FRENCH THEORIES OF BEAUTY AND THE AESTHETICS OF MUSIC 1700 TO 1750

THESIS

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Studies of eighteenth-century French musical aesthetics have traditionally focused on questions of taste treated in the critical literature of the day. During the first half of the century, however, certain French writers were dealing with aesthetics in the stricter sense of the word, proposing theories of beauty that suited existing philosophical values. The treatises in which these ideas were set forth—Jean-Pierre de Crousaz's Traité du beau, Jean-Baptiste DuBos' Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture, Yves-Marie André's Essai sur le beau, and Charles Batteux' Les Beaux arts réduits à un même principe—are among the first learned writings to present the musical experience in something other than a mathematical or pedagogical light. This study investigates not only the role music played in these theories of beauty, but also the methodological problems inherent in translating this data into historical information.
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CHAPTER I

THE ANOMALIES OF FRENCH MUSICAL AESTHETICS 1700-1750

The period 1700 to 1750 in France witnessed an inception of ideas concerning art and artistic beauty that is of importance historically, but the intellectual fruits of this era are overshadowed by the accomplishments of the epochs immediately preceding and following it. On the side of the seventeenth century, this period is faced with the intellectual model posited by Descartes, the artistic heights attained in Louis XIV's court, and the trenchant commentaries of observers like Nicolas Boileau. After 1750, its glories are quickly lost among those of the Encyclopedists and the rising philosophical tide that was engulfing Europe. Within its own boundaries, the serious questioning of the role of beauty that went on is obscured by the commonly-depicted frivolities of salon life, the extravagances of the Regency and Louis XV's court, and the highly-opinionated rationalism of the educated class. There is little wonder, then, that the authors of a fledgling system of aesthetics could remain to the present day, as Brewster Rogerson has described them, an "esoteric tribe."¹

If the cursory attention paid to these aestheticians—Jean-Pierre de Crousaz, Jean-Baptiste DuBos, Yves-Marie André, and Charles Batteux—is somewhat understandable, it remains for the historian a curious state of affairs. The vast differences between, say, the content of Boileau's writings and those of Denis Diderot stand as a mute testimony to this fact, for how can one presume the threads—national, intellectual, or otherwise—connecting these two men to be an esoteric matter? France during this time continued to be the most admired and imitated country in Europe, even with the death of Louis XIV, so there is no reason to assume that the historical significance of the aestheticians is any less than that of Boileau of Diderot, whether or not their writings have maintained a currency in modern literary studies. Their ideas could, in fact, go far in elucidating a century that is perhaps rivalled in its complexity only by our own.

The problems of this period, as they relate to the history of the aesthetics of music, have not gone altogether unnoticed. They have been the subject of several penetrating studies, probably the most famous being Jules Écorcheville's De Lulli à Rameau, 1690-1730: l'esthétique musicale.Écorcheville, in characteristically flamboyant style, describes

the contradictory nature of this period, which is at once its charm and its curse, in his introduction:

In the midst of the disarray of beliefs and the conflict of tastes, it seems that reason appears in everything as a sovereign power. The refinement of the intellect, joined to a misunderstanding of enthusiasm and of raptures of the heart, favored a rationalism without scruples. And can it be asked whether the effort of the doctrinaires is not then more complete and more significant than that of the artists? Certainly, a sonata of Couperin will always be read with infinitely more pleasure than a dissertation by the Abbé DuBos, and such wainscoting, above the door in shades of gray [telle boiserie, tel dessus de porte en grisaille], has preserved a charm that the Réflexions sur la critique undoubtedly never possessed. But it is no less true that all of the dogmatic works of the time that treat beauty illuminate in a keen light the state of sensibilities [Âmes] at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Without them, by the observance of the works of art alone, we would know only a more timid, and perhaps less sincere, aspect of these sensibilities. When La Motte, Terrasson, Dacier, DuBos, Père André, Raquenel, Le Cerf de la Viéville, Pluche, and a hundred others endeavor to link the artistic phenomenon with the intellectual faculties, they justify, through reason, an aesthetic to which all of their century instinctively conforms. In seeking to legitimize the perpetual interference of the rational element in the conscience of the artist, they divulge to use the cause and secret of this fearful reserve that holds back their works of art when they wish to extricate themselves from the strict imitation of objective nature. And if their rationalism leads from itself to an apology for the golden mean, it is because it belongs to an epoch of transition and perpetual equivocation. Theory and practice thus fall into accord and comment on one another.3

Having thus traced the difficulties of dealing with musical taste in this period to an overriding preoccupation with reason or objectivity, Écorcheville was then able to confine

3. Écorcheville, vi-vii. All translations are by the present author unless otherwise noted. Original spelling and punctuation have been retained in the transcription of texts.
his study to criticisms of music, that area in which theory and practice were mutually served. His book focused on the complex critical, moral, and poetic forces that influenced music. But by so limiting his field of inquiry, Écorcheville left unanswered questions that still plague musicology today: for instance, did a truly philosophical approach to music arise out of this critical milieu, and if so, did it have an impact on musical thought comparable to that of criticism? If the context for the day-to-day discussions and disputes about music has been established, the broader philosophical (or as Écorcheville prefers, speculative) issues remain inaccessible to the scholarly community. Those very French thinkers who may have wielded a lasting influence, whose theories of aesthetics should be numbered among the real achievements of the first half of the century, continue to be regarded as an esoteric tribe.

The years since the publication of Écorcheville's book have witnessed attempts at filling this lacuna, and the various efforts have not been entirely in vain. Some of the aestheticians now are fairly familiar names, and due to broader historical interests, many of their treatises are available in facsimiles or modern editions. Still, one senses

4. Indeed, Louis I. Bredvold writes in his article on Platonism and Neoclassical art that while Platonism played an important role in Neoclassical music, it is too complex a subject to be treated within the confines of the article, thus avoiding the issue. See "The Tendency toward Platonism in Neoclassical Esthetics," ELH: A Journal of English Literary History I (1934), 97, note 8.
that the historical role played by their systems of aesthetics is poorly understood, and this becomes evident with the stated goals accompanying each newly attempted study. Historians continue to be provoked by the current state of the materials into making new interpretations. With the number of studies steadily increasing and no clarification of the problem in sight, the field is rapidly reaching a saturation point. A reappraisal of present methodologies is therefore in order.

I believe that current research continues to fail because it seeks only to give new expositions of the contents of primary sources, without first establishing well-defined criteria for dealing with those sources. We must

5. The stated subjects of two recent articles may suffice as examples of this perceived need: "Parallels' drawn between, particularly, the arts of poetry, painting, drama, and music demonstrated their common intent; like the sciences, these arts would serve the end of truth and reveal the universals of behavior, action, and experience. For a good part of the next century theorists continued to busy themselves with the consolidation of symbolic formulas that were believed to embody such universals, their activity culminating in the compendious codifications of German Affectenlehre" (Alan Lessem, "Imitation and Expression: Opposing French and British Views in the 18th Century," Journal of the American Musicological Society XXVII [Summer, 1974], 325); "Both questions and answers in musical aesthetics in this era arise out of the particular philosophical milieu created by primary notions of the meaning and significance of music. This ambience is obviously connected chronologically and spiritually to both the 17th and 19th centuries; yet it has certain salient characteristics that are the hallmarks of a unique intellectual situation. It is the topography of this situation that we must come to know" (Maria Rika Maniates, "Sonate, que me veux-tu? The Enigma of French Musical Aesthetics in the 18th Century," Current Musicology IX [July, 1969], 117-18). There is
become comfortably familiar with these treatises before we can deal with larger historical issues. The theories of the various aestheticians are indeed becoming more familiar, but when they are seen only as extensions of seventeenth-century traditions or the innovations of the Encyclopedists, they are deprived of any true historical significance. Even Écorcheville's assessment cited above carries a negative ring, for it depicts the period as pointedly lacking the creative vitality of the eras surrounding it. Is this not placing value judgments on the period as a whole above the critical evaluation of the historical materials? What follows is an attempt to find criteria that will open up the period to a more serious scrutiny and make the selection of the treatises to be studied an obvious, reasonable process.

The Problems of Secondary Literature

Because the period 1700 to 1750 is truly one in which rationalism holds sway over intellectual endeavors, it is often assumed that straightforward procedures for treating the epoch can be gleaned from primary sources and then applied consistently in research. In fact a fairly authoritative tradition, dutifully practiced by most researchers, has evolved, but upon closer inspection this tradition yields up unexpected
anomalies. The problematic state of present research owes its existence to this gap between our expectations and actual data.

In surveying secondary sources dealing with eighteenth-century French musical aesthetics, one finds certain methodological patterns emerging from the wealth of historical detail. These patterns—which may for convenience be categorized as historiographic, philosophical, musicological, and phenomenological—represent some of the problematic, preconceived ideas we have about working in this area. The categories are flexible and even overlap to a certain degree. If our research is to continue growing, we must first come to understand fully the strengths and weaknesses of these methods that we commonly use. We must be able to adapt our methods in order to give the data more suitable expositions. The following discussion, then, is in no way intended to be critical of the secondary literature; rather, it is offered as a critique of the methodologies currently being used. While this approach admittedly has some negative qualities, it nonetheless has the distinct advantage of yielding an exceptionally positive picture of the period under consideration.

Though all of the problems that will be dealt with in this section could in a large sense be described as historiographic, since they all deal with history, there are certain problems that are inherent in the way historians have traditionally
treated the eighteenth century. These problems take the form of habits of convenience that are difficult to break. In the sometimes unavoidable process of dealing with too large a block of time and trying to cover too wide a range of literature, historians have developed a specialized vocabulary for describing the vicissitudes of eighteenth-century thought, and this terminology, often presented in the form of dichotomies, has become commonplace. Classicism and Romanticism, Rationalism and Empiricism, Ancient and Modern, and Imitation and Expression are all descriptive labels that come easily to the historian's pen. Gradually, however, these dichotomies have ceased to perform their descriptive function and have become broad, mutually exclusive generalizations.

Now it cannot be denied that the ability to generalize is a necessary tool, but the upshot has been that as these descriptions come to represent inflexible, opposing regions of thought, researchers spend more time tracing these generalizations in their data than they do the historical trends they hope to observe. The consequences can be misleading when studying a century where ideas and values existed in a constant state of reassessment. The historian, who is already faced with the burden of chronological distance, finds himself twice removed from the subject at hand. Bellamy Hamilton Hosler has commented on the methodological problems
that familiar generalizations posed in investigating the gradual acceptance of instrumental music during the eighteenth century:

The organization of this study grew out of a dissatisfaction with existing frameworks for investigation within the area of eighteenth-century aesthetic criticism. In the secondary literature in this field there is much talk of imitation and expression, and of rationalism, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism. Initially I expected to follow instrumental music's changing fortunes along a path moving away from rationalism and towards Romanticism, away from the espousal of imitation theories and towards the nineteenth-century view of art as emotional expression . . . . But I was to find . . . that such historical categories as Romanticism and rationalism, expression and imitation, proved confusing and unilluminating when used to explain changing attitudes toward instrumental music, in spite of the fact that they play central interpretive roles in much recent literature dealing with eighteenth-century music criticism.6

Hosler then goes on to show that one can wind up even farther from the truth than before when too much faith is placed in generalizations, however useful they may be. The sources can be studied assiduously from the standpoint of modern generalizations, and if caution is not used, the resulting conclusions will actually be at variance with what is stated in the sources.7 Researchers must therefore either take care to use


7. Maniates adopts this approach in the article cited in note 4, which traces interpretations of the words imitation and expression in eighteenth-century French thought. This method leads her to make statements about Jean-Baptiste DuBos, for example, that are misleading within the confines of his general aesthetic theory (see chapter three, note 30 of this study).
this vocabulary only with its original, descriptive intent or consciously keep the necessary generalizations from interfering with the conclusions.

A similar situation occurs when the liberally applied phrases and expressions that did exist in the eighteenth century are given precise, modern definitions. L'imitation de la nature comes to mind as having especially suffered from the well-intentioned rigors of twentieth-century methodology. When twenty different uses of the expression can be found in critical and aesthetic sources, it surely signals not a complex underlying aesthetic structure, but merely the kind of deliberately ambiguous catchword in which eighteenth-century Frenchmen delighted. Attempting to define these catchwords at the outset of a study could have an unwarranted effect on the results, since it involves removing them from their contexts and reducing them to the kind of generalizations previously noted. Another such lesson can be learned from the erroneous conclusions that scholars have made based on the so-called doctrine of the affections, the Affektenlehre. In this case, what began with the systematic treatment of the representation of emotions in the visual arts became, after

8. Arthur O. Lovejoy, "Nature as the Aesthetic Norm," Modern Language Notes XLII (November, 1927), 444-50. Maniates draws on some of Lovejoy's categories, p. 120.

the fact, an elaborate theory of aesthetics rooted in Cartesian thought and French philosophy. It will be shown later in this section, in connection with the discussion of French rationalism, that this latter interpretation of the data has no basis in historical fact. It may suffice, for the present, to point out that a corresponding doctrine des passions is conspicuously lacking in the very French sources that would be presumed to codify such a theory. Indeed, recent research by George Buelow has shown that the theory of the Affektenlehre, as a pervasive doctrine of aesthetics or musical expression in Germany, is misleading as well.

Another problem plaguing the secondary literature is the tendency to discuss aesthetics from a purely philosophical

[Note 10. See, for example, the quotation of Lessem in note 5. The Affektenlehre also figures prominently in discussions by Hugo Goldschmidt, Die Musikästhetik des 18. Jahrhunderts (Leipzig: Rascher, 1915), 32-49, 69-77, passim. Walter Serauky, in his book Die musikalische Nachahmungsästhetik in Zeitraum von 1700 bis 1850 (Westfalen: Lechte-Emsdetten, 1929), acknowledges the Affektenlehre (pp. 3-5), but is careful to avoid it in his discussion of French aesthetics (see pp. 7-42, passim, where he occasionally criticizes Goldschmidt's liberal application of the term).

Note 11. George J. Buelow, "Johann Mattheson and the Invention of the 'Affektenlehre'," a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in Boston, November, 1981. I am grateful to Professor Buelow for providing me with a copy of this as yet unpublished paper.]
standpoint. Although this would not seem, on the surface, to be an unreasonable approach, since aesthetics is a natural outgrowth of philosophical discussions on art, the underlying ideological differences between the methodologies of the historian and the philosopher belie any real success in light of present needs. Whereas the historian's task is to treat his data critically, to collect and arrange it to form a new but essentially objective picture of history, the philosopher must adopt a critical stance toward the ideas alone. His task, in short, is to judge the ultimate value of the ideas. Now even though this is an important function, it plays only a small role for the researcher who is searching for purely historical information. The musicologist in particular must carefully balance theories of aesthetics against their backgrounds and their historical implications for music and then weigh all evaluations against the results. The encroachment of any later values, whether explicit or implicit, threatens to disturb this delicate balance and render the conclusions meaningless by replacing what was to be an accurate historical picture with a mere reflection of twentieth-century values. 12

12. An example of an overt encroachment of later thought would be Goldschmidt's singling out of Crousaz as coming closer to the actual truth than his contemporaries, p. 47. Scholars have long recognized Goldschmidt's tendency to measure eighteenth-century sources in terms of modern philosophy; see for example Arnold Schering's review of Die Musikästhetik des 18. Jahrhunderts in Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft I (February, 1919), 302. An
Some musicologists, seemingly aware of the anomaly posed by the philosophical method, have reacted by taking their research too far in the other direction, in what may be termed the musicological approach. Realizing that valuable commentaries on music came from all sectors of the educated French public, they have given equal weight in their research to the various letters,\textsuperscript{13} pamphlets,\textsuperscript{14} pedagogical tracts,\textsuperscript{15} example of a more subtle encroachment would be the couching of an aesthetician's theories, which originally met the eighteenth-century demands for clarity and distinctness, in the complex, scientific language of modern philosophical thought; see for example Rosalie D. Landres Sadowsky, "Jean-Baptiste Abbé DuBos: The Influence of Cartesian and Neo-Aristotelian Ideas of Music Theory and Practice" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1960), 185-237.

\textsuperscript{13} The most famous example of this would be Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Lettre sur la musique française, written in 1753 and given in translation in Source Readings in Music History, ed. Oliver Strunk (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950), 636-54. Because of their brevity and tendency to address or rebut specific statements, letters give valuable insight into musical opinion and taste, but do little to reveal the aesthetic system that may be at work.

\textsuperscript{14} Given their highly polemical nature, pamphlets can be extremely unreliable sources for aesthetic theories. For example, Jean Laurent le Cerf de La Viéville, a well-known pamphleteer (see Strunk, 489-511, for a partial translation of his Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française [1704-67]), was regarded by the famous thinker Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle as "a lunatic, an absolute lunatic, a lunatic in the head as well as in the heart" (Abbé Trublet, Memoires pour servir à l'histoire de M. de Fontenelle [Paris, 1761], 167-68, quoted in translation in Georgia Cowart, The Origins of Modern Musical Criticism: French and Italian Music 1600-1750 [Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980], 53). It is ironic that so controversial a figure should be considered a primary spokesman for French musical aesthetics, since winning the immediate argument was
and preciosities that appeared in print. Yet these sources, valuable though they may be, were not all written with what could be described as an aesthetic purpose. In fact, they vary greatly in their scope and intent. Important historical distinctions thus become blurred when the authority of the *Mercure galant*, for example, is placed alongside that of DuBos, because this procedure at its best can do no more than reaffirm what is already widely known about musical taste at the time. It cannot be used to trace the development of a refined system of musical aesthetics. Écorcheville was therefore on the right track when he eliminated those theorists enamored of a "vague metaphysics" from his work and concentrated on criticism, allowing himself to treat his

far more important than unveiling a complete philosophical system in the notorious pamphlet wars of France.

15. For instance, one frequently encounters citations of the Abbé Noel Antoine Pluche's *Le Spectacle de la nature ou entretiens sur les particularités de l'histoire naturelle, qui ont paru les plus propes à rendre les jeunes-gens curieux, & à leur former l'esprit*, 8 vols. (Paris: Chez les frères Estienne, 1754-1755). This series was designed to instruct young men on the proper attitudes concerning everything from farm implements to religion, and while the information on music (vol. VII, pp. 97-142) is enlightening, given its late date and conservative viewpoint, it hardly constitutes a system of musical aesthetics.

16. Take for example the following comments, published in the *Mercure galant* in November, 1687: "I will not speak of music, because it does not have a point of beauty like most other things... Every man judges the beauty of a musical work according to whether it conforms to his taste. Thus although I could talk about the music of Mr. Collasse, what I said about it would not be generally received, and a private man must never give his sentiment
subject with some consistency. One should not, however, assume from this that the "metaphysicians" have nothing to offer. By taking the path opposite to Écorcheville's and avoiding music criticism, the purely aesthetic currents of the period can be observed in detail. These currents, while often reflecting contemporary standards of taste accurately, were conceived with intentions quite different from those of concurrent critical theory and musical practice.

Just as the methodological problems discussed up to this point have in one sense been historiographic, so too they have been phenomenological, for they have as their immediate cause qualities inherent in the period itself. But while the preceding three categories of problems are characterized by the techniques presently used in research, there are also problems for a rule on something that can be judged so differently" ("Je ne parlerai pas de la musique, écrit encore le 'Mercure', parce qu'elle n'a pas un point de beauté comme beaucoup d'autres choses ... Chacun juge de la beauté d'un ouvrage de musique selon que cet ouvrage est conforme à son goût. Ainsi quoi que je puisse dire de la musique de M. Collasse, ce que j'en dirais ne serait pas généralement reçu, et un particulier ne doit jamais donner son sentiment pour règle sur une chose dont on peut juger si différemment," quoted in Écorcheville, 37). Such skeptical attitudes toward the possibility of an aesthetics of music continue to be common throughout the first half of the eighteenth century (see Écorcheville, 21-53).

