They might never hear it again, but they never forget it. The impression it makes could be deep, and extremely long-lasting.

The music, then, seems to have its own internal life. It's as if it becomes some kind of internal object, radiating a kind of energy. You feel in a relationship with it. If you've been profoundly moved by the St Matthew Passion, you may well feel that you have been enlarged as a person, and in particular that your feeling for the various emotions of grief, betrayal, mourning, resentment, hope, have been stirred up, deepened, and strengthened. I can say this because this piece has words attached; we know what the story is. But something similar happens with pieces with no words. Music to which one has a strong response – including music that one thoroughly dislikes – has a powerful emotional impact, a developing and enduring one. This, after all, is why people listen over and over again to music – all sorts of music, not just Bach masterpieces.

From the point of view of my argument, recordings make things more complicated, in our era. One of the reasons why we like to possess recordings, and why composers and performers such as me like to make them, could be because of the ephemeral nature of music-making. Precisely in response to the anxiety caused by the short-lived experience and the nature of music itself, we respond defensively by making a solid object, an LP or a CD, or music stored on your phone, say, in which we can almost convince ourselves we can imprison a piece, so it can't get away. But I belong to the group of music-lovers who think that, much as we enjoy listening to recordings, it's just not the same as listening to a live concert. One of the prime features of a live concert is that you have to be there, you have to be awake, your ears open, because if you don't really hear and catch that musical sound now, while it is happening, it's too late, the moment has passed, you've lost the opportunity. How many times in a concert are you distracted by something or other: suddenly you realise that your mind has been elsewhere, and there's nothing you can do about it, you've irrevocably lost that segment of music-making.

So there is something highly illusory about music. It's difficult to know what music actually is, its essential nature. It is noise, it is communication. It's also got something very natural about it, like birdsong, but it is also always an expression of emotion. Even

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expressionless music, say a piece that sets out to express a feeling of being drained of emotion, or of being non-emotional, is, in a paradox, highly emotional. But its expression happens, then evaporates, fast. It's illusory. You can't grasp it, you can't contain it, you can't really put it in a box, not even in a CD. It's like smoke, or perhaps it's even less substantial.

It's this strange, illusory, evanescent quality of music which, even as from one point of view I complain about it, is part of its core nature and character. The evanescence of music is one of those remarkable facts that most of the time one doesn't think about, or even recognise. Something that is so powerful, and about which one can think and discuss, doesn't feel as though it is ephemeral. Yet it is, and I think it's that that is disturbing.

Another defence against its evanescent quality is in printing. In the West, since the invention of printing, we have had printed music, which gives a sense of the existence of music in a more solid, printed form. But that is only half-true, or even less. The music doesn't truly exist until it is "musicked," until it is sung or played or performed.

Words have something of this fugitive quality in common, particularly words connected to theatre, and poetry. Very often, at least in the theatre, there is a definite theme, a plot, a narrative. As with the example of the St Matthew Passion, which also shares a plot, you can grab onto the story and the related emotions, and you can point, therefore, to a definite theme. But is that true, on a deeper level? If you tune into a level below the surface meaning of these particular words and attend to their sonorities, to the music behind the words, and to what music itself means to us, we may reach a more dangerous, unfettered area – of unconscious phantasy and dreams. Many far less logical thoughts and feelings may be triggered by hearing these transient musical sounds of words, or of music itself. We may have reactions that we hardly notice, they speed by so fast, or they may seem so crazy that we disregard them as we concentrate on what we take to be the main points.

Well, it's high time we came to psychoanalysis. But, as is probably obvious, we've been here all along. The music and words of psychoanalysis, particularly the music of clinical psychoanalysis – what happens in actual sessions – is very similar to all that I have been describing. It's words, it's music, it's not written down, not recorded, it's a one-off, transient, evanescent. Music and words – at least the spoken, improvisatory words of a psychoanalytic session – are located in the dimension of time, unlike many of the other arts, and possibly even the printed word, which are located in the dimension of space. The psychoanalytic session itself is an object, which is quite impossible to grasp afterwards. We can do our best, but we always know that any account will be in so many ways quite different from the utterly unique and unrepeatable event of the session itself. And within the session, the same is true for segments. We never know what is going to happen in a session, hence approaching it with some dread and trepidation, as Bion said (Bion 1974, 13). But a session will often fall into segments; that's often how we try to remember it afterwards if we have to present a session: there will have been themes that dominate parts of the session, perhaps we feel it's had three themes, or even, in musical terms, three movements. Three main emotional arcs, perhaps with particular sound qualities, also from the analyst – different rhythms, different tempi. Then, within those segments, the particular musical phrases emanating from analyst or patient – the silent pauses – and within those phrases, each single utterance, including

non-verbal ones – breathing, or the odd grunt or snuffle or clearing of throats ... and sometimes, sighs – always so musically expressive (Grier 2019, 2021).

All these musical components pass, and never repeat. You could say that each session is ineffable. Is this in the area of Bion's O? This musical intercourse between patient and analyst is a heightened example of what happens to any couple; that the particularity of the relationship is made up of any number of highly significant, cathected moments – cathected sometimes positively, sometimes negatively – many of which will pass the couple by in terms of their conscious awareness. It's only, for example, if an analyst wishes to write up a session, that they will probably find themselves frustrated and tantalised by the sense that, however close they come, their writing doesn't quite evoke the experience well enough. Indeed, often what we manage is to write up a story, a particular version of a session, which is highly affected by how one is feeling when writing it, which happens after the session, and therefore in a different time-zone. There's also one's motive for writing, for whom one is writing, and so on. Paradoxically, I sometimes think that if I can let go of trying to write a historically and factually accurate memory of the session, but allow myself to write an account of it, a version of it, I am more likely to attain something which might at least resonate with my memory of the session, than if I try to be too exact.

It's also an important point that the different subjectivities of analyst and patient mean that the non-verbal, musical dimensions and experiences of sessions are not going to be the same for each participant. It would be easy to make the assumption that there is the one experience, in which they both participate, and at some overarching level, that may be true. Yet more immediate is the contrasting experience of patient and analyst, the musical dimension crucially expressing and elucidating this difference. Often enough, there may be a superficially logically coherent discussion of, say, a significant emotional event, yet for one party, possibly the analyst, it may be a relief at last to be engaging with something repetitive that has eluded focused attention, whilst for the patient the very act of focusing attention on this particular matter may greatly intensify anxiety. So, two different perspectives: an overarching one that contains both relief and anxiety; a second immediately subdivided into two currents, one of relief, the other of anxiety. Both relief and anxiety will express themselves in terms of different musics.