17. See Écorcheville, 33-35, for his rationale for rejecting writers whose works were oriented towards aesthetics proper. For an example of a modern scholar who likewise limits herself to the critical element, see the study by Georgia Cowart cited in note 14.
that belong to the data collected from a given historical period. These may be regarded as phenomenological problems. A historian routinely encounters a number of evidential inconsistencies and contradictions in the process of collating data. Many of these can be analyzed and discussed as they arise; many more are fairly trivial and can be excluded for the sake of brevity and clarity. Some, however, require the historian to formulate fundamental hypotheses on which he can base practical generalizations and establish methodological procedures. This latter kind of phenomenological difficulty lies at the heart of all historical inquiry since it is fundamental to the process of circumscribing and describing a given segment of time.

The one such phenomenon that has been central to every discussion of eighteenth-century French musical aesthetics since Écorcheville is the relationship between rationalism and music. Twentieth-century music historians have rather consistently fallen back on French rationalism when confronted by anomalous musical practices, but few of them after Écorcheville have attempted first to understand how rationalism was capable of influencing musical practice.

The current, widely-held opinion on the subject, which seems to have arisen primarily from German secondary sources, may conveniently be referred to as the affective interpretation, since it is closely related to the aforementioned
doctrine of the affections. Maria Rika Maniates begins her previously-cited article with a summary of seventeenth-century philosophical influences on music that may be taken as indicative of the affective interpretation:

In the 17th century, the rational theory of the passions rested on the Cartesian principle of the concrete and individual nature of emotions. The portrayal of these passions in music was inextricably bound up with a rhetorical concept of music as a language with a grammar and vocabulary of expressive techniques and devices. Such a concept was feasible because the affections were thought of not as mysterious, ephemeral emotions of the psyche, but rather as clear, static states of the mind. Thus, the presentation of passions in music could be rationally stereotyped into sets of figures and patterns. Bukofzer points out that these figures and patterns did not express but merely presented the affections. In this way, a specific pattern was not considered as inherently suited to "express" a particular passion, and various affections could often be "presented" by similar or identical figures.

This passage obviously rests upon René Descartes physiological categorization of emotions in Les Passions de l'ame (1650) and is intended to reflect in a musical context the rational qualities of clarity and distinction found in such works as Descartes' Discours de la méthode (1637) and Meditationes.

18. P. 118. In Maniates' defense, it should be pointed out that the information contained in this passage is derived from the following sources: Manfred Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York: W.W. Norton, 1947); Hermann Kretzschmar, "Allgemeines and Besonderes zur Affektenlehr, II," Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters fur 1912 (Leipzig, 1913), facsimile ed. (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1965), 65-78; and H.M. Schueller, "'Imitation' and 'Expression' in the British Music Criticism in the 18th Century," The Musical Quarterly XXXIV (October, 1948), 544-66.
de prima philosophia (1641). One is therefore led to make two assumptions about the affective interpretation: it is based on the idea that the emotions depicted in music were clearly recognized through certain widely accepted conventions, and it is primarily derived from and applicable to French musical opinion.

Maniates then contrasts this rationalistic theory of musical aesthetics with what is seen as the increasingly subjective outlook of the eighteenth century, represented in this instance by François Cartaud de Villate's rejection of mathematical explanations of music: "One grants a little too much honor to our masters of music if one believes them to be great mathematicians. A science whose rules vary according to the caprices of taste cannot be established on the immutable rules of the proportions."¹⁹ Scholars employing the affective interpretation greet statements of this kind as signs of incipient romantic attitudes, because the intellectual control implicit in the highly systematized, affective approach seems to be rejected.

No one can fault scholars for recognizing the importance of Descartes' epochal writings. However, one must ask whether this affective interpretation of the relationship between

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¹⁹. "On feroit un peu trop d'honneur à nos maîtres de Musique si on les croyoit de grands Mathématiciens; une science dont les principes varient selon les caprices du goût ne peut être établie sur les règles immuables des proportions" (Essai historique et philosophique sur le goût [Paris, 1736], quoted in Maniates, 119).
rationalism and music has a real basis in history. If seventeenth-century France is the seat of this musical rationalism (and indeed what other nation provides a likely source?), then seventeenth-century French music should reflect the trend. But nowhere in the operas of Jean-Baptiste Lully or the suites of Louis Couperin, for example, can this pervasive, literal-minded application of affective theory be found.²⁰ Those instances where the music does adopt a significative function seem rather to be outgrowths of the pictorial tradition of composition that is traceable back to Renaissance Italy.

If, however, we turn to writings on music, we find that Descartes himself left explanations of the role of music in rationalistic theory in some of his letters to Marin Mersenne,²¹ and these explanations allow us to construct an alternative interpretation that is far more consistent with extant primary sources. In a letter from January, 1630, Descartes states that the variability of men's tastes prevents certain matters from being studied

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²⁰ Hence David Fuller's observation that in French music "expression of the passions was not allowed to go beyond a gentle poignancy" (review of French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeux to Rameau by James R. Anthony [New York: W.W. Norton, 1974], Journal of the American Musicological Society XXVIII [Summer, 1975], 375).

rationally. In other words, he believed that if a subject does not evoke the same response invariably in every person who attends it, then that subject does not lend itself well to scientific inquiry and must be relegated to the status of a mere sensory experience. Thus, while certain musical elements have traditionally been subject to mathematical description, other elements are indeterminate and cannot be so neatly resolved:

I say [that the interval of a twelfth] is simpler [than that of a fifth], not more pleasant, because it is necessary to observe that this entire calculation serves only to show that consonances are simpler—or if you prefer, sweeter and more perfect—but not accordingly more pleasant. . . . In order to determine which is more pleasant, it is necessary to assume the capacity of the auditor, which like taste varies from person to person. Thus some will prefer to hear a single voice, others a concert, and so on, just as one person prefers that which is sweet and another that which is a little tart or bitter, and so on. 22

In effect, Descartes and later French writers were willing to dismiss as subordinate those experiences that could not be accounted for rationally. This becomes evident when Descartes extends his argument to include the subject of beauty in a letter dated March 18, 1630:

22. Je dis plus simple, non pas plus agreable; car il faut remarquer que tout ce calcul sert seulement pour monstrer quelles consonances sont les plus simples, ou si vous voulez, les plus douces & parfaites, mais non pas pour cela les plus agreables. . . . Mais pour determiner ce qui est plus agreable, il faut supposer la capacite de l'auditeur, laquelle change comme le goust, selon les personnes; ainsi les vns aimeront mieux entendre une seule voix, les autres un concert, &c.; de mesme que l'vn aime mieux ce qui est doux, & l'autre ce qui est vn peu aigre ou amer, &c," (Descartes, 108).
In answer to your [Mersenne's] query as to whether one can establish the reason for beauty, it is just like when you asked why one sound is more agreeable than another, though the word beauty seems to relate more particularly to the sense of sight. Generally, neither the beautiful nor the pleasant signifies anything except a connection between our judgment and the object, and because the judgments of men are so different, one cannot say that the beautiful or the pleasant has any determined measure. . . . What will please the most people will simply be named most beautiful, though this cannot be determined. 23

Descartes' premise—that what cannot be quantified cannot be studied rationally—is in complete agreement with Cartaud de Villate's assertion that taste cannot be mathematically explained, even though it precedes the latter by nearly a century. 24 One would expect these men to reject in the same way the idea that stereotyped musical figures can serve several different expressive conventions, for the possibility of more than one interpretation would lead both men to conclude that music is too vague to serve any expressive function at all by itself. Such a notion would probably not have occurred to them, however, because they were only trying

23. "Pour vostre question, sçaouoir si on peut establir la raison du beau, c'est tout de méme que ce que vous demandiez auparavant, pourquoi vn son est plus agreable que l'autre, sinon que le mot beau semble plus parti-culierement se rapporter au sens de la vœu. Mais generalement ny le beau, n'y l'agreable, ne signifie rien qu'vn rapport de nostre iugement à l'objet; & pource que les iugemens des hommes sont si differens, on ne peut dire que le beau, ny l'agreable, ayent aucune mesure determinée. . . .Mais ce qui plaira à plus de gens, pourra estre nommé simplement le plus beau, ce qui ne sçauroit estre determiné" (Descartes, 132-133).

24. Cf., note 16.
to explain why music could not be studied within the given philosophical system.

One may therefore hypothesize, as Écorcheville has done, a persistent rationalistic basis for French attitudes toward music that spans a fairly large block of time and encompasses the seemingly contradictory statements found in the literature.  

Music in the seventeenth century was regarded as serving one of two ancillary functions: it could accompany the declamation of a dramatic text or it could serve as a backdrop for courtly pastimes, routines, and ceremonies. It lacked the innate clarity of subject necessary in order for it to be accepted as an independent art. In Descartes' explanation of beauty, then, a subject drawn from one of the visual arts could be considered beautiful because its effect could be attributed to specific, visible details, but the less distinct, musical subject could achieve no more

25. For example, Écorcheville writes: "Ancients and Moderns alike strive to limit narrowly the artistic ideal in order to be sovereign masters in their chosen domain. Each seeks to narrow the field where the liberty of the poet or musician will be exercised, because he hopes thus to escape from the tyranny of a taste that is not his . . . . In music above all, the aesthetic phenomenon raises to [the level of] an instinctive force which manifests itself blindly and does not relate to the categories of the intellect properly speaking" (p. 16).

26. The function of church music was rarely questioned to the extent that the function of secular music was. Thus Pluche comments that music "renders to religion the services that Lully rendered to vanity" ("rendoit à religion les services qui Lulli rendoit à la vanité," vol. VII, p. 138).
than an attribution of pleasantness. By the eighteenth century, the popularity of musical stage presentations had become too great for music to be categorically denied the status of an art, but the critics nevertheless maintained that music was dependent upon a text to elevate it to this status, for it could not otherwise convey fixed meanings. Instrumental music, though generally conceded to be a lesser art, was likewise dependent upon extra-musical connotations. All of this is not to say that music was not enjoyed or that concerts were not attended; it was just that a firm role for music in the philosophical system underlying the period was lacking. To the public at large, music remained a pleasantry, a source of sensuous, but not intellectual beauty. The manifestations of this attitude may have varied from period to period, but the fundamental, rational assumptions continued unchanged even into the nineteenth century.

27. Pluche, though rather liberal in certain matters (see for example his remarks concerning the rivalry of French and Italian music, vol. VII, pp. 98-99), is adamant on this subject: "In a word, pretending to content someone with a long series of sounds destitute of meaning is directly contrary to the very nature of music, which is to imitate, like all the other arts, the image and sentiment that occupy the intellect" ("en un mot de pretendre contenter l'homme par une longue suite de sons destitués de sens: ce qui est directement contraire à la nature même de la musique, qui est d'imiter, comme font tous les beaux arts, l'image & le sentiment qui occupent l'esprit," vol. VII, p. 111).

28. Indeed, Martin Cooper suggests that they remain unchanged even in later French music: "The French composer is consciously concerned with the two data which no one can question--his intelligence and his senses. Music has
assumption that serves as a basis for most of the critical literature on music written in France during the first half of the eighteenth century.

The implications of this interpretation are substantial. Even if there existed a "rhetorical concept of music as a language with a grammar and vocabulary of expressive techniques" (a complex question in itself), it was not strong enough single-handedly to raise music to the undisputed level of an independent art. This state of affairs leads to two important propositions. First of all, anyone who attempted to reconcile beauty in general and musical beauty in particular with rationalistic principles could be considered, at least on an elementary level, an aesthetician, since this involved working against established beliefs toward values that would eventually result in modern aesthetics. Secondly, the question of musical beauty, though related to that of musical expression, is more fundamental, since a notion of musical expression dependent upon extra-musical considerations already predominated. The immediate goal for the aestheticians

remained in France longer than elsewhere the art of arranging sounds in agreeable and intellectually satisfying patterns" (French Music from the Death of Berlioz to the Death of Faure [New York: Oxford University Press, 1951], 1).

29. In fact, musical expression as we know it did not receive a great deal of attention until the time of the Encyclopedists, who speculated on music's origin as a primeval, inarticulate language of the emotions (see, for example, Étienne Bonnot de Condillac's Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines [1746], Diderot's Lettre sur les sourds et muets, à l'usage de ceux qui entendent et qui parlent [1751], and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Essai sur l'origine des langues [1753]). See also chapter six.
was to explain the artistic merit of music without subverting the intellectual principles of their time.

Criteria and Procedures

The solutions offered to the problems just discussed can now be translated into the criteria used in selecting and presenting data in this study.

1. Various writings on music must first be distinguished and then grouped according to their function and purpose. These groups can then be isolated and studied in greater detail than has hitherto been possible. There are four French treatises from the first half of the eighteenth century that seek to reconcile the subject of artistic beauty with the tenets of rationalism: Crousaz's *Traité du beau* (1715), DuBos' *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719), André's *Essai sur le beau* (1741), and Batteux' *Les Beaux arts réduits à un même principe* (1746). Interestingly, writings of this scope and subject seem to be confined to this period, probably reflecting intellectual needs that differ from those of the periods immediately preceding and succeeding. These differing needs will be considered more

30. Indicative of this is the fact that while secondary musical sources rarely mention all four aestheticians, secondary non-musical sources do so fairly consistently, showing that the accomplishments of the aestheticians are readily acknowledged outside of the field of musicology (see, for example, Ira O. Wade, *The Structure and Form of the French Enlightenment*, 2 vols. [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977], I, 109-10).
fully in the final chapter of this study. It is also interesting to note that these sources devote substantial space to the subject of musical beauty, probably reflecting the fact that music was somewhat more problematic than the other arts. Once a writer had made the leap of faith necessary to justify beauty within a rationalistic milieu, however, it required but a short distance more to include music as an art. It should be remembered that the aestheticians did not so much propose new ways of writing or listening to music as reassess existing opinions on music in light of their newly established theories.

2. **Writers must be allowed, as far as is possible, to speak for themselves through their treatises.** Too often, isolated comments have been drawn from sources and allowed to stand as representative of the beliefs and theories of their authors. If we are to know these sources rather than random ideas contained within, other factors must enter into the discussion as well. One must be aware of the background of the author, the format of his treatise, the structure of his aesthetic system, and even his literary style before his system can be viewed from the standpoint of musical aesthetics. These factors have admittedly received piecemeal attention in secondary sources, but they have never been brought together in a single, comparative essay.
3. Care must be taken to keep historical comparisons and comments from obfuscating the contents of the treatises. This too stems from the present need to know the treatises intimately. Three steps have been taken to insure that the primacy of this criterion remains intact. First of all, traditional historical terminology applicable to this subject has been stripped of its generalized connotations and used only in a descriptive sense. Secondly, relevant observations based on information from other periods or drawn from contemporary critical literature have been incorporated into footnotes or placed in a separate section at the end of each chapter. Finally, the collation of the sources has been reserved for the final chapter, so that it does not interfere with their exposition.
CHAPTER II

JEAN-PIERRE DE CROUSAZ, TRAITÉ
DU BEAU (1715)

Little has been written about the life of Jean-Pierre de Crousaz (1663-1750).¹ At the time his Traité du beau was published,² he was a professor at the university in his native city, Lausanne. This treatise and a critique of Alexander Pope's Essay on Man are his best-known works and represent his interest in the philosophical and theological questions of his time. Also extant are a number of letters to colleagues, as yet unpublished, that further reflect his involvement with controversial issues of the day.

Although the Traité was popular enough to have received critical treatment in Diderot's Encyclopédie article on beauty,³ it was the least reprinted and translated of the four treatises that will be considered in the course of this


A second edition appeared in 1724, substituting a chapter on beauty in religion for the earlier chapter on beauty in music. The first German edition, translated anonymously by a member of an intellectual academy in Königsberg, appeared in 1753 with the section on music intact, but the section was again deleted in the version given in Johann Nicolaus Forkel's *Musikalische-kritische Bibliothek* of 1778. It seems likely that the chapter was stricken from later editions not because of its "obtuseness," as Maria Rika Maniates suggests, but because its contents, which deal extensively with acoustical phenomena, were soon outdated by the theories published in 1722 in Rameau's *Traité de l'harmonie*.

According to Crousaz, the stimulus for the writing of the *Traité du beau* was a "conversation concerning the beauty of a palace." Though difficult to bring to a rational end, lively disputes on matters of beauty were not uncommon, as

4. See the appendix to this study for a listing of the eighteenth-century editions and translations of the four treatises under consideration.

5. The chapter on music is erroneously listed as being present in the second edition in Francois Lesure, ed., *Écrits imprimés concernant la musique*, 2 vols., series B/VI of *Répertoire international des sources musicales* (Munich: G. Henle, 1971), I, 244.

the format of Le Cerf de La Viéville's Comparaison\textsuperscript{7} well attests, and the abstruseness of the subject seems if anything to have served as an incentive to such debates. Sooner or later, even the most rational minds of the seventeenth century had had to resort, however reluctantly, to the epithet \textit{je ne sais quoi} to explain beauty, leaving to their eighteenth-century counterparts the task of either solving the riddle of what constitutes beauty or dismissing the issue as unimportant. For Crousaz, the solution lay in expanding the idea of beauty to include the contradictory aspects of what may be called beauty-related experience, so that he could explain how one man can call beautiful whatever is pleasing while another can justifiably maintain that an object is beautiful without being pleasant.\textsuperscript{8} At the heart of Crousaz' argument, then, is the notion that questions of taste and beauty are somehow related in a single, continuous process.

The whole of the \textit{Traité} is constructed on Crousaz' two-fold premise of beauty as presented in the second chapter. Only after the two branches have been clearly defined does he attempt, in the third chapter, to place them in a broader

\textsuperscript{7}See, for example, those portions of the \textit{Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française} [1704-6] translated in \textit{Source Readings in Music History}, ed. Oliver Strunk (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950), 489-507.

\textsuperscript{8}Crousaz, 1-3.
context—that of nature. Then, after exhaustive illustration, he turns to the problem of subjective experience in his fifth through seventh chapters. After connecting routine, beauty-related experiences to his original definition, he is able to devote successive chapters to expositions of beauty in science, virtue, eloquence, and music.

It has already been mentioned that Crousaz relies on principles of acoustics to strengthen his case for the beauty of music. He seems to have thought that he could treat musical beauty only after having established some rational basis, and because of this, the chapter on music is by far the longest in the book, comprising 131 of the total 302 pages. I am of the opinion that the reason for this digression lies in the emerging role of music as an art. What was regarded as a functional pleasantry in the preceding century, was now, in some quarters, being recognized as a more significant phenomenon. Music would have to be subjected to the same rational scrutiny that the other arts had already received. For Crousaz, as well as some later authors, such scientific details were comparable to the techniques that had to be mastered by poets and painters and could be used to justify the elevation of music to one

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9. For example, Yves-Marie André added a lecture on the physics of music to his four lectures (on beauty in painting, morality, les ouvrages d'esprit, and music) that make up the Essai sur le beau (see chapter four of this study). Similarly, Johann Mattheson opened his Der vollkommene Capellmeister (1739) with a chapter on the physics and physiology of sound.
of the higher arts. Because the digression on the physical properties of music does not substantially add to the author's theory of musical beauty, it will be largely ignored in the present discussion.

Aesthetics

Crousaz's main supposition is that confusion about beauty arises because it can be experienced in two different ways. There is a rational or intellectual beauty (les idées), and there is a beauty derived from sensory perceptions (les sentiments). These beauties are internal and external, respectively, in their origins, and Crousaz's perception of them as a dualistic entity probably owes something to Descartes:

Ideas occupy the intellect, whereas sentiments interest the heart. Ideas amuse us: they exercise the attention and sometimes fatigue it, depending on how they are composed and combined. But sentiments dominate us: they seize us, determine our condition, and render us happy or sad according to whether they are sweet or annoying, agreeable or disagreeable. Ideas are easily expressed, but it is very difficult to describe these sentiments—it is impossible in conversation to impart a precise understanding of them to someone who has not had similar experiences.

We are, moreover, the masters of our ideas. We stir them, and they originate one after the other. And provided that some sentiment does not maintain them or alienate them, we can arrest our attention as much as it pleases us, or just as easily turn it where we wish. But sentiments depend on exterior objects and on certain interior dispositions over which we have no control. This
is why we cannot always feel as we please or, to the contrary, avoid feeling what displeases us.¹⁰

Lest one interpret this passage as an apologia for a life of the feelings, it should be noted that the word sentiment, as used during this period, apparently carried none of the broad emotional connotations presently associated with it. Rather, it was closely linked to the idea of perception. The five senses, the information derived from them, and the resultant feelings, emotional or otherwise, were inseparably bound by the expression les sentiments.¹¹ Sentiment, therefore,

¹⁰. "Les idées occupent l'Esprit, les sentiments intéressent le Coeur, les idées nous amusent, elles exercent l'attention, & quelquefois la fatiguent, suivant qu'elles sont plus ou moins composées, & plus ou moins combinées entr'elles; mais les sentiments nous dominent, ils s'emparent de nous, ils décident de notre sort & nous rendent heureux ou malheureux, selon qu'ils sont doux ou fâcheux, agréables ou désagréables. On exprime aisément ses idées, mais il est très-difficile de décrire ses sentiments, il est même impossible d'en donner par aucun discours une exacte connaissance à ceux qui n'en ont jamais éprouvé de semblables.

Nous sommes encore assez maîtres de nos idées, nous les excitons nous-mêmes, elles naissent les unes des autres, & pourvu qu'il n'y ait pas quelque sentiment qui les entretienne ou qui les éloigne, nous y arrêtons notre attention autant qu'il nous plait, & nous l'en détournons, avec la même facilité des que nous le voulons. Mais les sentiments dépendent & des objets extérieurs, & de certaines dispositions intérieures qui ne sont pas en notre puissance: voilà pourquoi nous ne pouvons pas toujours sentir ce qui nous fait plaisir, ni au contraire toujours éviter de sentir ce qui nous déplait" (Crousaz, 8). For a comparison with Descartes, see the commentary at the end of this chapter.

¹¹. Thus on p. 583 of Léon Clédat's Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue française (Paris: Hachette, n.d.), we find the verb sentir defined as "all species of perception, either external or internal . . . to experience an impression--physical, moral, or intellectual--and
differs from intellect in that it represents the immediate, physical experience as opposed to the reflective, rational experience.

Rather than dismissing beauty because of its diverse manifestations, Crousaz proposes a conception of beauty that is general enough to encompass it in all its forms. Sometimes the beauty-related experience is intellectual, sometimes it is sensuous. Further, some people may be predisposed to one kind of experience; therefore while the majority is too inclined to depend on its sentiments in deciding the beauty of an object, philosophers rely too heavily on the intellect in forming their opinions.¹²

We should not, however, assume that reason and sentiment exist in a state of constant opposition. Crousaz seeks to unite them through that eighteenth-century panacea, nature. For him, nature is less an ideal or goal than an embodiment of God's will; it is the universe as God created it out of diverse elements. This principle of unity in diversity is a key element in Crousaz' argument. Our notion of what is beautiful is gleaned from diverse intellectual and sensory experiences that combine to form a single conceptual entity. We take pleasure in natural beauty because nature, for all of

¹². Crousaz, 10.
its vicissitudes, is unified by virtue of being God's creation, and art imitates nature by achieving a semblance of natural unity in spite of its diverse technical elements.\textsuperscript{13}

After defining beauty and relating it to Nature, Crousaz turns to the question of how beauty makes its respective appeals to the intellect and to the senses. He establishes first of all that the proper balance of variety and unity is essential in pleasing the intellect.

[The intellect] is made for diversity, and diversity animates the intellect, keeping it from boredom and languor. But it is necessary also to have uniformity in the midst of diversity, or else this diversity fatigues and confuses the intellect. If diversity and unity are both present, the former animates the intellect as much as the latter relaxes it.\textsuperscript{14}

This congenial blend is the product of three qualities: regularity, order, and proportion. Regularity accounts for the similarity of the diverse parts, order accounts for their arrangement, and proportion accounts for the way in which the first two qualities are combined. The intellect is satisfied through perceiving these relationships.\textsuperscript{15} The intellect would be helpless, however, were it not supplied

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, 12-14. Interestingly, Crousaz avoids using the expression \textit{imitation of nature}. It is possible that he hoped to make his treatise appear more scientific by avoiding the problematic word \textit{imitation}.

\textsuperscript{14} "... il est fait pour la variété, elle l'anime & l'empêche de tomber dans l'ennui, & dans la languer. Mais il lui faut aussi de l'uniformité au milieu de la diversité, sans quoi cette diversité le fatigue & l'embrouille, au lieu que s'il a l'un & l'autre, autant que la variété l'anime, autant l'uniformité le delasse" (\textit{Ibid.}, 12).

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, 14-16.
with information by the senses. An artwork must therefore be equally capable of appealing to the senses, and in order to do so, three more qualities must be employed: grandeur, novelty, and diversity. Grandeur stirs the senses through the impression of size, novelty stirs them through uniqueness, and diversity stirs them by combining the first two qualities. Together, these three qualities overwhelm the senses and thereby gain the interest of the intellect.  

Some problems clearly remain. If the judgment of the senses is to be as important as that of the intellect, it must be swift and true. A viewer's immediate reaction to a work of art must, for the sake of credibility, be accurate enough to foresee what his intellect will eventually verify. To give the sentiments this ability, Crousaz again resorts, in a frequently cited passage, to the wisdom of God:

[The] Creator, infinitely wise and incapable of contradicting Himself in His thought and creations has not rendered man susceptible to two different kinds of thought in order that they would form a

16. Ibid., 74-79. Charles Avison uses a similar threefold format in his An Essay on Musical Expression (London, 1753): "In Music, the perfection of composition arises from melody, harmony and expression. Melody of air, is the work of invention . . . Harmony gives beauty and strength to the established melodies . . . Expression arises from a combination of the other two and is no more than a strong and proper application of them to the intended subject" (quoted in Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries, ed. Peter le Huray and James Day [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981], 61). Since Avison exhibited an extraordinary familiarity with contemporary French writings, it is likely that he knew the Traité du beau.
continuous source of opposition and contrariety. Everything that the Creator finds well made, accomplished in its genre, or approaching perfection will be approved by the human intellect— if it thinks it just—as soon as it has knowledge of it. It is for this reason that the intellect naturally loves order and harmony, the Creator having found it appropriate to make everything with weight and measure, and the universe subsisting only by the proportions that reign there. But that which merits being approved must at the same time excite agreeable sentiments. This accord of our ideas with our sentiments is worthy of our perfect Author.

Everything that, in making an impression on our senses, when they are not deranged, gives place to agreeable sentiments, is made and acts in a manner of which the idea would please by itself were it already known.17

Crousaz is quick to concede that this is only an idealized version of what actually happens, for as we have already noted, he believes that few people experience beauty through the full use of both their intellect and their senses. He

17. "Son Créateur infiniment sage, & par conséquent incapable de se contredire ni dans ses pensées ni dans ses ouvrages, n'a point rendu l'Homme susceptible de deux manières de penser si différentes, afin qu'elles fussent en lui une source continue d'oppositions & de contrariétés. Tout ce que le Créateur trouve bien fait & regarde comme achevé dans son genre, ou comme approchant de la perfection, l'Esprit humain, s'il pense juste, ne manque pas de l'approver dès qu'il en a la connaissance. C'est par cette raison qu'il aime naturellement l'ordre & harmonie, le Créateur ayant trouvé à propos de faire tout avec poids & avec mesure, & l'Univers ne subsistant que par les proportions qui y règnent. Mais ce qui merite d'être ainsi approuvé doit en même temps exciter des sensations agréables, cet accord de nos idées avec nos sentiments est digne de la sagesse de notre parfait Auteur.

"Tout ce donc qui faisant impression sur les organes de nos sens, quand ils ne sont point dérangés, donne lieu à des sentiments agréables, est fait & agit d'une manière dont l'idée nous plairait déjà par elle-même, si nous en avions la connaissance" (Crousaz, 64).
blames this on a general atrophy due to the travails brought on by the fall of man.\textsuperscript{18} People have come to allow personal prejudices—temperament, love, habit, passion, and fickleness—to interfere with their judgment.\textsuperscript{19} However, residual traces of the ability to perceive beauty in an ideally balanced manner are still strong in some people, and can even be cultivated in those who have little innate ability.\textsuperscript{20}

Problems in defining taste cease to exist in Crousaz' system. A person who possesses good taste possesses a sensory capability that allows his sentiments to presage what his intellect will eventually conclude. One who has bad taste is either led by his senses to appreciate something that is devoid of rational beauty or led by his intellect to admire something that is overly learned or pedantic.\textsuperscript{21} In the same way, a work of art that appeals to both the senses and the intellect achieves true beauty, while one that appeals to either the senses or the intellect alone can never be more than a mere pleasantry.

On Music

The final twenty pages of the \textit{Traité} restate Crousaz' principles of beauty—its dual nature and its unity in diversity—in musical terms. Unity in diversity especially is a property well suited to the description of the beauty of music. Harmony and melody both must proceed according to the

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 66-67. See also note 9.  \textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 45-52.  \textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 68-71.  \textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 68.
relationship of individual pitches to a tonal center (which Crousaz calls a dominant tone) and hence are rationally governed by a set of rules that precludes their random combination. The ear, too, depends on the tonal center for unity, since the act of listening consists of subconsciously comparing what has gone before with what is being perceived at each moment. Composers thus employ preludes to establish the necessary tonal center for the ear and erase previous tonal centers from the memory.\textsuperscript{22} The use of repetitions in dance music and refrains in vocal music also serves to unify compositions, and Crousaz even calls upon the regularly recurring downbeats to aid in this capacity.\textsuperscript{23} The highest form of musical unity, however, is attained only when words and music combine in the expression of a single emotion:

The cadence of the verses; their brevity or length; the sweetness or rudeness of the words that compose them; the rapidity or slowness with which these words, and the syllables that comprise them, exist in pronunciation; the ease with which points where the voice must pause fall on a complete idea (or on an idea that is only half expressed, as when the things being said merit that the voice be interrupted, and when they are of such a nature that they can only be pronounced with effort); all of these combinations, when well managed and well proportioned with the ideas that one desires to express, serve to render the ideas more lively and the sentiments more profound. But when the conformity of tones is joined to these combinations, the human intellect--born to enjoy just relationships

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 282-85. See especially p. 285.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 292.
and to approve of proportions--finds nothing in the songs that does not enchant . . . 24

The proper mixture of words and music brings out a unity between two arts that would otherwise be characterized as diverse. It is therefore imperative that the composer add no agréments that would obscure the meaning and sentiment of the text and destroy this balance. 25

In order to relate his twofold definition of beauty more clearly to common musical experiences, Crousaz resorts to an account of the rules of music that is reminiscent of the Neoclassical tradition in art. But where the writers of the preceding century relegated everything not covered by the rules to the realm of je ne sais quoi, Crousaz chose instead to show greater leniency toward the rules and give the artist

24. "La cadence des Vers, leur brieveté, leur longueur, la douceur ou la rudesse des mots qui les composent, la rapidité ou la lenteur que ces mots, & les syllables dont ils sont composés exigent dans la prononciation, l'habilité avec laquelle les endroits, où la voix doit se reposer, tombent sur un sens complet, ou sur un sens qui n'est qu'à demi exprimé, quand les choses qu'on dit meritent que la voix soit entrecoupée, & qu'elles sont d'une nature, à ne les prononcer qu'avec effort. Toutes ces combinaisons bien menagées, & bien proportionnées avec les idées & les sentimens qu'on veut faire naître, servent à rendre ces idées plus vives & ces sentimens plus profonds. Mais quand le raport des Tons se joint à tous ceux-là, l'Esprit humain, né pour goûter de justes rapports & pour approuver les proportions, ne trouve rien qui ne l'enchante dans des airs . . ." (Ibid., 293-94).

25. Ibid., 294-95, 301.
more freedom of choice. He believed that the craft involved in composing should be subtle and unobtrusive, for too close an observance of the rules is confining and even boring, but he also felt that rules could not be avoided altogether. The composition must form an organic whole, flowing naturally from the composer's mind. If the composer were to rely on the rules to help him overcome a problem, his difficulty would immediately be sensed by the listener. Crousaz has in effect relegated the rules themselves to the realm of common sense, but even as he does so he expects the composer to accept an increased accountability for his creations. At this point, rational order—in direct contradiction to what most critics would continue to maintain—was no longer single-handedly responsible for the beauty of a work of art.

While some scholars feel that aestheticians like Crousaz adopt a more metaphysical stance in explaining musical beauty than is necessary, it must be admitted that Crousaz finds space for practical considerations as well. In fact, we have already seen that his lengthy section on acoustics was

26. In stressing the autonomy of the artist, he moves toward DuBos' idea of artistic genius (see chapter three of this study).

27. Crousaz, 295-98.

motivated, at least in part, by a concern for the practical side of musical beauty. Crousaz shows a great deal of interest in the use of chromatic alteration to heighten musical expression, and links this to the expressive color of the major or minor third that determines the modality of the key. And though he does find the major mode to be serious and forceful in general and the minor to be better suited for expressing delicate and tender sentiments, he eschews the traditional, affective characterization of the church modes:

I doubt nevertheless that this difference [between modes] goes so far as ancient tradition would have it. It seems to me that experience proves to the contrary, for in each mode there are lively, languid, and serious songs that succeed completely in making the effect to which they are destined because the design is well executed. It is from the proportion of its parts that an air draws its greatest efficacy and beauty.

29. Crousaz, 285-86. A number of details contained on pp. 285-89—particularly the acknowledgment of a twelve-mode system and the expressive characterization of modes according to the presence of a major or minor third—would seem to suggest either a familiarity with or at least information derived from the second edition of Gioseffo Zarlino's *Istitutioni harmoniche* (1573). Notably, on the question of affective characterizations of the church modes (see below, note 30), Crousaz could be seen as arguing directly against Zarlino. Although there were no new publications of the *Istitutioni harmoniche* during the late seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, André does quote "le célèbre Zarlin" in his *Essai sur le beau* (Amsterdam, 1741), rev. ed. (Paris: Gameau, 1770), 184.

30. Cf., the discussion of Descartes in chapter one of this study.

31. "Je doute pourtant que cette différence aille aussi loin qu'une ancienne tradition le dit, & il me semble que l'expérience prouve le contraire, car dans chaque mode on
It can thus be seen that Crousaz was still very much at home with the tenets of rationalism. Matters of musical expression were ultimately the result of a composer's skill in setting the text, and while the beauty of a piece may have rested largely on this skill, its supreme test was in the audience's reaction.

Commentary

Although Crousaz is usually portrayed as a thinker in the Cartesian mold, he departs from this tradition in significant ways, and his work is perhaps more indicative of the French rationalistic tradition in general. The extensive use of definition and inductive logic, for example, were considered admirable traits in France long before Descartes became famous. (One might even argue that Descartes' fame rested on his consummate ability to work within this frame.) These traits were in fact equally characteristic of the more

trouve des airs vifs, des airs languissans, des airs sérieux qui font tout l'effet à quoi on les destine, parce que le dessin en est bien exécuté; car c'est de la proportion de ses parties qu'un air tire sa plus grande efficace & sa plus grande beauté" (Crousaz, 289). For more general information, see pp. 289-91.

speculative tradition, in music theory for example, that had emerged during the Renaissance.\footnote{33}

As for the ways in which Crousaz differs from Descartes, these are often more striking than the similarities between the two men. It has already been noted that Crousaz' dualistic definition of beauty is reminiscent of Cartesian dualism, but as Descartes himself pointed out, sensation and thought had always been looked upon as lower and higher forms of experience. His innovation had been to make them a single process, without, however, altering the established hierarchy.\footnote{34} Crousaz' innovation consisted of putting these attributes on the same level so that the inevitable role played by the sentiments in beauty-related experiences would no longer have to be ignored. This points to an even more fundamental difference between the two thinkers concerning the physical process of perceiving beauty. Descartes had used a purely mechanistic approach, describing the soul (l'Âme) as nothing more than thought.\footnote{35}


35. Ibid., 142.}
Crousaz, on the other hand, avoided discussing the soul altogether—allowing it to retain its traditional, spiritual function—and used the word *esprit* to describe intellectual processes. In this way he avoided compromising his beliefs the way Descartes frequently did. The very religiosity of the *Traité* is antithetical to the mechanistic theory of experience and, indeed, to the spirit of rationalism itself. Finally, it will be noted from the first chapter of this study that Descartes had repeatedly refused to deal with the abstract notion of beauty, particularly in music, because the sheer variety of responses made it impossible to objectify this kind of experience.\(^{36}\) Crousaz chose instead to place the subjectivity of beauty in a more rational context.

Since Crousaz did not make citations,\(^{37}\) one can only guess as to how strongly he identified with various predecessors, but it seems clear that he believed himself aligned with the conservative, rational element in French society. His aesthetics are held together by a Pythagorean concern for proportion and measure that is equally characteristic of the papers of the Académie des Sciences, contemporary treatises

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\(^{36}\) See Descartes' letters to Marin Mersenne of January, March 4, and March 18, 1630 cited in chapter one, note 21 of this study.

\(^{37}\) He avoided direct quotations because he found the ideas of others, upon reflection, to have become inextricably linked with his own (see the *avertissement*).
on music, and the writings of Plato. The comparison with Plato can be extended even further because of Crousaz' reliance on the principle of unity in diversity. The application of this principle, which Crousaz links to the pursuit of religious truth, sounds remarkably like a passage from The Republic:

For if unity is adequately seen by itself or apprehended by some other sensation, it would not tend to draw the mind to the apprehension of the essence . . . But if some contradiction is always coincidentally with it, so that it no more appears to be one than the opposite, there would forthwith be need of something to judge between them, and it would compel the soul to be at a loss and to inquire, by arousing thought in itself, and to ask, whatever then is the one as such, and thus the study of unity will be one of the studies that guide and convert the soul to the contemplation of true being.

Following a logical format that is reminiscent of that used in Plato's treatises, Crousaz' guiding principle of unity in diversity leads the intellect inductively to the contemplation of beauty not only in the arts, but in science, morality, and religion as well. His idea of beauty in fact comes very close

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40. Trans. Paul Shorey, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), 524E-525A. For comparison with Crousaz, see notes 13 and 16. Numerous writers throughout history have borrowed this idea from Plato, including Saint Augustine and, in music, Zarlino.
to the Platonic notion of ideal beauty or truth.\textsuperscript{41} This inductive approach is also characteristic of Descartes' rationalism and can be contrasted with the more deductive, Aristotelian approach of English empiricism.

Even though Crousaz would have undoubtedly preferred to see himself as upholding the values of his time, his elevation of the sentiment to the level of intellect—along with a corresponding shift of focus from the creative act to the experiencing of art—can be regarded as progressive in light of later developments. The issues raised in the \textit{Traité du beau} recur time and again in the treatises on aesthetics written between 1700 and 1750 and serve to initiate a systematic approach to the appreciation of art whose tenets still have currency today.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{41} "Plato's remains a philosophy of a single standard; for all things, including art, are ultimately judged by the one criterion of their relation to the same ideas. On these grounds, the poet is inescapably the competitor of the artisan, the lawmaker, and the moralist..." (M.H. Abrams, \textit{The Mirror and the Lamp: Theory and the Critical Tradition} [New York: Oxford University Press, 1953], 9).