Imagination plays a huge part here. And whilst I try not to be making fictions, attempting all the time to be tethered to reality, whether the reality of facts or memory or feelings or atmosphere or images or musical sounds, I know it can't be quite "true," in the sense of objectively true. But "imagination" isn't quite right, it's too conscious. I am seeking a state of mind in which to conjure up the accuracy of feeling, a more freely associative state, allowing some slippage of factual accuracy but not too much, and hoping that some more unconscious

creativity may come into play. Dream work is involved, and yet again, not too much ... For me, the best word is illusion.

So many of the most important things in life come under this category, of things that can't quite be substantial, solid, tangible, that are ephemeral, evanescent, fugitive, not easy to remember in any detail whatsoever, yet paradoxically enduring, engaging, emotional, and, sometimes, life-changing, either in a particular moment or in being part of a chain of events which are themselves life-changing. Falling in love, or falling in hate, are examples. And certainly as analysts we are well used to listening to the St Matthew Passion in our sessions: people often come to us because of something terrible.

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They need to sing it to us, they need to get us to resonate with them, perhaps they need to get us to sing it to them whilst they are the resonating audience, in order for the deepest feelings of grief and remorse and possibly reparation to take place. I have one foot with Winnicott in that I think that illusion is crucial. I greatly like his idea of its significance in infancy, and the importance of gradual disillusion (Winnicott 1965b, 9). However, I don't think we can ever quite do without illusion, because so much of our relationships with others and with ourselves could be seen as coming under the umbrella of the illusory. Winnicott again: " ... experience is a constant trafficking in illusion" (Winnicott 1987, 43). If you lose illusion, you may become so desiccated of life and imagination that you die. Some of our patients come to us in this state, psychically near-dead, needing us to help them to learn to cathect illusion and the illusory, on the side of life. In Winnicott's words: " ... there are others who are so firmly anchored in objectively perceived reality that they are ill in the opposite direction of being out of touch with the subjective world and with the creative approach to fact" (Winnicott 1971, 66).

Much of my thinking leans on Winnicott's inspired notion of transitional objects and their necessity for health not only in children but also in adults (Winnicott 1951).

In his paper "Communicating and Not Communicating Leading to a Study of Certain Opposites," Winnicott (1965a) explores some areas close to those under study here, particularly when he writes of "silent or secret communication with subjective objects" (184) and the importance of illusion to the sense of "feeling real" (186). He even makes a reference to the "music of the spheres" (192). However, I am in fundamental disagreement with Winnicott about his notion of the core of the self being incommunicado, the central idea at the core of his paper, a notion which he simply asserts. My ideas about illusion are always in

the context of object relating. I would hold that, for example, even when composers may be working alone in their room, and writing out the musical sounds they hold within the privacy of their own minds, they are nevertheless always engaged in internal dynamic object relations, with the sounds they imagine, between the different musical elements they are conjuring up, the links and conflicts between the underlying unconscious phantasies, and so on. Winnicott mentions mystics, and I would understand mystics as working away in their internal worlds in a rather similar fashion to composers, even as, externally, they may shut themselves away from human contact. I could even imagine writing a piece of music expressing a person's feeling of wishing to protect a non-communicating, essential self, a fantasy of being completely and utterly – even blissfully – alone. However, I would expect in a psychoanalysis to find that that idea would be, for example, a defence against being in relationship with a dangerously misunderstanding object, possibly an abusive one, giving rise to an unconscious phantasy of wishing to be utterly alone – which, in my view, remains a phantasy precisely of being in a dynamic object relationship, albeit a dangerous one against which one needs to erect a defence.

But I also have one foot with Klein in that, in my view, the working through of the depressive position is normally the most important event, and an ongoing one, in any analysis; and the St Matthew Passion could be emblematic of the artistic recognition of this in Western classical music. In the consulting room, the patient needs to go through their own passion, together with the analyst in all sorts of different forms, recognising the damage they have done to their loved object, with all the intensity of grief

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arising from this, and hopefully then moving towards reparation. This will all involve real people, primarily the real persons of the analytic couple, yet so much of their relationship will take place in this area of illusion and the illusory. And here's the paradox: it really needs to take place in the illusory, if it is to be real.

I wish to try and illustrate my ideas with an account of the beginning of a session, which took place in the time of Covid, hence on the telephone. So hearing, and what I would call the music of the analytic encounter, was inevitably primary. In accordance with what I mentioned earlier, this was written up afterwards, so it is only my idea of what happened. I tried to describe a whole series of impressions. "Impressions" is another useful word, alongside "evanescent" and "illusory." Analysts are impressed, in that the patient will be projecting into them, so they are almost literally pressed inwards

by the patient's emotions. Of course, it is a two-way street ... And my descriptions of my patient's emotions are all filtered through my own psyche and my emotions, so they are certainly not pure representations of his emotions, though perhaps they are accurate creations or recreations of some of my fugitive feelings about his fugitive feelings.

I also hope that my description makes clear that I am registering and describing quite specifically musical dimensions of my patient's and my own vocal and aural relationship, i.e. I am for the most part writing non-metaphorically (Grier 2019).

Here's the account:

My patient telephones me. The sound quality of our interaction is obviously diminished and degraded in comparison with person-to-person contact. Nevertheless, from his first intake of breath I can hear that something's up: my patient's breathing is nervous and agitated, much more so than usual. Involuntarily, I tense up, stomach muscles cramped. It's early in the morning, and I immediately tell myself to relax – but that's me being professional, trying to discipline my reaction, and inevitably being defensive.

I suspect it's often like this, far more than we consciously realise; that we tune in emotionally before the first word has been spoken, even on the telephone. It's somewhat like the quality of anticipation during a conductor's upbeat at an orchestral concert, the very first upbeat before the first actual musical sound: before a note is actually played, the audience is full of anxious anticipation.

We are obviously already in the world of illusion, in that we cannot help imagining each other. This is not only because we have met in person for years before Covid: even if we were strangers, we would still be imagining each other, and that imagining would obviously be illusory. However, a more subtle version of that takes place, I think, when we do actually see our patients in person. There is still an imaginary version which each party projects into the other, taking more or less heed of the contrast and comparison with the reality in front of our eyes. And on the aural level, something similar pertains. Our listening is not just objective, it is highly subjective, on the part of both parties, so again there is that intangible, illusory quality even regarding what we perceive with our ears.