CHAPTER III

JEAN-BAPTISTE DUBOS, Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture (1719)

The life of Abbé Jean-Baptiste DuBos (1670-1742) stands in marked contrast to that of Crousaz.¹ As a young man, DuBos traveled extensively in the service of the Parsian bureau of foreign affairs, acquiring something of a cosmopolitan reputation. The vigor with which he pursued interests such as collecting medallions and attending operas makes him appear today as more of a dilettante than a man of letters. But his interests ran deeper than the simple pleasures of a man of the world. His advice in operatic matters was actively sought by the then foundering Académie Royale de Musique under the direction of Nicolas de Francine. During his travels, he was received and befriended by great thinkers such as John Locke and the famous skeptic Pierre Bayle. The popularity of his Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur


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la peinture² was immense, and won him a seat in the Académie Française in the year following its publication. His reputation was such that foreign visitors desired his company in much the same way that Charles Burney would one day seek out the aging Voltaire. Let us take for example the account of Charles-Étienne Jordan, a resident of Berlin:

How happy I was that day! I had the honor and pleasure to meet the Abbé Du Bos, author of the Parallel of Poetry and Painting [sic], one of the best works of this century. He receives foreign callers most politely. His conversation is beautiful; the language is ever pure, the expressions well chosen; he first seizes a topic and develops it with much pleasantness. He proves his erudition, but with a precision of ideas which shows his nicety of wit.³

It is this wonderful integration of thought and eloquence, interest and ability that makes Du Bos one of the most original thinkers of his day. The list of those who claimed to have been influenced by him contains some of the most illustrious names of the century, including Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, Edmund Burke, Claude Adrien Helvétius, David Hume, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Moses Mendelssohn, and Voltaire.

2. (Paris: J. Mariette, 1719). For the present study, the 7th ed. (Paris: Pissot, 1770), facsimile ed. (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1967) has been used.

The organization of the *Reflexions* is unlike that of other treatises and is perhaps suggestive of the author's ill-concealed disdain for the pedantic tendencies of the time. DuBos preferred a loosely connected, almost aphoristic succession of topics that can be repetitious and confusing, though rarely does it become boring. The treatise was originally divided into two volumes. In the first he undertook to show "in what consists the beauty of a painting or a poem, what merit these arts can draw from the rules, and what assistance they can draw from the other arts."4 The second volume is a potpourri of subjects, including some of those for which DuBos is best known: artistic genius, the "sixth sense" in artistic judgment, and the effect of climate on the artistic production.5 In later editions a digression comparing ancient and modern tragedy

4. "... en quoi consiste principalement la beauté d'un tableau & la beauté d'un Poème, quel mérite l'un & l'autre ils peuvent tirer de l'observation des règles, & quel secours enfin les productions de la Poésie & celles de la Peinture peuvent emprunter des autres Arts..." (*DuBos, avertissement*). Since an exposition of DuBos' theories requires a good deal of jumping back and forth in the *Reflexions critiques*, all further citations of DuBos will be made according to volume, chapter, and page number in order to avoid confusion.

5. DuBos' theory of climate—an attempt to explain why different countries have different levels of artistic production during certain historical epochs—is not germane to the present topic of beauty, even though it is one of the most widely known of DuBos' theories. See *DuBos*, II:xii:134-xx:335, and for a commentary, see Lombard, 239-56.
was taken from the first volume and expanded by drawing on the Latin translations of Marcus Meibom. This was then made into a third volume that is useful for studies in criticism, but of little concern to the present study.

Aesthetics

DuBos takes for the basis of his theories the paradox of pathos and pleasure that characterizes the highest forms of artistic experience:

It is no less difficult to explain what this pleasure consists of, which often resembles an affliction and whose symptoms are sometimes like those of the most lively sadness. The arts of poetry and painting are never so applauded as when they succeed in distressing us.

His resolution of this contradiction derives from the notion that just as nature, has provided man with certain needs—such as dependency on food, shelter, and clothing—in order that he survive, so too it has supplied him with intellectual needs, including a strong urge to escape boredom. Such "inactivity of the soul" can be purged intellectually or


7. "... il n'en est pas moins difficile d'expliquer en quoi consiste ce plaisir qui ressemble souvent à l'affliction, & dont les symptômes sont quelquefois les mêmes que ceux de la plus vive douleur. L'art de la Poésie & l'art de la Peinture ne sont jamais plus applaudis que lorsqu'ils ont réussi à nous affliger" (DuBos, I:introduction:1).

8. Vis-à-vis Crousaz' God. See the section on aesthetics in chapter two.
sensuously, but since a lifestyle devoted completely to
the intellect is virtually impossible, most people sooner
or later turn to sensuous experiences to mitigate their
boredom.\textsuperscript{9} Falling back on the sentiments\textsuperscript{10} in this manner
is not deserving of moral or intellectual censure, for it
is an automatic response to perfectly natural needs:

This natural emotion, which is excited in us
mechanically when we see those similar to us in
danger or misfortune, has no other attraction than
that of being a passion whose movements excite the
soul and hold it occupied. Yet this emotion has
some charms capable of making it sought out, despite
the sad ideas and importunities that accompany and
follow it.\textsuperscript{11}

The need to alleviate boredom can, however, become de-
structive, leading some people to take part in excesses like
violence, gambling, and drinking. It is precisely this
willingness to go to such extremes that makes art valuable.
A poem, a painting, or a tragedy gives a rendering of intensely
emotional events without the debilitating after-effects. It
produces emotions similar to those that accompany real events,
but weaker:

\textsuperscript{9.} DuBos, I:i:5-12.

\textsuperscript{10.} See chapter two, note 11 on the meaning of the word
sentiment in eighteenth-century France.

\textsuperscript{11.} "Cette émotion naturelle qui s'excite en nous machinalement,
quand nous voyons nos semblables dans le danger ou dans le
malheur, n'a autre attrait que celui d'être une passion
dont les mouvements remuent l'ame & la tiennent occupée;
cependant cette émotion a des charmes capables de la
faire rechercher, malgré les idées triste & importunes
qui l'accompagnent & qui la suivent" (DuBos, I:ii:12).
Painters and poets excite these artificial emotions in us by presenting imitations of objects capable of exciting real passions. The impression that these imitations make on us is of the same kind as the impression that the imitated object... would make on us; the impression that the imitation makes is different only in that it is less strong. The imitation must excite in our soul a passion that resembles what the imitated object would be capable of exciting.12

As in Aristotle's writings, the pleasure of art is derived from the conscious differentiation between what is real, or natural, and what is artificial.13 At the same time, this pleasure runs much differently than Aristotelian or contemporary theories. Though a spectator may be empathetically motivated to view an artwork, his reaction is essentially a sympathetic one; at no time does he completely suspend disbelief and succumb to the illusion that he is present in the setting depicted in the artwork. His emotion is one that

12. "Les Peintres & les Poètes excitent en nous ces passions artificielles, en présentant les imitations des objets capable d'exciter en nous des passions veritables. Comme l'impression que ces imitations font sur nous est du même genre que l'impression que l'objet imité... seroit sur nous; comme l'impression que l'imitation fait n'est différente de l'impression que l'objet imité seroit, qu'en ce qu'elle est moins forte, elle doit exciter dans notre ame un passion qui ressemble à celle que l'objet imité y auroit pû exciter" (Ibid., I:iii:27). Cf., Aristotle, Politics, 1340A: "The habit of feeling pleasure or pain at mere representations is not far removed from the same feeling about realities; for example, if any one delights in the sight of a statue for its beauty only, it necessarily follows that the sight of the original will be pleasant to him" (translated by Benjamin Jowett, Aristotle's Politics [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905], 309-10).

13. Cf., Nichomachean Ethics, 1140A; and Poetics, 1450A.
is peculiar to the viewing of art. It is, though one is hesitant to apply modern terminologies, an aesthetic emotion.\textsuperscript{14}

The necessity of maintaining an emotional distance cannot be stressed enough, because DuBos' real goal is not so much to base a system of beauty on emotion as it is to downplay the importance of the intellect in artistic judgment. In this sense, he is making an obvious break with established trends in rationalistic thought. For DuBos, relying upon reason in judging the beauty of an artwork is as absurd as attempting to judge the flavor of a stew by contemplating a list of its ingredients:\textsuperscript{15}

Sentiment informs us whether a work touches and makes its proper impression better than all the dissertations composed by critics for explaining merit

\textsuperscript{14} DuBos, I:xlili.:451-xliv:466. Hugo Goldschmidt seems to have been the first scholar to have drawn attention to this resemblance (Die Musikästhetik des 18. Jahrhunderts [Leipzig: Rascher, 1915], 38).

\textsuperscript{15} This is DuBos' analogy (II:xxii:341). It does, however, bear a strong resemblance to an analogy made by Molière in La Critique de L'École des Femmes (Paris, 1668): "It is precisely like a man who has found an excellent sauce and wishes to examine whether it is good based on the precepts of the Cuisinier français" ("C'est justement comme un homme qui aurait trouvé une sauce excellente, et qui voudrait examiner si elle est bonne sur les préceptes du Cuisinier français," Oeuvres complètes de Molière, 2 vols., ed. Maurice Rat, Vol. VIII of Bibliothèque de la Pléiade [n.p., Gallimard, 1956], I, 543). Such comparisons between the experiencing of art and the tasting of food underscore the wide variety of activities covered by the expression sentiment.
and calculating perfections and faults. The discussion and analysis of which these men avail themselves is, in truth, good when it acts to find the reasons for why a work does or does not please, but these means are not as valuable as sentiment when it is a matter of deciding this question. Does the work please or not? Is it good or bad, generally speaking? It is the same thing. Intellect must therefore intervene in the judgment that we carry of a poem or painting only in order to render the reason for the decision of the sentiment and in order to explain what faults keep it from pleasing and what agréments render it capable of moving.16

The ability of sentiment immediately to decide the merit of an artwork depends on the so-called sixth sense, which is located in the heart.17 Strictly speaking, however, the sixth sense works through the other senses, which is why one is able so quickly to judge the quality of a painting, a musical composition, or even a stew. It is as unusual to be

16. "Or le sentiment enseigne bien mieux si l'ouvrage touche, & s'il fait sur nous l'impression qu'il doit faire, que toutes les dissertations composées par les Critiques, pour en expliquer le mérite, & pour en calculer les perfections & les défauts. La voie de discussion & d'analyse, dont se servent ces Messieurs, est bonne à la vérité, lorsqu'il s'agit de trouver les causes qui font qu'un ouvrage plaît, ou qu'il ne plaît pas; mais cette voie ne vaut pas celle du sentiment, lorsqu'il s'agit de décider cette question. L'ouvrage plaît-il, ou ne plaît-il pas? L'ouvrage est-il bon ou mauvais en général? C'est la même chose. Le raisonnement ne doit donc intervenir dans le jugement que nous portons sur un poème ou sur un tableau en général, que pour rendre raison de la décision du sentiment, & pour expliquer quelles fautes l'empêchent de plaire, & quels sont les agréments qui le rendent capables d'attacher" (Ibid., II:xxii:340-41).

17. References to the heart as the seat of the sentiments persist throughout this period. Even Descartes, who did not subscribe to this view, admitted that one has the physical sensation of emotions moving and changing in the heart. See Les Passions de l'âme (Paris, 1649) in Vol. XI of Oeuvres de Descartes, 11 vols., ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery (Paris: J. Vrin, 1967), 353-54.
born without this special sense of taste as it is to be born blind; but just as some people are born with better eyesight than others, so too some are born with better taste.\textsuperscript{18}

Since everyone possesses some degree of the sixth sense, collective judgments on artistic worth are by far the most lasting. The general public, when well informed and familiar with a given genre,\textsuperscript{19} never fails to draw the proper conclusion.\textsuperscript{20} In fact, critics and artisans make the worst possible judges because their sensitivity to the expressiveness of a subject has been numbed through constant exposure, and they are only able to judge the empty merits of artistic technique.\textsuperscript{21}

There is, however, one exception among artisans in general: the artist who is born with genius. DuBos' definition of genius is deceptively simple:

\textsuperscript{18} DuBos, II:xxii:341-49.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., II:xxii:351-52. For a slightly different version of the same basic idea, see the portion of Le Cerf de La Viéville's Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française translated in \textit{Source Readings in Music History}, ed. Oliver Strunk (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950), 497-501.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., II:xxii:349-57 and xxiv:371-83. This faith in the majority opinion is, of course a product of the fundamental rationalistic beliefs discussed in chapter one. For examples of seventeenth-century sources expressing the same belief, see Jean Chapelain, \textit{Les Sentimens de l'Académie française sur la Tragi-comédie du Cid} (Paris, 1637), translated by Barrett H. Clark in \textit{European Theories of the Drama} (New York: Crown Publishers, 1957), 125-26 (in which the author does however grant a preeminence to the opinion of the "experts"), and Molière, \textit{La Critique de l'École des femmes}, scenes 6 and 7.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., II:xxv:383-92 and xxvi:393-400.
One calls genius the aptitude a man has received from nature for making certain things easily and well that others are capable only of making very poorly or with a great deal of difficulty. We learn to make the things for which we have genius as easily as we learn to speak our natural language.22

In artists, this natural aptitude consists not of the ability to follow rules obediently in creating art, but rather of the ability to invent ideas that will move other people. It is a combination of sensitivity and intellect that allows the artist to find a potentially moving subject and present it in the best possible light.23 Genius could thus be described as a mirror image of the judgmental sixth sense, existing within the artist rather than the audience. It is an innate talent, and once the artist is aware of his own special predisposition, he will strive to succeed in that area despite any failures or personal inadequacies. He can learn from a mediocre teacher as easily as from a great one, for it is his inner genius that makes him great.24

DuBos was thus able to account for the artist, the artwork, and its viewer through the singularly bold move of basing his system of aesthetics solely on sentiment. He was able to define the attraction of art and show what makes some works

22. "On appele génie, l'aptitude qu'un homme a reçu de la nature, pour faire bien & facilement certain choses, que les autres ne scauroient faire que très-mal, même en prenant beaucoup de peine. Nous apprenons à faire les choses pour lesquelles nous avons du génie, avec autant de facilité que nous en avons à parler notre langue naturelle" (Ibid., II:i:7).

better than others. He proposed what he believed to be an infallible system of judgment and supported it by localizing the je ne sais quoi both in process and function.

On Music

Near the end of the first volume, DuBos enters into a discussion of the senses and how each is suited to specific needs. Sight is preeminent among the senses because it communicates information more quickly and thoroughly than the others and does not rely upon intermediary signs, such as words, to interpret the data presented to it. Hearing is second to sight in its ability to carry information, but sometimes more necessary. When reading a poem silently and in privacy, for example, the eye is forced to perform a task unrelated to its own gratification, and the resulting distraction allows the intellect to make an unwarranted imposition on the act of judgment. If, however, one attends to the recitation of a poem, he can cease worrying about interpretation and give himself over to the pleasure of being moved. Even a poor rendering of a poem is therefore preferable to a silent reading.

25. Ibid., I:xli:414-15. For more general information, see pp. 413-27. Cf., Descartes' letter of March 18, 1630, cited in chapter one of this study; Joseph Addison, The Spectator, No. 411 (June 21, 1712), modern edition in 8 vols., ed. George Aitken (New York: Longmans, Green, 1898), VI, 72-76; and Aristotle, Metaphysics, 980A.

Heightened speech, whether simple recitation or tragic declamation, is a technique designed to make verse more moving by giving the passions it depicts greater realism (vraisemblance). Music presents still another way to heighten the effect verse has on its audiences:

Just as the painter imitates the traits and colors of nature, so too the musician imitates the tones, the accents, the sighs, the inflections of the voice—in short, all of the sounds with which nature itself expresses its sentiments and its passions. All of these sounds, as we have already shown, have a marvelous power for moving us because they are the signs of the passions, instituted by nature, from which they receive their energy. Articulated words draw their signification and their value only from the institution of men . . . .

Music is more moving than either recitation or declamation precisely because it draws on and enhances natural signs, both in its melody and, secondarily, in its harmony and rhythm. There is, then, a "truth [vérité] in the recitatives of opera," as DuBos calls it, that is arrived at by adhering to the qualities of impassioned speech.

27. "Ainsi que le Peintre imite les traits & les couleurs de la nature, de même le Musicien imite les tons, les accens, les soupirs, les inflexions de voix, enfin tous ces sons, à l'aide desquels la nature même exprime ses sentiments & ses passions. Tous ces sons, comme nous l'avons déjà exposé, ont une force merveilleuse pour nous émouvoir, parce qu'ils sont les signes des passions, institués par la nature dont ils ont reçu leur énergie; au lieu que les mots articulés ne sont que des signes arbitraires des passions. Les mots articulés ne tirent leur signification & leur valeur que de l'institution des hommes . . . ." (Ibid., I:xlv: 466-67).

28. Ibid., I:xlv: 466-70).

29. This equation of truth and beauty, possibly Platonic in origin, was common in French literature. Take, for example, Boileau's famous words, "Nothing is beautiful
But the principle of imitation in music can be extended even further. The descriptive instrumental symphonies in Lullian opera imitate sounds found in nature, and through the sheer force of the images that they invoke, these symphonies can also have a great effect upon audiences. To be sure, such imitations are merely servile copies of nature, useful in the depiction of specific, dramatic situations. They have no inherent capacity for expression. Whether the music imitates something obvious, like an earthquake or a thunderstorm, or something as abstract as slumber, it would be worthless if stripped of its dramatic context and considered purely as music. This DuBos calls the truth governing instrumental music--its dependence on extra-musical connections to give it meaning and expression.

DuBos realizes that his picture of the musical art is only an idealized version of what occurs in reality. Just as some people are incapable of having more than a shallow

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30. Ibid., I:xlv:483. For more general information, see pp. 470-83. Note that despite Maria Maniates' comments to the contrary ("Sonate, que me veux-tu? The Enigma of French Musical Aesthetics in the 18th Century," Current Musicology IX [1969], 123), DuBos is not saying that absolute music is capable of arousing emotions.


32. In much the same way that Crousaz realizes that his description of beauty-related experience is idealized (see chapter two, note 18).
appreciation of musical expression, there are also composers
who do not have genius enough to rise above pictorialism,
excessive ornamentation, and blind obedience to the rules:

As the beauties of execution must serve in a poem as
well as in a painting to give a work the beauties of
invention and traits of genius that paint the nature
one is imitating, so too the richness and variety of
harmonies, agréments, and the novelty of the songs
must serve in music only to make and embellish the
imitation of the language of nature and the passions.

What one calls the science of composition is a
servant... that the genius of the musician must
possess just as the genius of the poet must have a
talent for rhyming. All is lost... if the slave
renders herself the mistress of the house and is
permitted to arrange it according to her whims as
though it were built for her alone.33

With DuBos, as with Crousaz,34 the effect of a composition is
lessened when the composer surrenders himself to his intellect.

Before leaving the subject of music, DuBos briefly dis-
cusses what kind of poetry is best suited for setting to music,
and this leads him to an evaluation of Philippe Quinault's

33. "Comme les beautés de l'exécution doivent servir en
Poésie, ainsi qu'en Peinture, à mettre en oeuvre les
beautés d'invention & les traits de génie qui peignent
la nature qu'on imite, de même la richesse & la variété
des accords, les agrémens & la nouveauté des chants, ne
doivent servir en musique que pour faire & pour embellir
l'imitation du langage de la nature & des passions.
Ce qu'on appelle la science de la composition est une
servante... que le génie du Musicien doit tenir à
ses gages, ainsi que le génie du Poète y doit tenir le
talent de rimer. Tout est perdu... si l'esclave se
rend la maîtresse de la maison, & s'il lui est permis
de l'arranger à son gré, comme un bâtiment qui ne
seroit fait que pour elle" (DuBos, I:xlv:486).