As soon as my patient talks, I find myself on edge again. I have to strain to hear as he whispers, more like a moan, "it's been a difficult week, remains difficult." In singing terms, this man normally throws his voice in the tenor register, but today he is mumbling agitatedly, the pitch is unusually low, in the bass. I am

forced to listen very carefully, my ears on stalks. He pauses, my anxiety grows, wondering when – or if – he is going to speak again.

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These moments of silence, agitated silence, are particularly intense moments of illusion, of illusory agitations.

There's a minute's silence, in which I'm listening, listening, including, incongruously, to the birds in my garden. Suddenly he says, "the birds in your garden are singing away, *they* sound happy." This utterance had a rather forced, apparently agreeable sonority. I said "you're trying to sound reasonable, but I sense you feel the opposite."

He makes a deep sound in his throat – is it a growl or a sigh? Is he melancholy? Depressed? Anxious? Angry? What is the music? Its indecipherability is part of its character. I respond with anxiety. At moments like this, when my listening is concentrated to try to ascertain the emotional quality of the voice, I may be somewhat more open, grasping for the objective, than at those moments when I feel quite sure about what I hear and don't even think about it – at those times I may be quite caught up in an illusion.

Again talking down in pitch, in the bass register, hardly articulating the words with any clarity: "terrible trouble falling and staying asleep." As though talking to himself; I'm now eavesdropping, he's apparently incommunicado, although paradoxically I feel he is absolutely communicating, as if one were at the opera house and overhearing a character projecting in an aria how wretched they feel, describing how they are turning into themselves miserably.

"Last night was bad, I did not sleep at all" – delivered in a dull monotone. Another paradox: apparently without affect, but actually conveying very intense, repressed affect. Impossible still to know which way this is going to turn – to depression, to anger?

"My symptoms have been severe." I now hear unmistakably the tones of threat, of anger, even of suppressed rage. "Yesterday for the first time I felt my heart burning – heartburn. I've spoken to my GP. She has prescribed medication. I have the medication now. I don't know whether to start taking it." As he speaks, the pitch starts slowly to rise from bass to tenor register, the tempo from slow and uncertain to faster and more constant; the dynamics *crescendo* from *pianissimo* through to *forte*; the timbre focuses and begins to become strident, and I can hear very well the unmistakable tones of blame and accusation.

Suddenly the pitch drops: and he nearly whispers, "I don't know whether to start the medication, I'm in two minds ..." And then, suddenly loud, forceful, projecting right into my ear, "I can feel the symptoms right now." There's fear and panic, and insistent, rage-filled demand, entitlement.

This was my first meeting with my patient after I had been away for a week. He feels very dependent upon his analyst and the analysis to keep him functioning relatively smoothly, to keep his mood relatively stable. But it's not always like this after a break. I am surprised, I was not expecting him to feel so insecure. I feel as though I have been immediately filled with disturbance and chaos. My mind races: what has been going on during this past week? Occasionally, my patient has acted out badly, sometimes violently, but that hasn't happened for years. Surely we have got over that, his agitation has become more contained, even in my absence. I fear for a moment that all our work has been undone, that we are back to the chaotic, frightening beginnings of the analysis. I have a lightning association to snakes and ladders and to a sudden, shocking, panicky slithering down to square one.

But my mind is not utterly taken up with these chaotic emotions. In fact, most of the time, these feelings, though strong, do not have me in their grip – though at the very start

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of the session, my own mental containment felt precarious. Most of the time my mind is split, hopefully in a benign split, so that I am recognising, decoding, articulating, recording and thinking about all these emotional shifts, very often in an almost exclusively musical way, hardly paying any attention to the meaning of the words, while in the other half of my mind I am simply reacting emotionally, with my own agitation, fear, hope and dread.

I think there is a mixture in me of being able to recollect and note down fairly precise musical notations of the sounds of my patient's voice – the pitch, duration, tempo, dynamics, which is mixed with much imagination provoked in my mind by the music of his utterances (Grier, 2021). And this gives rise to emotional illusion after illusion – not, I hope, delusion, but illusion – as I try to follow my patient on his emotional journey in this session.

My patient now sounds more collected, and for the first time says – I almost said "sings" – to me a more melodic phrase; it's longer and with more tenderness of feeling. The words are: "I also feel bad if I'm your first patient of the day, the first patient after your break, and you're being greeted with all my upset. I wish I could give you a better start."

Without the music, I might have considered those sentiments to be insincere, parodying civilised feelings, possibly even taunting me. All these would have been possible, but then they would have had their own music. But the actual music of his voice sounded tender and regretful, so I thought that he meant in a simple and direct way what he said. He had dipped into the depressive position, fearing that he was damaging his good object. I therefore responded: "You're distressed, you're in pain, and you're angry with me. It's urgent you get through to me. You need to disturb me. But then you worry you're too powerful, making me hurt makes you anxious."

I wonder how I sounded, for my part, musically? I can't help being less aware of that, since at that moment I'm doing my own speaking and singing. But I may have been in tune with the way that he had just spoken. My patient may have felt that he had found a receptive audience in me, that I was not now absent psychologically, as I had materially been absent the week before; that he was not simply singing into an empty space with the musical sound of his emotions bouncing back at him from the walls. His complaint was that he had felt quite uncontained, and he hoped now that I could contain those uncontained feelings, even as he pushed and jabbed and poked hard at me to give me an experience of struggling with my own internal containment. All of this involves musical illusions, sounds, qualities of voice that come and go and alter in a nano-second, nothing solid like a fact to which one could point.

I suspect that he essentially felt like an infant abandoned for too long by his mother. I do not think that he could use secondary process thinking to help him to figure out what was going on between him and me in our separated state. Or, worse still, he could do that – he could tell himself that I was away for a week and that he would see me after a week's absence – but that made less and less difference to his agitated, infantile feelings as the week progressed.

Evidently, the musical sound of a full adult male is very different at first hearing from that of an infant. I've made the point that, unusually, my patient sometimes sang his words in this segment of the session at a much lower pitch than usual, in a bass register. However, all men were infants once, and the preverbal musical gestures and expressions of the infant can certainly be heard within the tones of fully grown adult males. What is confusing is that these adult males have grown big and strong, and if they are being

pumped full of infantile emotions, particularly disturbing and distressing ones, they can start to use their bodies and fists in ways which are similar to the way

infants use theirs. Except that adult males can do all too real damage to their objects, inanimate and, particularly, animate, so they can be very alarming.