34. Cf., chapter two of this study, note 27.
librettos. Truly great verse is not always best for musical settings because of its sharply detailed imagery:

We have said, in speaking of poetry of style [poésie du style], that it must express the sentiments in simple terms, but that it must also present us with all of the other objects of which it speaks, in the form of imagery [sous des images & des peintures].\(^3\) We have shown, in speaking of music, that it must imitate in its songs the tones, sighs, accents, and all of the inarticulate sounds of the voice, which are the natural signs of our sentiments and passions. It is very easy to infer from these two truths that the verses which contain sentiments are very proper for setting to music, but those which contain imagery [peintures] are very improper for setting to music.\(^3\)

Music, then, was no longer regarded as simply an adjunct to the text. It had long been recognized that music should be

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36. "Nous avons dit, en parlant de la poésie du style, qu'elle devait exprimer avec des termes simples les sentiments; mais qu'elle devait nous présenter tous les autres objets, dont elle parle, sous des images & des peintures. Nous avons exposé, en parlant de la musique, qu'elle devait imiter dans ses chants les tons, les soupirs, les accens, & tous ces inarticulés de la voix, qui sont les signes naturels de nos sentiments & de nos passions. Il est très-aise d'inférer de ces deux vérités, que les vers qui contiennent des sentiments, sont très-propres à être mis en musique; & que ceux qui contiennent des peintures, n'y sont pas bien propres" (Ibid., I:xlvii:502-3). Johann Adolph Scheibe makes similar observations based on the rhetorical theories of Bernard Lamy and Johann Cristoph Gottsched, in No. 75 (February 2, 1740) of his Der critische Musicus (Hamburg: Thomas von Wierings Erben, 1740), 383-86, comparing the ornamentation of melody with metaphors and tropes and emotional expression through musical figures with rhetorical figures. He considers musical figures, as used in vocal music, to be the only means of arriving at truly affective music. Cf., Lamy, La Rhétorique ou l'art de parler, 4th ed. (Amsterdam, 1699), facsimile ed. (Brighton: Sussex Reprints, 1969), 85-152; and Gottsched, Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst, rev. ed. (Leipzig, 1751), facsimile ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), 313-45.
expressively suited to its text, but with DuBos' reevaluation of Quinault, it was possible to see text and music combining to serve a specifically musical process. The very simplicity of style for which Quinault had earlier been criticized became a virtue, because it was naturally suited to musical phrases and allowed the words to be treated as pleasing, expressive sounds. More importantly, the simpler imagery did not require extended descriptive passages, making the overall length of the poem coincide with that of the musical composition. DuBos therefore concluded that if one wished to criticize Quinault, it should be done from the standpoint of the opera itself and not from the libretto alone.37

Commentary
DuBos exhibits none of Crousaz' hesitancy in making citations, and a perusal of his choices is most helpful in tracing the sources that he felt were influential in the formation of his system of aesthetics. He misses no opportunity, for example, of reminding his readers that ancient authorities like Cicero, Quintillian, and Horace believed the true importance

of rhetoric and poetry lay in the ability to move and persuade audiences.\textsuperscript{38} This seems to indicate a strong desire, on DuBos' part, to make his theories sound more conventional. In the same vein, it is clear that he wishes to ally himself with the accepted authorities of the seventeenth century, among whom Nicolas Boileau and Jean Baptiste Racine figure prominently in his footnotes. DuBos' special admiration for Boileau is manifested not only in citations, but in paraphrases without citation and, in one instance, a defense of the earlier writer as well.\textsuperscript{39} And while Boileau and Racine occasionally addressed themselves to problems that exceeded the boundaries of rational convention,\textsuperscript{40} it must be remembered that their writings in general represent French rationalism at its apex. Given the nature of DuBos' citations, then, and

\textsuperscript{38} For examples, see I:iv:41, I:xi:74, II:i:3, II:ii:15, and II:xxii:348.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., II:viii:83-84.

\textsuperscript{40} Boileau's translation of Longinus' On the Sublime (1674) may be taken as indicative of this side of his nature, although it is true that he made a rationalistic emendation of Longinus' definition of sublime in the twelfth of his Réflexions critiques sur quelques passages du Rhéteur Longin (1710). Answering some of his critics in the preface to his tragedy Bérénice (1670), Racine writes: "The principal rule is to please and to move; all others are made only in order to attain this first one" ("La principale règle est de plaire et de toucher: toutes les autres ne sont faites que pour parvenir à cette première," Oeuvres complètes de Racine [Paris: Furne, 1844], 159).
the responses that he made to certain controversies, one must conclude that he thought himself to be a defender of traditional values in French art.

At the same time, the ways in which DuBos goes beyond conservative doctrine cannot be ignored. Seventeenth-century commentators had refused to give opera serious consideration, rejecting it for the simplicity of its poetry, the lasciviousness of its plots, and for its overthrow of the so-called Aristotelian dramatic dicta. DuBos, however, embraces opera with unqualified enthusiasm, assigning a measure of pre-eminence to its expressive capacity. The emphasis he gives to sensation, in relation to expression, departs dramatically from the theories of his predecessors and is, in fact, indicative of the increased influence English philosophy was having in France.

DuBos does not hesitate to cite progressive English writers. Moreover, the influence of English thought is apparent in the above-mentioned emphasis on sensory perception, which bears the stamp of his friend John Locke's empirically oriented theories. Locke's An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1689) had been known in France prior

41. See, for example, his comments on which language, Latin or French, is best suited to poetic expression (I:xxxv: 317-56). His firm stance on the superiority of Latin is, however, tempered by the realization that French poets need to be understood by their countrymen (I:xxxvii: 365-68).
to English publication through a translated abridgment in Jean
Le Clerc's journal, *Bibliotheque universelle*, and Locke had
personally sent an advance proof of the first French edition
to DuBos in 1700. Equally influential was a series of essays
on imagination written by Joseph Addison for the *Spectator* in
June and July of 1712, from which DuBos drew a number of ideas,
developing them more fully. Among the ideas of Addison that
stayed with DuBos, the most prominent are the stressing of
art's sensuous appeal at the expense of the intellect, the
notion of words as intermediary signs inferior only to sight
in communicative ability, and most important of all, the
dualism of pleasure and pathos in art:

How comes it to pass, that we should take delight in
being terrified or dejected by a description when we
find so much uneasiness in the fear or grief which
we receive from any other occasion?

If we consider, therefore, the nature of this
pleasure, we shall find that it does not arise so
properly from the description of what is terrible as
from the reflection we make on ourselves at the time
of reading it. When we look on such hideous objects,
we are not a little pleased to think we are in no
danger of them. We consider them, at the same time,
as dreadful and harmless; so that the more frightful
appearance they make, the greater is the pleasure we
receive from the sense of our own safety.

42. See Lombard, 73, and Ira O. Wade, *The Structure and Form

43. No. 411 from *The Spectator*, VI, 75.


DuBos of course used this idea to explain the utility of arts, but further expanded it so that pleasure came not so much from a sense of relief as from a perception of the artistic function—from an emotional reaction to the depiction itself.46

The Platonism of Crousaz serves as an ideal foil to what could, by comparison, be called an Aristotelian approach in DuBos' Réflexions. Crousaz, like many of the Frenchmen who came before and after, attempted inductively to construct a complete system of thought from a few basic principles, using the principles themselves to prove the efficacy of the system. DuBos, on the other hand, took art, apart from all questions of morality and science, and tried to deduce from its myriad qualities what gives it its specific role and function, much as Aristotle did in his Poetics. In much the same way, Crousaz' dualism of reason and sentiment in the experiencing of beauty gave way to DuBos' singling out of sentiment as the primary form of experience. These innovations allowed DuBos to assign music a hitherto unknown

46. Cf., DuBos' notion of the sixth sense with Francis Hutcheson, An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (London, 1725) in Vol. I of Collected Works of Francis Hutcheson, 7 vols., facsimile ed. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1971), 7: "It is of no consequence whether we call these Ideas of Beauty and Harmony, Perceptions of the External Senses of Seeing and Hearing, or not. I should rather choose to call our Power of perceiving these Ideas, an Internal Sense, were it only for the Convenience of distinguishing them from other Sensations of Seeing and Hearing, which men may have without Perception of Beauty and Harmony."
CHAPTER IV

YVES-MARIE ANDRÉ, ESSAI SUR LE BEAU (1741)

The intellectual foundations underlying the Essai sur le beau of Yves-Marie André (1675-1765)¹ are rather unusual. A Jesuit, André had become an enthusiast of the writings of Descartes as a student in Clermont, despite the fact that Cartesian doctrine frequently stood in contradiction to the teachings of his order. The hostile response of his superiors to his intellectual stance created an uncomfortable situation for him that lasted throughout most of his life. André clung to the tenets of Cartesian philosophy with an admirable tenacity, and the geometric spirit is abundantly evident in the Essai.

While the Essai sur le beau seems to have been only moderately popular abroad, it achieved wide currency in France. In his article on beauty in the Encyclopédie, Denis Diderot devoted more space to the Essai than to any other single treatise, calling it the "most followed, most

extensive, and best formed" of its kind. The greatest testimony to Diderot's admiration, however, is the number of passages borrowed, sometimes verbatim, from the Essai without credit to the author. Diderot's opening paragraph is an obvious paraphrase of André's introduction, and his comments on Plato and Saint Augustine are clearly drawn from the Essai. To be sure, Diderot goes on to propose his own theory of beauty in the article, but his reliance on André to get through some of the more general sections is nevertheless a noteworthy tribute.

The Essai sur le beau is a series of lectures that André had delivered before the academy of the city of Caen, where he had served as a professor of mathematics since 1726. The original edition contained five lectures on four topics: painting, morality, written works [les ouvrages d'esprit], and two essays on music. André, like Crousaz before him, felt it imperative to discuss musical theory and acoustics before explaining how musical beauty is perceived. In this instance, the digression takes on an added weight because André contends, unlike his predecessors, that the ultimate judge of musical beauty is reason. In the


3. Bredvold briefly comments on this, but does not sufficiently convey the extent of the borrowings (p. 109).
edition of 1770, five more discourses—on method, decorum, the graces, love of beauty, and disinterested beauty—were added, but the five original essays were retained without alteration.

Aesthetics

André, like the other writers considered thus far, wrote his treatise in response to the prevalent Pyrrhonistic view that beauty was only a shallow, fleeting pleasure since it could not be objectified. Yet, André contended, even the staunchest Pyrrhonist must concede that there exists a kind of experience whose sense can only be conveyed through the word beauty:

I wish to say, in order to suppose nothing but the indubitable, that there is in all intellects an idea of beauty; that this idea expresses excellence, agreement, and perfection; that this idea represents beauty to us as an advantageous quality that we esteem in others and admire in ourselves.⁴

These seemingly innocent remarks are actually the basis for the arguments that follow on behalf of beauty. Rather than risk usurping the role played by reason in contemporary philosophy, André prefers to construct a system whereby the essence of beauty can be understood through reason alone,

⁴. "Je veux dire, pour ne rien supposer que d'indubitable, qu'il y a dans tous les esprits une idée du Beau; que cette idée dit excellence, agrément, perfection; qu'elle nous représente le Beau comme une qualité avantageuse, que nous estimons dans les autres, & que nous aimérons dans nous-mêmes" (Andre, 5).
without the aid of sentiment.\(^5\) This is a rather difficult task to accomplish and, indeed, had been avoided by thinkers up to this point. As we have already seen with Descartes, there is no way to account for beauty within a purely rationalistic system, so André does the next best thing. He deems it to be an irreducible quality, making it—in the truest Cartesian spirit—an innate idea. The existence of beauty is "indubitable", because we cannot deny the experience, and it therefore cannot be questioned.\(^6\)

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5. Ibid., 6-7.

6. Cf., Descartes: "The first [rule] was never to accept anything as true that I did not know to be evidently so: that is to say, to carefully avoid precipitation and presumption and to include nothing more in my judgments than what presented itself clearly and distinctly to my intellect, so that I would have no occasion to doubt it" ("Le premier estoit de ne receuoir iamais aucune chose pour vraye, que ie ne la connusse euidemment estre telle: c'est a dire, d'euiter soigneusement la Precipitation, & la Preuention; & de ne comprendre rien de plus en mes iugemens, que ce qui se presenteroit si clairement & si distinctement a mon esprit, que ie n'eusse aucune occasion de le mettre en doute," Discours de la méthode (Leiden, 1637) in Vol. VI of Oeuvres de Descartes, 11 vols., ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery [Paris: J. Vrin, 1967], 18). Although André does not call beauty an innate idea, this seems to be implicit in his arguments. Cf., part four of the Discours de la méthode: "I judged that I could take for a general rule that the things we conceive very clearly and very distinctly are all true, but that there was some difficulty in noting well what those things are that we conceive distinctly" ("ie jugay que ie pouuois prendre pour reigle generale, que les choses que nous conceuons fort clairement & fort distinctement sont toutes vrayes; mais qu'il y a seulement quelque difficulté a bien remarquer quelles sont celles que nous conceuons distinctement," p. 33).
This is not to say that beauty is incapable of appealing to sentiment as well as reason. André, here, is working with something more fundamental. Such experiences are of little importance compared to establishing rationally what beauty is. He separates the nature of beauty from the actual process of experiencing it, making beauty ultimately exist, by virtue of its innate character, outside of human control. This leads him to a systematic structuring of his theory that is considerably different from those of the theorists previously discussed. André proposes for beauty a three-fold hierarchy: "there is an essential beauty, divine and independent of all institution; a natural beauty, independent of the opinion of men; and finally a species of beauty that is of human institution and to a certain extent arbitrary." This hierarchy, with its particular emphasis on the notion of an essential, absolute beauty, determines the format of each of André's discourses.

The overwhelming task of proving the existence of an essential beauty anterior to all perception does not faze

7. By theoretically basing all beauty-related experiences on reason, André is simply making sentiment an aspect of the rational process, much as Descartes does in Les Passions de l'âme (Paris, 1649). See the commentary to chapter two, note 34.

8. "... il y a un Beau essentiel, & indépendant de toute institution, même divine: qu'il y a un Beau naturel, & indépendant de l'opinion des hommes: enfin qu'il y a une espèce de Beau d'institution humaine, & qui est arbitraire jusqu'à un certain point" (André, 5-6).
André in the least. Its existence is so fundamental, so
obvious, as to be above proof, for it is part of the innate
quality touched on earlier. Who can doubt, asks André,
that geometric logic has not always been the basis of our
conception of beauty?

Does not the slightest attention to our primitive
ideas convince us that regularity, order, proportion,
and symmetry are essentially preferable to irregular-
ity, disorder, and disproportion? Can anyone forget
that natural geometry—which is impossible to ignore
since it is part of what is called common sense--
gives our eyes, as in other people, a compass for
judging the elegance of a figure or the perfection
of a work?9

Should this incontestable truth still be questioned, the
authority of Plato and Saint Augustine provides irrefutable
evidence. André draws his argument for essential beauty
in painting from a dialogue on architecture used by Augustine
in De vera religione and De musica, and since a similar
dialogue is invented for proving the essential beauty of
music, the passage is worth quoting here in full.10

9. "La plus légère attention à nos idées primitives,
n'aurait-elle pas dû les convaincre que le régularité,
l'ordre, la proportion, la symétrie sont essentiellement
préférables à l'irrégularité, au désordre & à la dispor-
portion? La Géométrie naturelle, qui ne peut être
ignorée de personne, puisqu'elle fait partie de ce qu'on
appelle sens-commun, aurait-elle oublié de leur mettre,
come aux autres hommes, un compas dans les yeux, pour
juger de l'élégance d'une figure, ou de la perfection
d'un ouvrage?" (Ibid., 9-10).

10. Diderot also considered it worthy of quotation in his
article on beauty (p. 170).
If I ask an architect, says this holy doctor, why having constructed an archway in one wing of his edifice, he chooses to do the same thing in another, he will no doubt answer me that it is in order that the parts of his architecture will be symmetrical. But why does this symmetry appear necessary to you? Because it pleases. But who are you to make yourself arbiter of what does or does not please men, and how do you know that the symmetry pleases us? I am sure because things so disposed have decency, justice, and grace; in a word, because they are beautiful. Very well, but tell me: is it beautiful because it pleases, or does it please because it is beautiful? Easily, this pleases because it is beautiful. I believe that too, but I ask you again: why is it beautiful? And if my question embarasses you, since the masters of your art have not ventured this far, you will at least agree without difficulty that the similitude, equality, the agreement of the parts of your building, all reduce easily to a kind of unity that contents reason. This is what I wished to say. Nevertheless, take care, for there is no true unity in bodies, since they are composed of an innumerable quantity of parts, and each part in turn is composed of an infinitude of others. Where then do you see this unity that directs you in the construction of your design, this unity that you regard as an inviolable law of your art, this unity that your edifice must imitate to be beautiful? If nothing on earth can be perfectly imitated, then nothing on earth can be perfectly one. But what follows from this? Is it not necessary to recognize that there is an original beauty above our intellects--sovereign, eternal, perfect--that is the essential rule of beauty you seek in your art.

11. This argument, which seems to contradict the principle of unity in diversity, is also used in Plato, The Sophist, 243B-244C.

12. "Si je demande à un Architecte, dit ce S. Docteur, pourquoi, ayant construit une arcade à l'une des ailes de son édifice, il en fait autant à l'autre, il me répondra, sans doute, que c'est afin que le membres de son architecture symétrisent bien ensemble. Mais pourquoi cette symétrie vous paroit-elle nécessaire? Par la raison que cela plait. Mais qui êtes-vous, pour vous ériger en arbitre de ce qui doit plaire ou ne doit pas plaire aux hommes? & d'où sçavez-vous que la
Geometric relationships give the form and logic necessary to unify all creations—spiritual, natural, and artificial—and these relationships are beautiful even when they are not consciously or directly perceived.

Essential beauty, then, must be considered the foundation of all beauty. From this point on, André's system of aesthetics is built on recognizable ideas. The two lesser forms of beauty in the hierarchy, natural beauty and arbitrary beauty, are based on the familiar distinction between the natural and the artificial (or man-made) that one finds in definitions of art from Aristotle on. Their relationship

symétrie nous plaît? J'en suis sûr, parce que les choses ainsi disposées, ont de la décence, de la justesse, de la grâce; en un mot, parce que cela est beau. Fort bien. Mais dites-moi: cela est-il beau, parce qu'il plaît; ou cela plaît-il, parce qu'il est beau? Je le crois comme vous. Mais je vous demande encore: pourquoi cela est-il beau? & si ma question vous embarrasse, parce qu'en effet les maîtres de votre art ne vont guères jusques-là, vous conviendrez du moins, sans peine, que la similitude, l'égalité, la convenance des parties de votre bâtiment, réduit tout à une espèce d'unité, qui contente la raison. C'est ce que je voulais dire. Oui, mais prenez-y garde. Il n'y a point de vraie unité dans les corps, puisqu'ils sont tous composés d'un nombre innombrable de parties, dont chacune est encore composées d'une infinité d'autres. Où est-ce donc que vous la voyez, cette unité qui vous dirige dans la construction de votre dessein; cette unité, que vous regardez dans votre art comme une loi inviolable; cette unité, que votre édifice doit imiter pour être beau; mais que rien sur la terre ne peut imiter parfaitement, puisque rien sur la terre ne peut être parfaitement un? Or de-là que s'ensuite-il? Ne faut-il pas reconnaître qu'il y a donc au-dessus de nos esprits une certaine unité originale, souveraine, éternelle, parfaite, qui est la règle essentielle du beau, que vous cherchez dans la pratique de votre art?" (André, 12-14).
with essential beauty is a reciprocal one. Whereas the latter may be the source of the other two, it is still dependent on them to provide the sensuous appeal that will stimulate the intellect. They are the elements within and outside of man's control that lead to the contemplation of the one true beauty.