This was the case with my patient. As an infant, he had been terrorised by an abusive mother, unprotected by a passive father, and on autopilot, he tended to defend himself by terrorising his objects as his mother had done to him, unrestrained internally by any boundary setting or containing father. Most of his predominant driving emotions were infantile. It was hard going for him to accept that what he thought of as his big man ideas, prejudices and feelings, were often infantile, particularly dominated by the fear of being humiliated and the desire to humiliate. All of this was communicated musically, and my own immediate musical impulse was fight or flight, to retaliate or take cover.

So, although I was not in the least anticipating the music at the start of the session, it was like the re-emergence of old, disturbing and chaotic music, resonating menacingly. The threat of its renaissance, the fear that it would engulf us again was immediately present in the music and in the body. I'm sure it was in his body, he could not have pitched his communication to me as he did without his whole body being involved, and in my body I found myself tense and feeling sick in my gut.

This leads to the very obvious emphasis in my thinking on the importance of the physical, the bodies of the patient and the analyst, in all this consideration of the place of music. I have just set out how physically affected my patient and I were in this piece of analytic dialogue, but of course that is always the case, albeit that usually it will be much more subtle. Listening and hearing as well as speaking and singing are primarily bodily, and most of our emotional reactions to what we hear – even when what we are hearing is the sound of our own voices – occur at lightning speed, faster than we can process them. Analysts like to think that we process our thinking first and speak second, and sometimes we manage this, but very often our cognitive processes are trying to catch up with what has already happened in the body – in this instance, in hearing, although, as with the dialogue just presented, what one hears often triggers yet more and various strong bodily responses, in addition. Here, I am following in the footsteps of Alessandra Lemma, when she wrote:

... I am also taking the opportunity to initiate an exploration of whether there may be some merit in conceptualising the body of the analyst as a part of the setting. I am using the term "embodied setting" in two ways: (a) to denote the way that the analyst's physical appearance and presence – their sense of reality, if you like – provide an embodied form of containment such that changes at this level may

mobilise particular anxieties and fantasies in the patient; and (b) to underline that the analyst's somatic counter-transference is an important cornerstone of her internal setting, that is, the analyst also uses the body's free associations to listen to the patient, not least as they may relate to the patient's "embodied fantasies" (Lemma 2014, 226);

and Dana Birksted-Breen, when she wrote: " ... I will focus on situations at the limits of our understanding, situations in which the body of the analyst is the recipient of the unconscious event ... " (Birksted-Breen 2016b, 1117).

It makes an immense difference to the patient, however, if what they find is something like a musical instrument in the analyst, resonating to infantile feelings, imaginatively

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sympathising with them. Edna O'Shaughnessy wrote: " ... in a psychoanalysis the analyst's mind is *the* instrument investigating the mind of the patient" (1994, 942) (emphasis original).

This echoes Freud's statement that " ... everyone possesses in his own unconscious an instrument with which he can interpret the utterances of the unconscious in other people" (Freud 1913, 320).

Birksted-Breen comments:

... Freud also makes clear that in order for the unconscious to be an instrument, certain conditions are necessary. In particular, the analyst needs to turn his own unconscious to that of the patient, adjust to the patient, and convert what is received in the form of derivatives. These are the conditions of the psychoanalytic method (Birksted-Breen, 2016b, 1119) (emphasis original);

and

It follows from Freudian theory that if the unconscious is the privileged instrument of the psychoanalyst, by definition it is an instrument which is unknown "in its innermost nature" (Freud 1900), an instrument which has close links with the body and hence the pre- and infra-verbal, and an instrument whose use cannot be thought of independently of those roots. (Birksted-Breen 2016b, 1126)

Here, Freud, Birksted-Breen and O'Shaughnessy are clearly referring to scientific instruments, whereas the instrument I have in mind is an artistic one. And yet this is ultimately a spurious

distinction: this essay is about the need for a creative intercourse between the scientific and artistic – specifically musical – dimensions of the analyst's mind.

Analysts, naturally, also have their own responses, with which they have to wrestle. My need to struggle with my own anger at being disturbed by the patient is the correlate of my patient struggling with so many more urgent and intense feelings, which threaten to shipwreck him. As analyst, I have to recognise that my patient can, to a certain extent, unleash his infantile self through piercing and destabilising music, whereas I have to feel and know my infantile, musical responses without unleashing them. I can't shriek back, for example. This requires work of the analyst, and, whilst I always expect my patients to work, it's sometimes a narcissistic shock to remember that I have to do it, too. I believe that here too the place of musical illusion is central, the music of the analytic couple in distress.

So all through this time that I have been describing, we are both creating impressions, which are very close to illusions. The patient, in particular, is trying to get through to me, to contact me with his feelings in the hope that I will take them in and contain them. To do this, he has to get creative, with a whole range of thoughts and words, but as I've been trying to show, as well as those more secondary process items, he's working very hard on a more primary process level, like a baby with its mother, to get me to have feelings. To truly, actively have them. And for this, he does indeed have to get creative, he has to create aural illusions, musical illusions, which will resonate in my imagination.

I'm sure this kind of session will ring bells with all psychoanalysts. This is not a life-changing session, we didn't discuss some sort of major event with insightful interpretations from the analyst – or the patient. This isn't even the whole session, it's just the start. But it's my attempt to evoke – I dare no longer claim to record – a sketch, mainly musical, of the beginning of a session that many will recognise as being the first

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cousin of many starts of sessions. These are the kinds of moments or segments of sessions that are eminently forgettable when one is trying to give a serious overview of the case. And yet, if you spend time on them, not focusing over-anxiously on the verbal or philosophical themes contained in them, but trying to be as present as possible to the fleeting emotional content – which in my case I do through attending to the music – you can then gain access to a whole dimension of the analysis which otherwise risks sinking into insignificance. But it is so far from being insignificant: the emotionality of the start of this session is obviously crucial for whatever might emerge with more substance later in the

session. It is equally obviously my attempt to evoke a true portrait of the patient, or of analyst and patient, at that particular moment in time, trying to capture something of the shifting quality of the here-and-now relationship. Yet this is a task one can only do if one acknowledges the paradox that one essentially cannot do it: it's just too evanescent, too much of an illusion.

(I should perhaps add that, whilst I realise that my professional musical training equips me to pay full attention to the musical aspects of the session, I believe that it is an intrinsic human activity to be listening constantly to those with whom one is relating, as well as to oneself, and to be immediately responsive. I don't believe there is any choice in the matter: this is quite involuntary. I appreciate that for many analysts this whole dimension remains virtually unconscious: my writing is an attempt to bring what I believe to be such a powerfully determinative facet of object relating into more ordinary analytic focus (Grier 2019, 2021).)