On Music

Given the central role of essential beauty in André's system, it is clear why he felt the need to include an introductory lecture on musical theory. Music needed a strong rational basis in order to be taken seriously, and were it not for the advances made by Jean-Philippe Rameau and members of the Académie des Sciences, André might have been forced to draw conclusions similar to those of his Pyrrhonistic opponents. But the recent breakthroughs in acoustical research revealed, with the aid of hindsight, what the writers of classical antiquity had known instinctively. Music's essential beauty, with its foundation in phenomena that can be studied rationally, had allowed music originally to function as a heightened form of speech suitable for addressing the gods, for gods alone were capable of directly perceiving its essential beauty without recourse to more pleasurable enticements.13 To prove that there is a

13. Ibid., 156-57.
rational basis for the essential beauty of music, André provides a lengthy variant of Saint Augustine's dialogue:

In order to convince any man capable of reflection, I have only to catch him departing from one of our concerts, during which he has felt all harmony in his ear and his heart. You come from hearing beautiful music, sir; would you tell me what you have found beautiful about it? Everything: the melody of the voices and the symphony of the instruments seem to vie, out of envy, for the honor of pleasing one. But how does it please you, this confused multitude of voices so different, of instruments so diverse, of sounds so dissimilar? Is it not more likely to dazzle the ear than divert it? . . . You do not do our performers justice. The multitude [of performers] does not cause confusion: we have seen them start together on the first beat, united and distinct, mounting and descending in cadence, raising themselves up again and sustaining, lending each other reciprocal graces. We admire above all the beautiful regularity of the consecutive sounds, the propriety of their course, the regularity of their periodic movements; the proportion of the intervals, the correctness of the tempos, and the perfect accord of all the concerned parts . . . . Very well. Order, regularity, proportion, correctness, propriety, accord: I begin to see the beauty in your music. But all of this is neither the sound that strikes the ear, nor the agreeable sensation that results in your soul, nor the reflective satisfaction that follows in your heart. . . . What do you conclude from that? . . . I conclude that there is, in the concert, an accord purer than the sweetness of the sounds you hear there, a beauty that is not the object of the senses, a certain beauty that charms the intellect and which the intellect alone perceives and judges. Do you doubt it? . . . No, but I would like to know by what rule one judges it. . . . By what rule! I have not consulted any, save to render myself attentive to everything. I followed all of the movements of successive or simultaneous sounds. I compared them. I observed all of the rhythms. I felt the rising and falling, the flowing and harmonious style of composition, the flights, the repose, the resumptions, the encounters, the flights, the returns . . . That is to say, sir, that while so many sonorous voices and instruments were striking your ear with agreeable harmonies,
you felt within yourself an interior master of music beating the measure, if I may speak thus, to show you the correctness; that you discovered the principle in an insight superior to the senses, in the idea of sonorous numbers and in the rule of harmonic proportions and progressions that are their essential image; in the idea of propriety, a sacred law, that prescribes to each part its rank, its end, and its legitimate route for arriving there; that is to say that while each performer read the music from his part, you read your own, written eternally and ineffaceably in the great book of reason that is open to all attentive intellects. In a word, it is necessary either to refuse music the name of harmony, which it has always carried without contradiction from the first concert to the present, or to agree that there is an essential and absolute musical beauty that must be the inviolable rule.

14. "Et pour en convaincre tout homme capable de réflexion, je n'aurais qu'à le prendre au sortir de quelqu'un de nos concerts, pendant qu'il en porte encore toute l'harmonie dans l'oreille & dans le coeur. Vous venez, Monsieur, d'entendre une belle Musique: voudriez-vous me dire ce que vous y avez trouvé de Beau? Tout; la mélodie des voix & la symphonie des instruments sembloient, à l'envi, se disputer l'honneur de vous plaire. Mais, comment vous plaire? cette multitude confuse de voix si différentes, d'instruments si divers, de sons si dissemblables, n'est-elle pas plus propre à étourdir l'oreille, qu'à la divertir? . . . Vous ne rendez pas justice à nos concertans: la multitude n'y cause point de confusion: nous les avons tous entendus partir ensemble au premier signal, unis & distingués, monter en cadence, descendre de même, se relever, se soutenir, se prêter mutuellement leurs graces réciproques: nous admirons sur-tout la belle ordonnance des sons consécutifs, la décence de leur marche, la régularité de leurs mouvements périodiques, la proportion des intervalles, la justesse des tems, le parfait accord de toutes les parties concer-tantes. . . Fort bien. Ordonnance, régularité, propor-tion, justesse, décence, accord; je commence à voir du Beau dans votre Musique. Mais tout cela n'est pas le son qui vous frappoit l'oreille, ni la sensation agréable qui en résultoit dans votre ame, ni la satisfaction ré-fléchie qui la suivoit dans votre coeur . . . Que voulez-vous conclure de-là? . . . Je conclus que, dans le concert, il y a un agrément plus pur que la douceur des sons que vous y entendez; un Beau, qui n'est pas l'objet des sens;
Although André admits that the natural beauty of music is not as readily apparent as that of the visual arts, there are plenty of proofs that it exists. Acoustical research had shown that the notes of the triad are present, as overtones,

un certain Beau, qui charme l'esprit seul y apperçoit, & dont il juge. En doutez-vous? . . . Non: mais je voudrois sçavoir par quelle regle on en juge? . . . Par quelle regle ev avez-vous jugé vous-même, pour me donner de votre concert une si belle idée? . . . Par quelle regle! je n'en ai point consulté d'autre, que de me rendre attentif à tout: je suivois tous les mouvemens des sons successifs ou simultanés; je les comparois entr'eux; j'en observois toutes les cadence; je les sentois, les élévations & les abaissemens, le style coulant & nombreux de la composition, les faillyes, les repos, les reprise, les recontres, les suites, les retours. . . C'est-à-dire, Monsieur, que pendant que tant de voix & d'instrumens sonores vous frappoient l'oreille par des accords agréables, vous sentiez au-dedans de vous-même un maître de Musique intérieur qui battoit la mesure, si j'ose ainsi parler, pour vous en marquer la justesse, qui vous en découvroit le principe dans une lumiere supérieure aux sens; dans l'idées de l'ordre, la beauté de l'ordonnance du dessein de la piece; dans l'idée des nombres sonores, la regle des proportions & des progressions harmoniques, dont ils sont les images essentielles; dans l'idée de la décence, une loi sacrée, qui prescrivoit à chaque partie son rang, son terme, & sa route légitime pour y arriver; c'est-à-dire, que pendant que tous vos concertans lisoient sur le papier chacun sa tablature, vous lisiez aussi la vôtre écrite en notes éternelles & ineffaçables dans le grand livre de la raison, qui est ouvert à tous les esprits attentifs; c'est-à-dire, en un mot, qu'il faut, ou refuser à la Musique le nom d'harmonie, qu'elle a toujours porté sans contradiction depuis le premier concert qu'elle a donné au monde jusqu'à notre siècle, ou convenir qu'il y a un Beau musical essentiel & absolu qui en doit être la regle invincible . . ." (Ibid., 160-64).

15. Cf., Ibid., 15-17.
in each fundamental tone, leading André to conclude that the ear subconsciously detected this relationship all along. Recent research had also shown that the ear is capable of discerning even the slightest variations in pitch, making it far more sensitive than sight in its perceptions. The ear, then, is physically capable of detecting phenomena of which the intellect is not directly aware. Even the organization of the human body—the delicate formation of the inner ear for hearing, the disposition of the lungs, glottis, and mouth for producing sound—is geared toward the experiencing of sound as a natural beauty.

With these arguments in mind, who can dispute that the body's construction is not equally disposed to perceiving what is touching and moving in harmonic relationships? "There are some sounds that have a secret rapport with our heart that we cannot ignore. . . . There exist sounds in nature for expressing and impressing all of the different

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16. Ibid., 165-166. André draws his information principally from Descartes, Abrégé de la musique (1668) and Joseph Sauveur, "Système général des intervalles des sons" in Mémoires de l'Académie royale des sciences, 1701 (1704).

17. Ibid., 166-67. André's information comes principally from Sauveur and Denis Dodart, "Mémoire sur les causes de la voie de l'homme, et de ses différents tons" in Mémoires de l'Académie royale des sciences, 1700 (1703).

18. Ibid., 167-69.
passions that we have." Our reactions may seem to be sentiments, but they are caused by scientifically plausible relationships that run deeper than our intellects can grasp. André continues in this vein, explaining that the degree of naturalness of the sound-producing elements is what makes us prefer voices to instruments, wind instruments to keyboard instruments, and gut strings to metal strings. Unfortunately, as with so many of the arguments in the Essai, the precise way in which the rapport between the external causes and the internal reactions is established is "so obvious as to be indubitable" and hence never described.

It may seem as though this system leaves few creative means to the composer, but in actuality there is still an arbitrary musical beauty over which he maintains control. This control is perhaps best exemplified by the selection and use of dissonances, which season and regulate the flow of consonances and prevent boredom. Sometimes dissonances can even contribute to the portrayal of the more violent passions.

19. "Il y a des sons qui ont, avec notre coeur, une secrète intelligence, que nous ne pouvons méconnoître ... autant que nous avons de passions différentes, autant de sons dans la nature pour les exprimer & pour les imprimer" (Ibid., 169-70).

20. Ibid., 170-72.

21. Diderot's single criticism of André is that in the Essai the origins of the ideas of rapport, order, and symmetry are never clearly addressed (p. 175). Concerning this problem, see the commentary at the end of this chapter.

22. Ibid., 175-80.
Arbitrary musical beauty is divisible into three types that recall the overall hierarchy of beauty: beauty of genius, which accounts for the learned and dignified styles of composition such as word-painting, modulation, and counterpoint; beauty of taste, which represents the more soothing, less surprising elements of musical pleasure; and beauty of caprice, which relies on novelty and humor to please, just as poetic trifles please even the most serious souls. The first two kinds of arbitrary beauty are available only to the most talented composers, who possess an awareness of essential beauty:

We know that musical genius and taste are a species of infused music, noted in certain souls by the very hands of nature. But it must be recognized that these natural notes are traced there very lightly, very confusedly, and it is very difficult, if not impossible, to decipher them without a knowledge of sonorous numbers, which are the true key. In a word, musical theory is absolutely necessary for conducting the practice [of composition] in its perfection.

Lesser composers have often viewed genius and taste as mutually exclusive ideas, but André points out that Zarlino

23. Ibid., 175, 181-83.

24. "Nous savons que le génie & le goût musical sont une espece de Musique infuse, note dans certaines ames par les mains memes de la nature. Mais il faut aussi avouer que ces notes naturelles y sont tracées bien legerement; qu'elles y sont bien confuser; qu'il est bien difficile, pour ne pas dire impossible, de les deciffer sans la connoissance des nombres sonores, qui en sont la veritable clef; en un mot, que la theorie musicale est absolument necessaire pour conduire la pratique à sa perfection" (Ibid., 183-84).
himself says the two qualities are compatible in the greatest compositions. True musical genius is therefore a product of the intellect alone.

Judgment of musical beauty, according to André's aesthetic, is a product of the notion of unity in diversity, which he derives from Plato by way of Saint Augustine. On the simplest level, the unity of a composition can be destroyed by poor intonation, wrong notes, misplaced dissonances, and the like. But above and beyond the routine problems of composition and performance, there is an ideal unity based on the proper combination of words and music:

What do we demand of a musician who composes an air on some words? That he needs to enter into the spirit of the piece; that he pays attention to the character, the genre, and the mode; that he expresses the words, but above all the sense of the phrase; not only the particular sense of each phrase, but of the entirety of the text in the whole of the composition. Can one ask more formally that the words he is given and the music he adds give birth of a completely perfect whole, a unity so necessary that without it you parade the finesse of your art completely in vain?

25. Ibid., 184. 26. Ibid., 185-86.

27. "Que demandons-nous à un Musicien qui compose un air sur des paroles? Qu'il ait soin d'entrer dans l'esprit de la piece; qu'il en faisisse bien le caracter, le genre, le mode; qu'il en exprime dans ses tons, non-seulement les mots, mais sur-tout le sens; non-seulement le sens particulier de chaque phrase, mais le sens total de la lettre entiere dans le total de sa composition. Peut-on lui demander plus formellement, que des paroles qu'on lui donne & de l'air qu'il y ajoute, il en fasse naître un tout parfaitement un ? unité [sic] si necessaire, que sans elle vous m'étaleries en vain toutes les finesse de votre art . . ." (Ibid., 186).
Words and music must suit not only each other, but the occasion at which they will be performed as well. Finally, one must judge the composition as a whole, deciding whether the diverse voices and instruments combine to form a distinct musical entity. André thus takes the principle of unity in diversity in music farther than Crousaz. He notes that some people feel that the proper concord among diverse parts had been achieved only within the last century, but ingeniously cites Seneca, another neo-Platonist, to show that this unity had been a serious musical consideration in classical antiquity. Indeed, how could a modern Orpheus hope to achieve unity, if the Orpheus of antiquity had failed to do so?

The final portion of André's last lecture is a comparison of music and painting that proposes, for the first time among the treatises being considered, music as the preeminent form of artistic expression. Music earns this important title because of its ability to convey, through its semblance of motion, the nuances and subtle changes that characterize emotion. Painting, the other likely candidate for the title,

28. Ibid., 187-89.
29. Ibid., 189-92.
30. Note in the section on music in chapter three, for example, that DuBos gives the sense of sight preeminence over the sense of hearing. See also Descartes' comments cited in chapter one.
is only able to depict the emotions of a single, frozen instant. At least twenty successive paintings of a subject would be necessary to express what is contained in a single musical composition, and musical pictorialism at its most graphic can even give one the sensation of being present at an actual event. More important than this, however, the high degree of rationalistic application that is possible in music, because of its theoretical and acoustical properties, gives it greater credibility in the intellectual system underlying the Essai. Ironically, André is using the same rationale to assign music preeminence that had been used to rank painting and poetry above music in the seventeenth century.

Commentary

André's Essai sur le beau exhibits a unique blend of rationalistic thought, which shows the influence of Descartes'

31. Cf., Aristotle, Politics, 1340A: "Rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also of temperance and of virtues and vices in general, which hardly fall short of the actual affections... No other sense, such as taste or touch, has any resemblance to moral qualities; in sight only there is a little, for figures are to some extent of a moral character, and [so far] all participate in the feeling about them" (trans. Benjamin Jowett in Aristotle's Politics [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905], 309-310). See also the Poetics 1447A, where Aristotle compares the metrical arts of music, poetry, and dance with the visual arts of painting and sculpture.

32. André, 192-96.
writings, with conservative, neo-Platonic tendencies that may have been in part a result of his training as a Jesuit. Like Descartes, André sees sentiment and intellect as part of the same physical process and uses the notion of innate ideas to explain the irreducible elements in his observations. What is lacking in the Essai is a structural foundation comparable to that of Cartesian methodology. Geometry was important to Descartes because it represented an ideal method of proof; nothing could be considered true unless it could be proven through a chain of reasoning as substantive as that of a geometric proof.\(^3\) The weakness of André's system is that it believes anything analogous to geometry to be true and assumes that this truth is so obvious that formal proof is no longer necessary. This kink in his logic makes his rationalistic theory of beauty appear, from a modern viewpoint, to border on the metaphysical.

André frequently cites ancient authorities, particularly those influenced by Plato, to bolster his arguments. The importance of mathematical and geometrical explanations, the use of unity in variety as a guiding principle, and the expansion of the notion of beauty to include morality show a strong Platonic influence and are used by Crousaz and some

\(^{33}\) See part two of Descartes' Discours de la methode, VI, 11-22; and rule four of Regulae ad directionem ingenii (Amsterdam, 1701) in Vol. X of Oeuvres de Descartes, 371-39.
seventeenth-century thinkers as well.\footnote{See the commentary to chapter two. See also Bredvold, 91-119.} In fact, when one considers that art, morality, and science all continued to be included within the idea of beauty well into the eighteenth century,\footnote{Francis Hutcheson exemplifies this in his \textit{An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue} (London, 1725). This also occurs in later French writers, such as Diderot, though perhaps to a lesser degree as this specific kind of treatise became less and less frequent.} it is perhaps historically indicative of changing attitudes toward art that André chose to downplay the role of science in this capacity. But perhaps the strongest case for Platonic influence comes from the similarities between André's threefold hierarchy of beauty and Plato's description of all objects as having a threefold existence. For Plato, an object enjoys the most beautiful and perfect existence when it is conceived by the mind. A secondary level is reached when a craftsman makes a functional, three-dimensional copy of this conception, and a tertiary level is reached when an artist makes a non-functional copy of the craftsman's rendering.\footnote{Plato, \textit{The Republic}, 595A-598D.} In the same way, André describes beauty as having an idealized, absolute existence, a practical existence in nature, and a more localized existence in art.

It is difficult from a twentieth-century standpoint to reconcile the rationalistic attitudes of eighteenth-century...
France with the tenets of Platonism, which are usually viewed as a fairly conservative system of thought, but it must be remembered that rationalism in France had taken on a conservative aspect by the eighteenth century. Platonism, with its emphasis on order, proportion, and relationships, was ideally suited to intellectual pursuits, and its complementary nature did not go unnoticed. It is clearly present in the theories of Crousaz, André, and later Diderot. One may therefore conclude that scholars like Władysław Folkierski, who reject André because he emphasizes logic and morality in a treatise on beauty, are in error; it is precisely this emphasis that makes André a crucial figure in an ongoing historical process.

Before turning to the theories of Charles Batteux, it is worth pausing to note that André is at variance with Crousaz and DuBos in method only. His goals are the same. One could explain beauty-related experiences by making sentiment equivalent to reason, by using sentiment instead of reason,


or by subsuming sentiment under reason; but in every case, the need to confront an experience that could be genuinely felt outweighed the temptation to let rationalistic values stand untouched. 39

CHAPTER V

CHARLES BATTEUX, LES BEAUX ARTS RÉDUITES À UN MÊME PRINCIPE (1746)

André, who published his Essai sur le beau in 1741 at the age of sixty-six, could still be regarded as a member of the generation of Crousax and DuBos. In his treatise, as in theirs, we find the question of beauty being probed in isolation; existing data is reassessed, and new explanations are offered. It remained for the next generation, that of the Encyclopedists, to sort through the new theories, add to them, and begin assimilating them into a broader cultural milieu. Standing somewhere between these respective generations is Les Beaux arts réduites à un même principe, written by Charles Batteux (1713 or 1715-1780).¹ In this treatise, Batteux set about, on the one hand, proposing another new way of thinking about artistic beauty and, on the other, organizing and structuring what was already known and accepted concerning artistic beauty. It is indicative of their pivotal role that Batteux' theories, despite their popularity, did

¹. The nouvelle édition (Paris, 1747), facsimile ed. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1970), has been used for the present study.
not receive a great deal of recognition from the Encyclopedists, who seemingly grouped Batteux with the earlier theorists. Batteux' career began auspiciously at the age of twenty-three (or twenty-five) with a professorship in ancient languages at the Collège de Lisieux in Paris, followed shortly thereafter by an appointment as professor of rhetoric at the Collège Royale de Navarre. His reputation became wide-spread, however, only after the publication of Les Beaux arts in 1746, and it was not until 1761 that he was received into the Académie Française and the Académie des Inscriptions. These belated honors attest to the persistence of his ideas in France and elsewhere, even though his fame has been overshadowed historically by that of the Encyclopedists.


4. Belated, considering that DuBos was inducted into the Académie Française the year after his Réflexions critiques was published (see the introduction to chapter three).
For Batteux, the so-called rules of art, which had come to encompass both the act of creation and the act of judgment, were so manifold and complex that even the most assiduous attempts at explaining them were doomed to failure. He therefore sought—like Crousax, DuBos, and André before him—to offer a systematic approach that would, in essence, make the rules self-evident. He perceived his task to be to cull from the rules a universal law that would imply their existence, much as happens with the results of a scientific experiment.  

He found his law in the idealized imitation of nature, the same principle that had guided art during ancient times and exerted an influence on French art in the preceding centuries. This solution would be more than old wine in new bottles, for Batteux had found the commentaries from antiquity and those of the Neoclassic period alike to be veiled in obscurity. So lengthy a tradition could not be wrong: it was simply in need of clarification.