The transference is an illusion, par excellence, in the world of psychoanalysis. The whole point of the transference is that it is illusory – and we are immediately in the world of paradox. It's our business as analysts to work out the transference, and to help the patient work through their transference neurosis, though we don't aim for an outcome in which the patient no longer transfers their internal object relations into their external relationship. Firstly, we know that is not a real possibility, but, secondly, not to transfer would be the mark of pathology. To transfer too much, too intensely, too concretely, is pathological – not so much an illusion as a delusion. But not to transfer is to lack imagination, not to be able to influence an object affectively, not to be able to invest even a good object with life and love. Nor a bad object with hatred, which is also necessary. This investment, this cathexis, is by definition illusory – and yet we can see it is on the side of health. My contention is that you don't just work it out via the meaning of the words; it's particularly conveyed, elaborated and worked through in the music of the voice, indeed in the music of the voices, even though that music is so ephemeral, so close to illusion. And the relationship between the spoken words and their music, the shifting relationship in which words and music can be at one, or can be at odds, subtly or violently, requires analysts to attend to each dimension, and the dimension of their own interiority and musical responses. This is my musical variant on Dana Birksted-Breen's notion of bi-ocularity (2016a, 25): and it's crucial for the analyst to be able to have a sense of what feels true and what feels illusory ... as well as my contention that even true moments can pass so quickly, and feel so transient, that the quality of solid truthfulness itself can evaporate into something that feels illusory.

All this points to a particular anxiety that is particular to musical participation. The very fact that each moment is so transient, that it passes, that it evaporates, even on those occasions when the contents of the words passing between the analytic couple may

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be of great importance, the fear of whether one will remember (whether analyst or patient) – gone? over? – the difficulty of recording it in one's mind in a substantial enough form to be able to tell a third party of an important analytic insight (whether analyst or patient): all this is linked directly to the evanescence of the musical quality of the analytical communication. On occasion it can even make one begin to entertain doubts as to the truth or falsity of the analytic engagement.

The usual definition of illusion is of falsity. Disillusionment is therefore often held to be one of the aims of psychoanalysis, and indeed of a mature life. In *The Future of an Illusion* (Freud 1927), Freud set out his contention that God and religion were the ultimate illusion. Many have written on this subject, such as Lucy LaFarge, who investigates the trio of disillusion, disappointment and despair (LaFarge 2015, 1225). She shows theoretically and clinically how life can return to a somewhat deadened analytic relationship, paradoxically when the analytic couple can bear to investigate precisely their disappointed and depressing feelings, showing how the relationship is deprived of life when engagement with these problems is evaded. When such dark feelings, sometimes mutual, are faced, a phase of renewed, more mature life, can evolve. The theme of attractiveness of illusions constitutes a significant part of Britton's thoughts on unconscious beliefs and reality (Britton 1995, 19). The tenacity with which the Oedipal illusion – mother really loves me, her son, more than father – can be clung onto, despite massive evidence to the contrary, and despite conscious affirmation of the reality of Oedipal defeat – of course I know my mother loves my father best in the world – illustrates the reality of this. John Steiner has investigated the subject thoroughly in his papers on illusion and disillusion (Steiner 2016, 427) and on Don Quixote (Steiner 2020, 1), in which he is particularly sensitive to the need many feel for a measure of illusion. Steiner pleads for analysts to recognise how a morally righteous and aggressive pursuit of the truth – the disillusioned truth – may bring massive pain and chaos in its wake, and he marks our sadness when Don Quixote dies sane, as if his death symbolises how we, too, can no longer live out our own phantasies, which are perhaps coterminous with illusions. Bion devotes an entire paper (Bion 1958), albeit a short, powerful one, to his shattering critique of analysts who arrogate certainty of factual truthfulness to themselves and idolise “the truth,” and recently Civitarese (2021) has developed these same ideas further in

his creative exegesis of Bion's paper. Then there is Winnicott, with his finely tuned observation and empathic sensitivity to the infant's need for what he calls a "graduated failure" of the mother (Winnicott 1965b, 9) as she should ideally gently let her infant down from his illusioned throne – his Majesty the baby's throne – to the reality of disillusion.

The theorist whose ideas are perhaps closest to mine is John Klauber. He discusses the relationship between transference and illusion, and Neville Symington writes, about him, that:

he [Klauber] pointed out that the transference ... was a dramatisation of the patient's illusions and that the analyst set the stage to enable this to occur. As soon as he had said this its truth was staggeringly obvious to all analysts ... (Symington 1987, 46–47)

Klauber mostly regards the patient's creation of illusion as inevitable and necessary, and that it becomes a core part of the analytic task to disentangle illusion and reality. For

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example:

The development of transference, distressing as some of the forms in which it shows itself may occasionally be, is an invitation to the analyst to help his patient discriminate the illusory from the real at an increasingly complex psychological depth, and is for this reason a therapeutic experience. (Klauber 1987, 4)

I doubt many would disagree with this. However, he then goes further:

The transference illusion is not simply a false perception or a false belief, but the manifestation of the similarity of the subjective experience aroused by an event in the past and in the present. The evolution therefore represents a new piece of understanding, expressing itself not in the language of logical thought, but in that of artistic creativity. (Klauber 1987, 7)

And, especially:

We cannot live by reality alone. We need the illusions which touch reality "with a celestial light." That is why religion is so important in all societies, not excluding – however much we may object to religion – the esoteric forms that often pervade scientific societies. Its solutions give us the emotional courage to live beyond reality. ... In psychoanalysis

the transference not only helps the patient to discriminate, but to imagine. (Klauber 1987, 8)

Klauber does not develop this more original take on illusion, and I suspect he may have been embarrassed by his own thought, because he starts the next paragraph with the words: "With this little hymn to the irrational ..."

For my part, I would emphasise that we never quite become disillusioned. I don't think the preceding authors would disagree: we know that the infantile dimensions of our personalities persist throughout life, and always clamour for their phantasies to be fulfilled. So, at the very least, in a desire to perpetuate the illusion that we should have perpetual access to the perpetual, overflowing good breast as well as to engage in violent Oedipal rivalry, we engage in activities that gratify such impulses and drives to some extent, ranging from gross acting out to the subtlest forms of sublimation. In music and the other arts, reality and illusion constantly and unconsciously mate in a fragile intercourse, reflecting a similar process in every psychoanalytic session.