Batteux strove admirably to this end. The overall structure of Les Beaux arts differs dramatically from other works in this tradition and is superior to that of DuBos'

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6. Ibid., v-viii.
Réflexions, from which many ideas are obviously drawn.\footnote{Interestingly, Batteux does not cite DuBos. For some theories on the relationship between the works of the two men, see notes 41 and 48.} The treatise is divided into three parts. The first two deal with the creative and judgmental acts, genius and taste respectively. Batteux notes that the differences between these two processes are not as clear and distinct as one would hope:

Genius and taste have so intimate a relationship in the arts that there are some cases where one can neither unite them without appearing to confuse them nor separate them without all but depriving them of their functions. . . . It is impossible to say what genius must do in imitating nature without supposing the taste that guides it.\footnote{"Le Génie & le Goût ont une liason si intime dans les Arts, qu'il y a des cas où un ne peut les unir sans qu'ils paroissent se confondre, ni les séparer, sans presque leur ôter leurs fonctions. . . . il n'est pas possible de dire ce que doit faire le Génie, en imitant la Nature, sans supposer le Goût qui le guide" (Batteux, 23).}

By devoting the first part of the treatise to describing the relationships between genius and the arts and the second to describing the relationship between taste and the arts, Batteux seeks to make the similarities and differences of the two processes apparent. He also believes that the discussions make his all-important principle—the imitation of la belle nature—abundantly clear. The main purpose of these discussions is to provide a foundation for the systematic description of the arts in the third section of the treatise, which could be considered Batteux' crowning achievement.
Unfortunately, much of the intended effect of this last part is subverted by the expository technique used in the first two parts, a technique that can only be described as dogmatic reiteration. The real issues being discussed are often lost amid continual panegyrics to the imitation of nature.9

One must not allow this problem to obfuscate Batteux' sense of structure, for as Paul Oscar Kristeller points out, this may alone "account for his claim to originality as well as for the enormous influence he exercised both in France and abroad."10 For Batteux, there are three categories of art, all derived from nature: arts of survival, which employ principles found in nature and include everything from routine needs for existence to subtle mechanical inventions; fine arts, which imitate nature for the sake of pleasure and include music, poetry, painting, sculpture, and dance; and a final category in which the first two categories are combined so that the arts of survival are extended to give pleasure as well, as in rhetoric and architecture.11 These groupings


are significant because they show that Batteux recognizes different kinds of beauty (or as he prefers, art), much as do Crousaz and André. At the same time, since he purports only to treat the fine arts, like DuBos, he is able to eliminate the first and last categories, neatly avoiding the extensive and varied discussions required by this Platonic conception of beauty. His structuring of beauty gives him something heretofore lacking, a reason for considering the fine arts separately from all other manifestations of beauty.

Aesthetics

Like DuBos, Batteux believed that art originated as a palliative for the boredom that arose with increasingly civilized behavior and that it was furthermore associated with nature from its beginning:

Bored by too uniform a delight in the objects that nature generously offered them and finding themselves moreover disposed to receive pleasure, [men] took recourse in their genius to procure a new order of ideas and sentiments that aroused their intellect and reanimated their taste. But what could this genius, limited in its fecundity and its views, make, since it could not exceed nature and since it was working

12. Ibid., 68-69. See also note 13 below.

13. Although Batteux repeatedly stresses that the appreciation of art is an act of sentiment (see, for example, p. 10), he also acknowledges, as here, that art must please the intellect. In general, he felt that too much emphasis on the intellect would lead to an undesirable artificiality (cf., chapter two, note 27 and chapter three, note 16).
for men whose faculties were confined within the same limits? All of its efforts necessarily continued to reduce themselves to choosing the most beautiful parts of nature in order to form an exquisite whole, which was more pleasing than nature itself without ceasing to be natural.\textsuperscript{14}

In this passage, Batteux delineates the essential qualities of genius: it is independent of the intellect and involves a selective approach to nature. Each of these ideas is further illustrated in a passage that Batteux selects from the ninth chapter of Aristotle's \textit{Poetics} comparing history and poetry:

History paints what has been made, poetry what might have been made. The former is linked to the truth; it creates neither actions nor actors. The latter holds only to what seems to be true [\textit{le vrai semblance}]: it invents; it imagines at its whim; it paints from judgment. The historian gives examples such as they are, often imperfect. The poet gives them such as they might be. And it is for this reason, according to Aristotle, that poetry can be a much more instructiveless than history.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} "Ennuies d'une jouissance trop uniforme des objets que leur offroit la Nature toute simple, & se trouvant d'ailleurs dans une situation propre à recevoir le plaisir; ils eurent recours à leur génie pour se procurer un nouvel ordre d'idées & de sentiments qui ravivèrent leur esprit & ranimèrent leur goût. Mais que pouvait faire ce génie borné dans sa fécondité & dans ses vues, qu'il ne pouvait porter plus loin que la Nature? & ayant d'un autre côté à travailler pour des hommes dont les facultés étaient resserrées dans les mêmes bornes? Tous ses efforts durent nécessairement se réduire à faire un choix des plus belles parties de la Nature, pour en former un tout exquis, qui fût plus parfait que la Nature elle-même, sans cependant cesser d'être naturel" (Batteux, 8).

\textsuperscript{15} "L'Histoire peint ce qui a été fait. La Poésie, ce qui a pu être fait. L'une est liée au vrai, elle ne crée ni actions, ni Acteurs. L'autre n'est tenue qu'au vrai semblable: elle invente: elle imagine à son gré: elle peint de tête. L'Historien donne des exemples tels qu'ils sont,
History is the more intellectual field, poetry the more sensuous. But the artist is obligated, almost morally obligated, to choose from all of nature rather than from a single model, so that the resulting creation will achieve a higher degree of perfection (or beauty) than is possible in fact. An artist is a creator only for having observed nature, and he observes nature for the sake of creativity.

The process of selection employed by genius is not dry and intellectual. Traditional stories of divine fires and inspired transports of creativity are symptomatic of what Batteux calls enthusiasm. Like all anti-intellectual notions, enthusiasm is difficult to define precisely, but it is a necessary part of genius. Its presence inspires artistic excellence, and its absence brings about periods of decline in artistic productivity. It is the crucial link between the imitation and nature:

Nature has in its treasures all of the traits from which the most beautiful imitations can be composed: these are like the studies in the notebooks of a painter. The artist, who is essentially an observer, recognizes them. He composes from them in his intellect a whole, from which he conceives a vital idea that fills it out. Soon his fire is illumined at the

17. Ibid., 11.
sight of the object: he forgets himself, and his soul passes into the things he creates. ..18

Rationally motivated rules would thus be more likely to interfere than to aid in creative genius.

Taste too may be similarly constrained by rules, but in defining taste Batteux seeks to circumvent this problem by using science as a foil. The goal of science, like history, is truth; the goal of art is the good and the beautiful. We strive in the former to see objects as they really are; whereas in the latter, we seem them as they relate to us, influence us, or please us. Batteux is working here with the same dichotomy of intellect and sentiment that has been noted so frequently in this study. For him, intellect and sentiment are similar in the way they function, but dissimilar in the way they are applied. Taste, therefore, must take precedence in the judgment of art. Like knowledge, it is at its best when it performs accurately, but just as some people can be fooled into believing falsehoods, so too some can be misguided in their artistic judgments.19

18. "La Nature a dans ses trésors tous les traits dont les plus belles imitations peuvent être composées: ce sont comme des études dans les tablettes d'un Peintre. L'Artiste qui est essentiellement observateur, les reconnoît, les tire de la foule, les assemble. Il en compose dans son esprit un Tout dont il conçoit une idée vive qui le remplit. Bientôt son feu s'allume, à la vue de l'objet: il s'oublie: son ame passe dans les choses qu'il cree .. ." (Ibid., 34). For more general information, see pp. 58-60.

19. Ibid., 58-60. Cf., chapter two, notes 18 and 19 and chapter three, note. 32.
Taste is a swift and clear reaction to an artistic stimulus. It is easily felt but its existence is difficult to prove; for this reason, the Pyrrhonistically inclined treat it skeptically. Indeed, one should be skeptical of an innate, natural ability to judge art, for art is man-made and hence not part of nature. However, Batteux' conception of taste is based on man's instinct for judging natural objects in relation to his own needs and pleasures.

Human industry having then invented the fine arts on the model of nature and these arts having had for their object agrément and pleasure (which are in life a secondary order of need), the resemblance of art to nature—their conformity to a single goal—seemed to require that natural taste also be the judge of the arts, and this is what happened. Taste was recognized without contradiction. The arts divined new subjects for it, if I may speak thus, that ranked themselves peacefully under its jurisdiction without obliging it to change its laws for them in the least. Taste remained constant, and it promised the arts its approbation only when they were proven to have the same impression as nature itself. Masterworks of art could only obtain [the approbation of taste] at this price.20

20. "L'Industrie humaine ayant ensuite inventé les beaux Arts sur le modèle de la Nature, & ces Arts ayant eu pour objet l'agrément & le plaisir, qui sont, dans la vie, un second ordre de besoins; la ressemblance des Arts avec la Nature, la conformité de leur but, sembloient exiger que le Goût naturel fût aussi le Juge des Arts: c'est ce qui arriva. Il fut reconnu, sans nulle contradiction: les Arts devinrent pour lui de nouveaux Sujets, si j'ose parler ainsi, qui se rangerent paisiblement sous sa Jurisdiction, sans obliger de faire pour eux le moindre changement à ses loix. Le Goût resta le même constamment: & il ne promit aux Arts son approbation, que quand ils lui seroient éprouver la même impression que la Nature elle-même; & les chefs-d'oeuvres des Arts ne l'obtinrent jamais qu'à ce prix" (Ibid., 64-65). For more general information, see pp. 62-68 and 89-90.
Taste is thus but an extension of the sense that judges good and bad in daily life, in the same way that art is but an extension of nature.\textsuperscript{21}

The pleasures of art should appeal to intellect as well as sentiment. This is accomplished in fairly obvious, or at least familiar ways. The intellect is pleased by variety, but invariably finds too much variety to be fatiguing; for this reason, artists compose their works with symmetry and proportion, insuring that a proper blend of unity and variety will be achieved.\textsuperscript{22} Yet though an intellectual side to art is necessary, the highest artistic glories are nevertheless reserved for the sentiments. Being inherently oriented to perceive nature, taste is especially gratified at seeing nature perfected. By constantly observing the perfection of nature through art, we are inspired to perfect ourselves as well.\textsuperscript{23}

The ramifications of taste for Batteux' system of art are numerous. What follows is a brief summary of these consequences as given in the final four chapters of the second part of \textit{Les Beaux arts réduits à un même principe}:

\textsuperscript{21} Significantly, it is the deductive element in Batteux' method that allows him to draw this conclusion. In the theories of Crousaz and André, art and morality were equally capable of beauty, but were considered separately (see the introductions to chapters two and four).

\textsuperscript{22} Batteux, 84-90. Cf., chapter two, note 13 and chapter four, note 12.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}, 74-81 and 123-28.
1. Since there is only one nature and only one sense of taste for judging it, good taste always reaches the same conclusion regarding the merit of any single artwork. But just as nature is filled with a variety of subjects, many of which are yet unknown, a variety of approaches may be brought to bear on a single artwork—from the nuances of an individual artist to the prejudices of a nation—without damaging the artwork's validity. Taste must therefore consider each work of art separately.24

2. Judgments are made by comparison with nature, but can also benefit from comparisons made with works of the same genre or on the same subject. In this way, one can always arrive at a confident judgment.25

3. It is only natural that taste would improve through constant exposure to artistic perfection and that this would in turn have a reciprocal effect, causing art to improve in order to stay abreast with the more refined sense of taste. As art is perfected, society is also perfected.26

4. This rudimentary version of historical progress can be applied to teaching methods to enhance intellectual development. Because the mental growth that occurs during the first five years of life is based on information derived from the

25. Ibid., 114-122.
senses, the inculcation of taste at an early age would nurture the incipient intellect, giving it the impetus to pursue questions as they naturally arise.\textsuperscript{27}

On Music

According to Batteux, man expresses himself in three ways: through his words, through his tone of voice, and through his gestures. Words are most important, because they are capable of expressing complex or subtle thoughts, but tone of voice and gestures have the advantage of being universally understood. This is because one's gestures or the inflections of one's voice speak directly to the sentiments, while words further require intellectual understanding:

Word instructs us and convinces us: it is the organ of reason. But tone and gesture are the organs of the heart: they move us, win us over, and persuade us. The word expresses passion only by means of the ideas to which it is linked and by reflection. Tone and gesture arrive directly in the heart, without any detour.\textsuperscript{28}

All three forms of expression are neutral in and of themselves, partaking neither of nature nor artifice.\textsuperscript{29} Through studied

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 128-38.

\textsuperscript{28} "La parole nous instruit, nous convainc, c'est l'organe de la raison: mais le Ton & Geste sont ceux du coeur: il nous émeuvent, nous gagnent, nous persuadent. La Parole n'exprime la passion que par le moyen des idées auxquelles les sentiments sont liés, & comme par réflexion. Le Ton & le Geste arrivent au coeur directement & sans aucun détour" (Ibid., 263-64). For more general information, see pp. 262-64.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 277-80.
application, however, they are capable of signification in any of the three categories of art, being equally suited to survival or pleasure.\(^{30}\) In the fine arts, their counterparts are poetry, music, and dance respectively.\(^{31}\) This leads Batteux to make three generalizations about music: the object of music, like the tone of voice a person uses, is sentiment; the inflections of the voice must retain their signification when transposed into music; and music must augment the inflections of the voice, giving more energy to their expression.\(^{32}\)

Action and passion are closely related to each other in both life and art, but Batteux notes that some arts, according to their means of expression, emphasize one or the other. Poetry, for example, is essentially descriptive and gives greater weight to the action being described, while music is a form of nondiscursive expression and must give greater weight to passion.\(^{33}\) Perhaps the best indication that music is a sentimental rather than intellectual art is that lyric poetry—poetry designed to be set to music—is less involved than

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30. Ibid., 264-66.  
31. Ibid. See also pp. 269-70 and pp. 277-80. Batteux is also careful to point out that poetry, music and dance were united during ancient times (see pp. 259-61 and pp. 299-308). Cf., Aristotle, Poetics, 1447A.  
32. Ibid., 267-68. Cf., DuBos' explanation of musical expression in chapter three, note 27.  
33. Ibid., 269-71.
other kinds of poetry. Its expressive content is carried by the music. In much the same way, spoken tragedies, which deal with the heroic deeds of men, are an active art, while tragédies lyriques, which deal with gods and the merveilleux, rely on passions to communicate their stories. Those very qualities in opera that seem most unnatural--continuous singing, machinery, dancing--are best suited to its supernatural subject matter. This is how opera is able to maintain a sense of vraisemblance.

Subjects should therefore be chosen for setting to music whose texts can be expressed sentimentally rather than intellectually.

The principle used in musically signifying the inflections of the voice can be extended to cover inanimate objects as well, according to Batteux. For example, the instrumental music found in operas usually imitates sounds associated with natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms. Two kinds of musical imitation, then, are technically possible: the imitation of impassioned speech and the imitation of natural phenomena. However, Batteux warns that the latter can have

34. Ibid., 244-55, 271-72, and 303-4. Cf., DuBos' theories about the kind of poetry that should be used in librettos in chapter three, notes 36 and 37.

35. Ibid., 218-21, 271-76, and 302-4.

36. Ibid., 271-72 and 303-4.
at best only a "half life," since it does not portray passions.\textsuperscript{37} This is because people are most attracted to subjects that closely mirror their personal experiences.\textsuperscript{38}

Batteux concludes his commentary on music with some observations on how his theories affect the idea of musical expression. It must be remembered that it is unnecessary, if not impossible, to identify each passion as it is musically portrayed. This is not the composer's task. The composer acts as would an orator, taking the natural patterns of the voice and enhancing them. Like the orator, he takes care that his style suits the text, making it clear and easy to understand and adding nuances and novelties that will interest the audience.\textsuperscript{39} As an artist, however, the composer must also conform to the demands of his art, in this case to the musical demands of rhythm, tempo, melody and harmony.\textsuperscript{40}

Commentary

Several instances where Batteux appears to be drawing on the ideas of DuBos have been pointed out in the course of

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 283-84 and, secondarily, pp. 83-84. Cf., DuBos' comments on instrumental music in chapter three, note 30.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 279-84.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 288-93.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 287, 293-99.
this chapter, and the similarities seem to be especially strong on points related to music. Batteux' concern with sentiment—especially in describing the expressive, non-verbal qualities of the voice—is very close to that of DuBos, and like DuBos, he appreciates the expressive capacity of instrumental music, but only when it is placed in a context that will give it rational meaning as well. He agrees with the earlier writer that it is wrong to criticize librettos for not measuring up to the tragedies of Pierre Corneille and Jean Baptiste Racine, applauding those very qualities in opera that had been deemed weaknesses by preceding generations. Batteux in fact praises Philippe Quinault, Lully's librettist, as the finest of all lyric poets in the first edition of Les Beaux arts, but this passage was deleted from subsequent editions. On the whole, then, the most important points in DuBos' description of musical beauty are echoed by Batteux.

41. Alfred Lombard agrues against Manfred Schenker's assertion that since there are no citations of DuBos in Les Beaux arts Batteux did not draw on the Réflexions, in L'Abbé Du Bos: un initiateur de la pensée moderne (Paris, 1913), facsimile ed. (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969), 322-25. It seems more likely, given the popularity of the Réflexions, that Batteux was trying to avoid some of the controversy that probably surrounded DuBos' anti-rationalistic theories.

42. Cf., the section on music in chapter three.

Although DuBos and Batteux seem to agree particularly where departures from tradition are called for, the latter is more willing to let tradition stand whenever possible. Whereas DuBos scarcely mentions the intellect except to oppose giving it a role in artistic matters, Batteux often shows obeisance to the rationalist tradition. It is also significant of the differences between the two men that Batteux draws directly from English sources and not from DuBos' interpretation of these sources. For example, his discussion of why unpleasant subjects are pleasing when represented in art—a passage not drawn upon in the present chapter—resembles more closely that of Joseph Addison than DuBos. But the most notable example is Batteux' borrowing of the idea that

44. Although interestingly, he does seem to be responding directly to André's theory of musical beauty when he writes: "I do not pretend to calculate the sounds in connection with each other or with our organ [of hearing]. I speak here neither of flutterings, vibrations of strings, nor mathematical proportion. I abandon to the wise theorists these speculations, which are only like the grammatical end or dialectic of a discourse of which I can feel the merit without entering into this detail. Music speaks to me only by tones" ("Je ne prétends point calculer les sons, ni leurs rapports, soit entre eux, soit avec notre organe: je ne parle ici, ni de trémoissemens, ni de vibrations de cordes, ni de proportion mathématique. J'abandonne aux savans Théoristes, ces speculations, qui ne sont que comme le grammatical fin, ou le dialectique d'un Discours, dont je puis sentir le mérite, sans enterer dans ce détail. La Musique me parle par des tons," Batteux, 279-80).

45. Ibid., 97-101. Cf., No. 418, The Spectator, 8 vols., ed. George A. Aitken (New York: Longmans, Green, 1898), VI, 109; and the commentary to chapter three of the present study.
ethical and aesthetic judgment are participants in a single thought process, which is derived from the theories of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson.46

Even the logical basis on which Les Beaux arts is constructed, when compared with the Réflexions critiques, shows the influence of English empiricism, whether one believes Batteux to have conceived the principles guiding the treatise inductively, in the traditional French manner, or deductively.47

Thus while the influence of DuBos cannot be overlooked, Batteux also used other sources in forming his own ideas.48

It is precisely Batteux' willingness to pay homage to both French and English systems of philosophy that makes his treatise the culmination of the theories of beauty proposed during the first half of the century. On one hand, he uses the Aristotelian principle of imitation of nature as an

46. See, respectively, Characteristics (London, 1709), modern edition in 2 vols., edited by John M. Johnson (London: Grant Richards, 1900), II, 128, 138; and An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (London, 1727) in Vol. I of Collected Works of Francis Hutcheson, 7 vols., facsimile ed. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1971), vi-viii. Both of these works were well-known in France. Indeed, Batteux goes so far as to cite Francis Bacon on how art pleases through perfection (see Batteux, 80-81, note a).