The explicit or implicit desire for psychological development, to be found in most psychoanalytic theorising, can hardly avoid an underlying implication that we would wish human nature to be different. If only we could break through from the pleasure-pain principle to the reality principle, and stay there! If only, after the immense struggle to evolve from the paranoid-schizoid position to reach the depressive position, we could remain there! The fact that we don't, that we oscillate constantly between these positions (Britton 1998, 69) – or, in Freudian terms, that we never quite outgrow our infantile desires – comes across as something to be regretted. In fact, part of coming to terms with reality in the maturation process involves accepting, if not quite embracing, the fact that the immature side of our psyches is always going to give us trouble. It is difficult to grant an adequate valuation to the infantile, pleasure-seeking, pain-avoidant, troublesome paranoid-schizoid parts of the personality. How can they receive a positive connotation, when we are always trying to outgrow them? Yet you just can't get away from the fact that they are part of the whole fabric of things. They are included in masterpieces like the St Matthew Passion, in which Peter's betrayal of Jesus, presumably motivated by the pleasure principle and by an entirely understandable paranoid-schizoid fear of pain and punishment, plays just as important a part musically as, for example, the wise and loving utterances of

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Jesus. The paranoid-schizoid music of the crowd's hatred of Jesus, and particularly for the pleasurable sadism involved in his mockery, constitutes an

integral part of the music of the Passion, to be balanced by the music from the depressive position of utmost grief, anguish, remorse, guilt, and despair.

But, to push the boat out even further, what about the fact that today's depressive position is tomorrow's false certainty? For a moment, truth is nearly attained, but very soon afterwards it no longer feels so true. Whatever the context, things change in the minds of all the participants, including in the minds of the internal objects which are also not fixed, so this moment of truth, too, participates in evanescence. Its rightness begins to fade, it's false to cling onto it, and its truth begins to feel illusory. It, too, is transient. After a while, even if you remember that while it was happening it felt so true, from your new vantage point, that memory of truthfulness begins to acquire a quality of illusion. In its place, there is now loss, pain, something to be mourned. There's nothing for it, you have to start all over again.

Once this has recurred sufficiently frequently for one to become aware of it as a pattern, a fork is revealed in the road. One path leads to depression, the other to hope. It has to be depressing that probably all our attempts to get hold of the truth will always fail. Yet, there is that sense that we really were onto something, and that we will try for it once again. To feel that it is all illusion could be a very nihilistic path. A different interpretation could lead to an acceptance that much in the world and our attempts to grasp it will always be illusory, yet to know that reality is always covered with a cloak of illusion, may begin to make at least certain qualities of illusion quite precious. I'm in the territory of Bion's O. O itself can't ever be defined or grasped, but it can be intuited. Bion connotes it as "ultimate reality" (Bion 1965, 162), so, logically, anything that we would normally hold as real is confusingly revealed as illusory.

Perhaps this is why – at least partly why – creative artists need to try to undertake the same task over and over again. Rembrandt and Cézanne and their portraits, Mozart with his 27 piano concertos, Haydn and his 104 symphonies, Bach who wrote 24 preludes and fugues in all existing keys, and then did it all over again, Schumann who wrote nearly 140 songs in one year (1840). Each was entirely serious in each of these endeavours, trying to grasp and portray reality. Yet each evidently experienced dissatisfaction with what the rest of us consider to be masterpieces, and needed to do it again. And again. I suggest two elemental motives for these repeated attempts, in line with my theme. Firstly, each time they attempted to portray reality, or a portion of reality, they felt they had not succeeded. The ultimate reality, the O of their quest, always lay beyond the illusion that they had created. But secondly, which is nearly the same thing, ultimate reality, O, is covered with a cloak of illusions, so that whatever they may have captured was only one of an infinite number of

perspectives, and finishing one take only opened up the possibility of more. If you've written 104 symphonies, you could probably write another 104, equally full of life. 48 preludes and fugues? Why not another 48 – which is essentially exactly what Bach did at the end of his life in his final unfinished masterpiece "The Art of Fugue." If you've written 27 piano concertos by the time you die at the age of 35, you could possibly write twice as many if you could live till 70, each one distinct and different, brimming with life, each one an illusion, in this very particular sense. Nothing quite false about it, but each expressing the nearest one can get – or at least a genius could get – to a truthful articulation of one aspect of ultimate reality, O, which is

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bound to feel, after the event, illusory, just transient, evanescent ... and so the next attempt has to be made.

So, in the psychoanalytic consulting room, there might be an analogical process. You don't have to be too mystical, in my view, about O. Many colleagues might well agree that an aim not only of an analysis as a whole but also of each individual session is to try to approach the truth of things. The truth of what is particular about the analysand, the truth of the process, and the quality of the analytic relationship. It's obvious to me that we should attend to John Steiner's warnings, in line with T. S. Eliot's famous dictum that "humankind cannot bear very much reality," and tread carefully, with circumspection around disillusionment, and, as Steiner emphasises, value kindness. But from the start, session one, possibly more obviously once the analysis has become deeply embedded and serious and creative in its engagement with love and hate and joys and sorrows, and possibly even more obviously once it is moving towards its end, perhaps there could be a space in the analyst's mind for contemplating the value of a never-ending renewal of a quality of illusion.

The main field in which this will show itself is the transference-countertransference. Far from the transference neurosis being worked through, there's a paradox: at one and the same time it may well be that the patient is helped to shed some more obvious identifications with the primary figures of their early life, whilst unconsciously embarking on a never-ending engagement with new possible object relations deriving from the infinite varieties of their unconscious phantasies. These are all expressed in the transference, and the analyst will need to be fully alive, creatively so, to the possibilities of the newly minted objects the patient needs him or her to be. These may indeed derive ultimately from the patient's earliest internal objects, but by now they have been undergoing an infinite series of transformations

and developments, so that they will almost certainly be quite unrecognisable in terms of any resemblance to the patient's memories or family history. This is in line with Freud's late thinking on the transference, which he described as " ... a universal phenomenon of the human mind ... and in fact dominates the whole of each person's relations to his human environment" (Freud 1925, 42).

In my terms, the transference consists of ever-new illusions: and the patient is not alone in this process. The analyst needs not only to be even more receptive to the new and different projections coming their way, but also to be actively trying to understand the patient and the analytic relationship, actively trying to paint a new, more truthful, more accurate portrait of the patient. Each session's portrait is new, sometimes only very slightly different from the one the day before, but sometimes radically so, so the two portraits from contiguous sessions might be almost unrecognisable. And not only literary and visual portraits, but musical ones. The patient might well sound quite different, in fact is bound to do so as they express the changes occurring in their unconscious evolution, and this will trigger different responses, both receptive but also active and creative in the analyst, whose own unconscious phantasy processes are always alive and expressive, if the analysis is a going concern.

I argue that this process is not a defence against maturity but the expression of a kind of eternal rejuvenation, a capacity to see new qualities in things, after the pain of realising that the lead one had been following is not actually good enough, far enough, wise or encompassing enough, but needs to be replaced, yet again, by a new perspective or feeling about things, new vision, new sound, new music. Ancient and modern. Ancient

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in the sense of something very old, which all these poets and musicians and artists have been seeking – possibly a single goal shared by them all. But modern in the sense of perpetual failure, dissatisfaction, always incomplete, needing to be renewed; new experiments, trials, thoughts, and frustrations; heaven forbid, analysts using theories from the competing analytic camp, which they are bound to use differently, therefore "wrongly," but possibly creatively. The attempt, then, to finish within the analysis the equivalent of a portrait or a concerto, only for the cycle to repeat itself, infinitely.

In his latest novel, Salman Rushdie writes of Pampa Kampana, his mythical poet-creator:

*(Thanks to Pampa Kampana's amused delight in Domingo Nunes
and his garbled mispronunciation, she chose to refer to both the city*

and the Empire as “Bisnaga” throughout her epic poem, intending, perhaps, to remind us that while her work is based on real events, there is an inevitable distance between the imagined world and the actual. “Bisnaga” belongs not to history but to her. After all, a poem is not an essay or a news report. The reality of poetry and the imagination follows its own rules. We have elected to follow Pampa Kampana's lead, so it is her dream-city of “Bisnaga” that is so named and portrayed here. To do otherwise would be to betray the artist and her work.) (Rushdie 2023, 33–34)

It should come as no surprise that it is such a creative novelist who seems to grasp and articulate the paradox of the relationship between illusion and reality most clearly, but this passage – itself in parentheses and italics which perhaps symbolises its quality of being set apart, not quite real, close to evanescence – seems to reflect the delicacy of the analyst's dilemma in the consulting room. When is there too much illusion, too much phantasy and too much primary process, and when is there too much reality, too much secondary process thinking, too little creativity and imagination? When should the analyst help the patient with the building of a dream city, with its own alternative order of reality; when would that combined activity tip over into collusive analyst–patient delusion?

As each attempt at grasping reality shows itself to be transient, evanescent, actually not so much reality as an illusion, the next attempt is conceived and born – not without pain, mourning, loss, confusion, and frustration. But these may be the cycles, perhaps often quite unconscious, even in the minds of analysts who are not used to thinking in this way, and who may be much more creative than they realise. I suspect that, even as they engage so often with sadness and the equivalents of the St Matthew Passion – very much the stuff of analytic realities – it is nevertheless these cycles of evanescence and illusion that prove to be truly creative and life-giving.

So, illusion sits uncomfortably – or is it creatively? – right on the boundary between truth and falsehood. Steven Groarke puts it thus: “There is an unresolved (unresolvable?) tension between (1) illusion as the negative value of truth and (2) illusion as the ground of imagination and creative living (personal communication).”

The Latin root of illusion is *illudere*. This can mean “to mock at,” which is more in line with the habitual meaning of illusion as not only unreal but somehow wrong; however, the Latin verb can also mean “to play with,” which offers quite a different slant on the meaning of “unreal.”

Louise Gyler addresses these borderline contradictions thus: “How do we make the distinction clinically between good and bad illusion, so to speak? Perhaps we can't, and that

is the reason to take seriously our own senses and subjectivity – both the positive and negative possibilities” (personal communication).

In Freud's beautiful short essay “On Transience” (1916), he gives a description of two very different attitudes towards the transience of life, which I would suggest overlaps with a sense of the underlying illusion behind what superficially looks solid or beautiful.

Freud writes:

My conversation with the poet took place in the summer before the war. A year later the war broke out and robbed the world of its beauties. It destroyed not only the beauty of the countrysides through which it passed and the works of art which it met with on its path but it also shattered our pride in the achievements of our civilization, our admiration for many philosophers and artists and our hopes of a final triumph over the differences between nations and races. It tarnished the lofty impartiality of our science, it revealed our instincts in all their nakedness and let loose the evil spirits within us which we thought had been tamed forever by centuries of continuous education by the noblest minds. It made our country small again and made the rest of the world far remote. It robbed us of very much that we had loved, and showed us how ephemeral were many things that we had regarded as changeless. (Freud 1916, 307)

In this passage, Freud writes about illusions, as they are revealed by war, to be let-downs, disappointments. Beautiful and high-minded things are shown up as disturbing and depressing when their transience is realised, their ephemerality.

And yet, in Freud's description of the to-and-fro with the poet, it is the poet who is seriously depressed by the transience of nature, while Freud himself ascribes a positive value to the transient, illusory dimension of things that come and go, that flower but then fade and die.

Here is Freud's earlier description of the poet:

Not long ago I went on a summer walk through a smiling countryside in the company of a taciturn friend and of a young but already famous poet. The poet admired the beauty of the scene around us but felt no joy in it. He was disturbed by the thought that all this beauty was fated to extinction, that it would vanish when winter came, like all human beauty and splendour that men have created or may

create. All that he would otherwise have loved and admired seemed to him to be shorn of its worth by the transience which was its doom. (1916, 305)

And here is Freud's response:

But I did dispute the pessimistic poet's view that transience of what is beautiful involves any loss in its worth. On the contrary, increase! Transience value is scarcity value in time. Limitation of the possibility of enjoyment raises the value of the enjoyment. It was incomprehensible, I declared, that the thought of transience of beauty should interfere with our joy in it. (1916, 305)

These exchanges are so vivid and characterful and contrasting that they almost demand to be set to music. And the musicality of Freud's writing – even in English translation, surely one of the qualities which earned him the Goethe prize in 1930 – links with all that I have been pointing to. The fact that Freud's essay is printed gives it a certain solidity, but if you could imagine that you read it just the once, or, better, heard it read, I believe you would find yourself even more in touch with its poetic, musical aspect. The essay itself as a piece of literature portrays its subject matter – the transient. The fact that it is so short, just three pages long, emphasises even more the sense that if you were to hear the essay,

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it would be much like hearing a piece of music; it would come to your attention, and almost before you knew it, the piece would have finished, just leaving its resonance evaporating. And yet, for all its evanescence, you might never forget it. It could be that not forgetting it may well be a pointer to its truthfulness, its non-illusion. I think this is how Freud thought of it. But this feeling is bittersweet, for as well as something truthful that remains, there is also a sense of a core element of it that has vanished, evaporated, often leaving a question – again, that may be too solid, maybe it's more like a feeling of a question, a doubt – of whether you ever quite grasped it when you thought you did.