47. Cf., the commentaries to chapters two, three, and four for discussions of how inductive and deductive methodologies, designated as Platonic and Aristotelian respectively, were used in these treatises.

48. As Lombard notes, many nineteenth-century scholars believed Batteux to have done no more than organize and rewrite DuBos' Réflexions (see Lombard, 323).
a priori means of proof, as Crousaz or André might have done, while on the other he seeks to reduce art, through observa-
tion, to this same principle, much as any English empiricist
would have considered doing. This unusual blend is suggestive
of the methodology that Denis Diderot was to use in constructing
his own theory of beauty in the *Encyclopédie*. There is, in
this same vein, much in *Les Beaux arts* that is forward-
looking. For example, Batteux' tendency to discuss art in
terms of its origins in primitive society foreshadows a tech-
nique that would be used to great advantage by the Encyclopedists.
And though his accomplishments were not to be recognized widely
by the Encyclopedists, his emphasis on the processes surrounding
a work of art, rather than on the artwork itself, and his
thoughtful structuring of the relationship between the
different arts were too original to be ignored and were to
insure him a fame lasting well into the nineteenth century.

49. Diderot's methodology will be discussed in chapter six
of this study.

50. For other discussions of *Les Beaux arts*, see M.H. Abrams,
*The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical
Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 12-13;
Wladyslaw Folkierski, *Entre le classicisme et la romantisme:
étude sur l'esthétique et les esthéticiens du xviiie siècle*
(Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1953), 279-80;
Hugo Goldschmidt, *Die Musikästhetik des 18. Jahrhunderts*
(Leipzig: Rascher, 1915), 69-76; Kristeller, 20-21; Miller,
330-38; Alfred R. Oliver, *The Encyclopedists as Critics of
Music* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), 16;
Rosalie D. Landres Sadowsky, "Jean-Baptiste Abbe DuBos:
The Influence of Cartesian and Neo-Aristotelian Ideas on
Music Theory and Practice" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation,
Yale University, 1960), 245-47; and Walter Serauky, *Die
musikalische Nachahmungsästhetik im Zeitraum von 1700 Bis
If we were to look at the treatises of Crousaz, DuBos, André, and Batteux only from the standpoint of what they wrote about music, we would find little information that is not already available in contemporary critical writings. Any of a number of sources inform us that music was expected to support, in the most general way, the mood of the text or that instrumental music was cold and meaningless when deprived of a dramatic context. In much the same way, the raw materials that went into the making of the various theories of beauty were also abundantly present in contemporary literature. One need not look far, for example, to find the ideas of sentiment and genius being used in critical contexts. All of these ideas were implicit in the fundamental rational premise of this period, discussed in chapter one, whereby experiences that cannot be objectively quantified cannot be rationally studied. These were not, in themselves, new ideas and consequently have little impact on our present ways of thinking about the period.

1. Both ideas, for example, are present in the portions of Le Cerf de la Viéville's Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française translated in Source Readings in Music History, ed., Oliver Strunk (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950), 489-507.
What is innovative in the writings of the aestheticians is that they took these commonplace attitudes and used them to construct systems in which beauty conformed to the existing rationalistic standards. In taking this step, the aestheticians left the staid values of the seventeenth century, still very much alive in the eighteenth century, behind. Music, along with the other arts, could now be treated in learned writings as something more than a mathematical or pedagogical exercise; it could be regarded as a real and even profound experience as well. This signals something deeper than questions of musical taste or expression and something more far-reaching. It signals the beginning of a slow-moving process of change in attitudes toward art, and hence toward music, that spans two centuries.

While rationalistic elements in the theories of beauty remain for the most part unchanged, such as the prevalent critical attitudes toward different arts and the importance of mass approval in deciding artistic merit, the manner in which the theories are put together varies greatly. For the purposes of this study, attention has been repeatedly called to two methodological categories, which have been described as Platonic and Aristotelian.

The Platonic method is characterized by an inductive approach in which beauty is regarded as an underlying, universal principle. This principle can be applied to such contrasting fields as art, morality, and science just as Plato
applied his ruling principle of universal truth to every situation in his dialogues. It is a working method especially common in French philosophy. The highly influential Descartes had used it in his rationally oriented writings, and it was only natural that theorists like Crousaz and André would follow suit, establishing singular definitions of beauty that accounted for all possible contingencies. Even Batteux acknowledged the importance of this method when he began his treatise by proposing different categories of beauty or art, before deftly limiting himself to the study of the fine arts.

In direct contrast to the Platonic method is the Aristotelian method. There is no omnipresent ideal governing Aristotle's writings, only a concern for studying individual subjects in detail. Each of his works in turn is devoted to the methodical description of a single topic—art, ethics, rhetoric, and so on—so that that topic is clearly understood. The deductive gathering and focusing of information implicit in this method is not unlike the empirical methods used by contemporary English philosophers, who relied on direct observation and immediate experience in studying a given subject. Since DuBos and Batteux openly draw ideas from English sources, it is not surprising to find that their treatises are devoted entirely to the subject of the fine arts and that their theories rely on the primacy of sensory experience. They use these principles in a way that is unmistakably French, however.
If the terminology used in eighteenth-century French aesthetics often proves too static for tracing historical trends, the Platonic and Aristotelian methods prove to be invaluable guidelines. This is apparent in the Encyclopédie article on beauty by Denis Diderot.² Coming as it does after the period under consideration, it allows us to find out what was and was not retained from earlier theories.

One can immediately see, in the article, that Diderot identifies most strongly with theories couched in the Platonic manner. Crousaz and André receive considerable attention, and Diderot goes on to offer a theory of beauty equally applicable to music, morality, and mathematics. He defines beauty as something that is perceived through connections and relationships, through the sense of order that can exist both within an object and between that object and surrounding ones.³ In this broad, rationally ordered definition, Diderot is not far from the theories of André, with whom he shares a special affinity.⁴ Like André, he believes that rational order is the basis of beauty even when it is not perceived as such; but whereas André was willing to stop at this point,


³. Ibid., 175-76.

⁴. See the introduction and section on aesthetics in chapter four of this study.
Diderot goes on to probe further into the origins of the idea of beauty. To do this he turns directly to English empiricism, leaving DuBos and Batteux virtually unmentioned.\(^5\) He proposes a scenario in which the mind, at birth, is constantly trying to make sense out of the multitude of impressions that it receives and striving to bring order to its environment. The mind therefore works with ideas like proportion and symmetry without at first being aware of what they are. It is so dependent upon the senses in the early years that it comes to regard the activity of perceiving order as part of the sentiment. It reacts to beauty automatically, not realizing that it is performing a rational function.\(^6\) André's theories are thus taken beyond their rationalistic foundation, but allowed to continue serving rationalistic values. The Cartesian notion of sentiment and reason as lower and higher forms of the same phenomenon is preserved.\(^7\)

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5. The only possible reference to DuBos is a general grouping, under the name of Francis Hutcheson, of aestheticians who believe in a so-called sixth sense for judging art; beyond this, however, DuBos has little in common with Hutcheson (see the commentary to chapter three). Batteux is mentioned only long enough to note that his principle of imitation of nature is never explained in his treatise (see also chapter five, note 9).

6. Diderot, 175-76. For more general information, see pp. 178-79.

This retention of rationalistic values keeps the above-mentioned process of change in attitudes toward art, initiated in the first half of the century, from culminating in a completely new philosophical view of music or art in France at the outset of the second half of the century. After reading the treatises of DuBos and Batteux, one expects to find some kind of rapprochement between the ideals of French philosophy and theories based on sentiment, but this does not happen. Like other vestiges of the time of Louis XIV, rationalism was not something to be tampered with, at least until the Revolution, and the theoretical treatment of beauty had come about as far as it could in this system. Art had attained a new level of acceptance, and now the emphasis shifted to other ways of studying it rationally.

Philosophically, the attention given to music turned from the question of beauty to that of expression: not musical expression in the modern sense, but rather in the sense of a directly communicative ability much as was hinted at previously by DuBos and Batteux. Philosophers searched for the source

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8. The greater acceptance of music can be seen in the seriousness of writings such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Lettre sur la musique française* (1753). This did not, however, result in its acceptance into the philosophical system. As Rousseau notes in his letter: "I admit that I should have a poor opinion of a people who attached a ridiculous importance to their songs, who made more of their musicians than of their philosophers, and among whom one needed to speak more circumspectly of music than of the gravest questions of morality" (translated in *Source Readings*, 636-37).

9. See chapter three, note 27, and chapter five, note 32.
of this expression; critics called out for its rejuvenation. The sensuous beauty of French music was no longer seen as carrying the expressive quality of inarticulate sound. In what seems a far cry from the sober tone of his article on beauty, Diderot could demand, in the guise of Jean-Philippe Rameau's nephew, a kind of music employing "exclamations, interjections, suspensions, interruptions, affirmations, and negations. . . . No witticisms, epigrams, neat thoughts—they are too unlike nature." In matters of taste as well as intellectual pursuits, a new generation was at hand.

The Aristotelian innovations of DuBos and Batteux did not, however, fall into obscurity in the second half of the century. As a perusal of the appendix to this study indicates, the treatises of both men were being published in German translations in the 1760s and in the case of Batteux, as late:


11. See, for example, Rousseau, Lettre sur la musique, 636-54.

12. Translated by Jacques Barzun and Ralph Bowen in Rameau's Nephew and Other Works (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), 71. Le Neveu de Rameau, which was published posthumously, was probably written in the 1760s.
as 1774. If we again focus on the methodological procedures that were used, we can find plausible explanations for this phenomenon.

For much of the eighteenth century, musical and non-musical critical literature in Germany was based on the critical literature of seventeenth-century France. This is indicative of the strong influence France exerted on European culture during and after the reign of Louis XIV. Leipzig had been established early in the century as the major German center for the dissemination of Neoclassical values, largely through the efforts of the university professor Christian Thomasius. Destined to become more famous than Thomasius, however, was his pupil Johann Christoph Gottsched, who in 1730 published the important treatise *Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst*. The *Versuch* was to remain the foremost German authority on Neoclassical critical values through most of the century.

The methodical, exhaustive exposition of the literary arts in the treatise, along with its austere application of the ideals of simplicity and naturalness, reason and morality, is

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13. Gloria Flaherty notes that DuBos' *Réflexions critiques* may have been known in Germany in the French edition as early as 1727 and was fairly well known there by the early 1740s; see *Opera in the Development of German Critical Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 168, 320-21.

14. For the present study, the rev. ed. (Leipzig, 1751), facsimile ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962) has been used.
reminiscent of many seventeenth-century French writings, as is the treatment of opera, which was considered primarily a literary genre but rejected because of its sensuality and avoidance of rules.\textsuperscript{15}

It is unusual that this outdated view of opera should have predominated as long as it did,\textsuperscript{16} for more timely French opinions were being circulated in Germany as well.\textsuperscript{17} In fact, the whole subject of music reveals some surprising inconsistencies in the German adaptation of French principles. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the differences between the traditional beliefs of the two countries on how music affects its listeners: whereas the French regarded the enjoyment of music as an essentially physical or sensuous experience, the Germans had longed perceived it as part of a personal

\textsuperscript{15} Gottsched, 738-43. To support his criticism of opera, Gottsched calls upon such seventeenth-century noteworthies as Charles de Marquetel, Seigneur de Saint Evremond; Jean Baptiste Racine; and Nicolas Boileau (see pp. 743-50).

\textsuperscript{16} See, for example, the comments of Georg Benda in "Ueber das einfache Recitative," written in 1783 for the Magazin der Musik and given in translation by Thomas Bauman in "Benda, the Germans, and Simple Recitative," Journal of the American Musicological Society XXXIV (Spring, 1981), 129-31.

and even spiritual experience. By stubbornly upholding French attitudes, Gottsched and his followers were denying part of their heritage. The journal *Der critische Musicus* (1737-40), published by Gottsched's student Johann Adolph Scheibe, was started in order to bring Gottsched's principles of criticism more directly to bear on German music. But since Scheibe himself was a musician, one often finds him quietly attempting to reconcile French and German beliefs about music. In his definition of musical beauty, for example, he combines the French elements of order and control with the German idea of the musical experience:

> The beauty of music consists of the energy that brings about in the auditor a [feeling of] wonder and, most important of all, in the presentation of all things that bring forth this energy through the music. A music that does not obtain this power over its auditor is never beautiful, and the master who made it must either not have thought at all or else wished not to think, for thus results a deficiency that stirs up loud disorder, displeasure, and physical discomfort [Eckel.]

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19. Scheibe sets forth his goals in No. 1 (March 5, 1737) of *Der critischer Musicus* (Hamburg: Thomas von Wierings Erben, 1738), 1-8. A second volume of *Der critischer Musicus* was published in 1740.

20. "Die Schönheit der Music besteht in dem Nachdrucke, hieraus folget bey den Zuhören eine Bewunderung, und endlich wichtige Vorstellungen von allen den Dingen, die ihnen durch die Music vorgetragen werden. Eine Music,
In a similar vein, Bellamy Hamilton Hosler points out that Scheibe exhibits a greater leniency toward the expressive powers of instrumental music than is common in French criticism.21

In effect, the German critics had borrowed external features from seventeenth-century French criticism without availing themselves fully of the underlying philosophical system—a system that divided all experiences into intellectual and sentimental or sensory-derived categories and classified artistic experiences as sentimental. Almost from the outset there arose in Germany theories of art that compensated for this lack of a firm, philosophical grounding by emphasizing the anti-intellectual aspects of the artistic experience.22 The intense activity in aesthetics during the second half of the century can be ascribed, at least in part, to this prevailing need, culminating in Immanuel Kant's description of beauty as being perceived without the aid of rational contemplation.23

die diese Gewalt über ihre Zuhörer nicht erhält, ist niemals schön, und der Meister der sie verfertiger hat, muss entweder gar nicht gedacht haben, oder nicht dencken wollen, und so entstehet denn ein Mangel, der lauter Unordnung, Verdruss und Eckel erwecket" (No. 8 [June 11, 1737] of Der critischer Musicus, I, 61).


22. See, for example, Cowart, 127-29.

23. Kant writes: "The judgment of taste is not a judgment of knowledge; it is aesthetic rather than logical. One
With these factors in mind, we can hypothesize two reasons for the success of DuBos' and Batteux' theories in Germany. First of all, the treatises attempted to reconcile art with the tenets of rationalism. This would have provided German writers with a means for concentrating on art while maintaining French critical standards. Secondly, the emphasis on an anti-intellectual element in art--namely, sentiment--would have coincided nicely with the native German belief in the intrinsic expressiveness of art. It may be a telling point that the notion of sentiment, albeit with a somewhat different definition, becomes prominent in later German theories. It should also be noted that those very qualities in the treatises of DuBos and Batteux that have been described as Aristotelian are the ones that were most likely to appeal to German theorists.24 The methodologies used were well suited to German needs. They may not have provided the only possible answers to the questions plaguing German critics, but they did offer one valid solution.

24. Interestingly, Gottsched made one of the German translations of Les Beaux arts, but saw fit to interpolate his own observations (see the appendix to this study).
One can readily observe that the history of the aesthetics of music holds a unique place in modern scholarship, for it does not fall fully within the realm of the historian, the philosopher, or the musicologist. Yet, it is an area of research that holds great promise for all three disciplines. The idea of aesthetics arose at the same time that attitudes toward music were undergoing change, affording the historian and the philosopher a perhaps unparalleled means for monitoring the metamorphosis of music from a traditional craft into a full-fledged, modern art. For the musicologist, the aesthetics of music provides a middle ground of understanding between the day-to-day exchanges of music criticism and the long-range changes that occurred. It allows all three to study not only what happened, but how it came to happen in the first place and leads them ultimately to ask the important question, why?
APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGIES OF EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS
OF THE TREATISES

The following list has been provided in order to give some idea both of the longevity of the individual theories and of the patterns in which they were disseminated throughout Europe. It includes a chronological arrangement of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editions and translations of each of the four treatises covered. The treatises have been grouped by author, and these groups have then been ordered according to the appearance of the first edition of each treatise.¹

Jean-Pierre de Crousaz

_Traité du beau. Où l'on montre en quoi consiste ce que l'on nomme ainsi, par des exemples tirez de la plupart des arts et des sciences._ Amsterdam: François L'Honoré, 1715.

_Traité du beau. Où l'on montre en quoi consiste ce que l'on nomme ainsi, par des exemples tirez de la plupart des arts et des sciences. Nouvelle édition revue, corrigée et augmentée par l'auteur._ Amsterdam: L'Honoré et Châtelain, 1724. The chapter on music was replaced in this edition by a chapter on religion.

¹ This list contains only publications that could be verified in François Lesure, ed., _Écrits imprimés concernant la musique_, 2 vols., Series B/VI of _Répertoire international des sources musicales_, (Munich: G. Henle, 1971); _The National Union Catalog: Pre-1956 Imprints_, 754 vols. (Chicago: Mansell, 1968-81); or else through direct observation. It is in no way intended to be a complete listing.


Jean-Baptiste DuBos


2. In addition to the sources listed in note 1, the section on Dubos has employed Alfred Lombard, L'Abbé DuBos, un initiateur de la pensée moderne (Paris, 1913); facsimile ed. (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969), 542-45.

Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture.
Cinquième édition revue, corrigée et augmentée, 3 vols.

Critical reflections on poetry, painting and music; with an inquiry into the rise and progress of the theatrical entertainments of the ancients; translated into English by Thomas Nugent, gent. from the fifth edition revised, corrected and inlarged by the author, 3 vols. London: John Nourse, 1748.


Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture.
Sixième édition, 3 vols. Paris: Pissot, 1755. There were actually two editions issued during this year: one in quarto and one in duodecimo.

Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture.

Oordeelkundige Aanmerkingen over de Poëzy, en Schilderkunst, Waarin men op een levendige wyze vind afgeschetst en ondertekt, de Aart en Kragt der Muzyk, Met veel Nutte en Noodige Leszen voor en Muziekminnaars, Uit het Fransch van Du Bos Vertaald, door Philip Zweerts, 3 vols.
Amsterdam: Hermann de Wit, 1760.


Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture.


Yves-Marie André


Essai sur le beau, par le P. André J., avec un discours préliminaire, et des réflexions sur le goût, par Mr. Formey. Amsterdam: J.H. Schneider, 1759.

Essai sur le beau, par le P. André J., avec un discours préliminaire, et des réflexions sur le goût, par Mr. Formey. Amsterdam: J.H. Schneider, 1760.


Charles Batteux


Cours de belles lettres distribué par exercices, 4 vols. Paris: Desaint et Saillant, 1750. This work, which also appears under the title Principes de littérature, is a collection of several of Batteux' earlier treatises. The first volume is Les Beaux arts. 3


"A Course of the belles lettres: or The principles of literatur." Tr. from the French of the Abbot Batteux by Mr. Miller, 4 vols. London: B. Law, 1761.


Dritte und verbesserte Auflage, 4 vols. Leipzig: M.G. Weidmanns Erben und Reich, 1759.


Einleitung in die Schönen Wissenschaften. Nach dem Französischen des Herrn Batteux mit Zusätzen vermehret von C.W. Ramler,


Einleitung in die Schönen Wissenschaften. Nach dem Französischen des Herrn Batteux mit Zusätzen vermehret von C.W. Ramler,


Principes de littérature. Cinquième édition. Tome premier.

Principes de littérature. Nouvelle édition. Tome I. Paris:
Dessaint et Saillant, 1775.

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—— Untitled article on the relationship between invention and composition in No. 8 (June 11, 1737), Der critische Musicus. Hamburg: Thomas von Wierings Erben, 1738, 57-64.

—— Untitled article on opera and the rules of art in No. 20 (January 7, 1738), Der critische Musicus. Hamburg: Thomas von Wierings Erben, 1738, 177-84.

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