There is a moment in *Alice in Wonderland* (Dodson 1865), when Alice encounters the Cheshire Cat, and gradually the Cheshire Cat disappears until only its grin is left hanging in the atmosphere. Alice says that “she has often seen a cat without a grin but never a grin without a cat.” Like almost everything else in the two Alice books, this is a superb moment of creative illusion, and we recognise its emotional reality. We've had experiences of something evaporating and only a part of it – its grin – is left hanging there. It's nonsense, of course, grins can't do that, and yet that's just what they do. My patient is like that. He leaves something hanging in the atmosphere. Very often, it's a sound. It's no longer the particular words he has spoken, no longer a thought, let alone an interpretation. It's certainly an emotion, as it lingers in the atmosphere, often in the form of an evaporating musical resonance. I don't think I notice this quality only because I'm musical: many people often have that experience about an

important person, a loved or hated person, very often a child. Most obviously, a baby, because babies aren't speaking words and sentences and the stuff of secondary process. They make particular noises, always musical, and these musical sounds are often left dangling in the air. These sonorities often hover on the edge of consciousness, not quite articulated, not quite recognised, but potent even in their evanescence, nonetheless, within the relationship. Real? Illusion?

But then, such is the essence of illusion – that it is illusory.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to many colleagues as well as musical friends who have helped me with their criticisms and suggestions. Thanks also to the anonymous reviewers and especially to the editors, Bruce Reis and Alessandra Lemma, and to my wife, Anjali Grier.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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Illusion, musicalité et évanescence. L'auteur explore les similitudes entre l'expérience de la musique et celle des séances d'analyse. Il axe sa réflexion sur les qualités de l'évanescence et la façon dont, à certains égards, la musique - contrairement aux autres arts, ne dure que le temps où elle est jouée, puis, se tait, tout comme s'achève, après la séance, l'échange qui a eu lieu entre analyste et patient. Cependant, les réverbérations psychiques de certains moments éphémères ou fugitifs peuvent durer toute une vie. Même en l'absence d'une compréhension non-verbale profonde, la rencontre patient-analyste est néanmoins émotionnellement significative, ce que l'auteur illustre à l'aide d'un exemple clinique. Il explore la question du transfert en tant qu'illusion, ainsi que la relation entre vérité et illusion au regard du concept de O de Bion. Pour conclure, il s'interroge sur la valeur paradoxale de l'illusoire dans l'esthétique et la nature, à la lumière du court texte de Freud, « Éphémère

destinée » (1916) et du sourire du Chat du Cheshire de Lewis Carroll, en suspens dans l'air.

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Illusion, Musikalität und Vergänglichkeit. Ich untersuche Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Erfahrungen mit Musik und analytischen Sitzungen. Hierbei konzentriere ich mich auf Merkmale der Vergänglichkeit, auf die Art und Weise, wie Musik - im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen Künsten - in einer Hinsicht nur so lange andauert, wie sie tatsächlich gespielt wird. Dann ist sie vorbei. Ähnlich verhält es sich mit dem Analytiker-Patienten-Gespräch in einer Sitzung. Doch der psychische Nachhall einiger flüchtiger, vergänglicher Momente kann ein Leben lang anhalten. Selbst wenn auf einer sprachlichen Ebene kein tiefgreifendes Verständnis stattfindet, kann die Begegnung zwischen Patient und Analytiker dennoch emotional bedeutsam sein. Ich veranschauliche dies anhand eines klinischen Beispiels. Ich untersuche die Übertragung als Illusion und die Beziehung zwischen Wahrheit und Illusion im Sinne von Bion O. Ich schließe mit Gedanken über den paradoxen Wert der Illusion von Ästhetik und Natur, wie er von Freud in seiner kurzen Abhandlung "Über die Vergänglichkeit" (1916) betrachtet wurde, sowie anhand des Grinsens von Lewis Carolls Grinsekatze, die in der Luft hängt.

Illusione, musicalità ed evanescenza. Esplorerò qui alcune somiglianze tra l'esperienza della musica e quella delle sedute analitiche. Mi concentrerò in particolare sulle qualità dell'evanescenza: sul modo cioè in cui la musica, a differenza di molte altre arti, dura in un certo senso soltanto per il tempo in cui viene effettivamente suonata - e passato quel tempo, è finita. Tra analista e paziente accade in seduta qualcosa di simile - eppure il riverbero psichico di alcuni attimi fuggenti può durare per tutta una vita, e persino quando non si realizza alcun tipo di comprensione profonda a livello verbale l'incontro tra paziente e analista può essere emotivamente significativo (situazione che illustrerò con un esempio clinico). Prenderò inoltre in esame il transfert nella sua dimensione di illusione e la relazione tra verità e illusione a partire dal concetto bioniano di O. Il lavoro si conclude con alcune riflessioni sul valore paradossale dell'illusorietà dell'estetica e della natura, sulla scia delle considerazioni fatte da Freud nel suo breve scritto sulla "Caducità" (1916), e infine sul sorriso dello Stregatto di Lewis Carroll, che rimane sospeso nell'aria.

Ilusión, musicalidad y evanescencia. En el presente artículo se explora algunas semejanzas entre la experiencia de la música y las sesiones psicoanalíticas. El autor se centra en las cualidades de la evanescencia, la manera en que la música -a diferencia de muchas otras artes-solo dura, desde

cierta perspectiva, mientras está realmente sonando. Luego termina. Al igual que en el intercambio analista-paciente en una sesión. Sin embargo, las reverberaciones psíquicas de algunos momentos fugaces y pasajeros pueden durar toda la vida. Y aun cuando no ocurre ninguna comprensión profunda en la esfera verbal, el encuentro paciente-analista es emocionalmente significativo. Se presenta un ejemplo clínico. Se explora la transferencia como ilusión y la relación entre verdad e ilusión en relación con la O de Bion. El artículo cierra con algunas ideas en torno al valor paradójico de lo ilusorio en la estética y en la naturaleza, como lo considera Freud en su breve artículo "La transitoriedad" (1916), y a la sonrisa del gato de Cheshire de Lewis Carroll, dejada colgando en el aire.

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