

MUSIC: A VIEW FROM DELFT
 On Developing an Analytical View

Edward T. Cone, "Music: A View from Delft," *The Musical Quarterly* 47/4 (Oct. 1961): 439-453.



Johannes Vermeer, *View of Delft* (c1660-1661), oil on canvas

"...for fullest enjoyment we want the medium of an art to be saturated—used to the fullest extent in every dimension."

"It is not enough that the demands of a polar couple be satisfied simultaneously; they must be satisfied together organically, so that each member of the pair grows out of the other. Thus the two structures, abstract and representational [form], must be more than parallel. They must fuse by mutual analogy, so that they become two ways of looking at one single, basic structure."

– Edward T. Cone, *Music: A View from Delft*

Terms & Concepts

<p>Johannes Vermeer, Dutch painter (1632-75)</p> <p>Analysis abstract vs. representational form actual scene/hypothetical view analogue balance (brought into) coherence complexity (complexities) content/form design detail/whole dimension grows out of... figure/ground form fusion by mutual analogy medium motif organic pattern polar couple</p>	<p>polar tension poles of unity positive/negative space representation - objective/subjective saturation - suspended saturation structure subject surface texture temporal art tensions texture textural complexity unity - unity/multiplicity - unity/complexities views - Vermeer-views - traditional views of painting: + portrait + still life + landscape visual matrix</p>	<p>Perception appreciation association attraction communication contemplation emotion enjoyment expression perception - visual/aural/intellectual personal associations realization (moment of) satisfaction suspense vision of the artist</p> <p>Musical dualities consonance/dissonance expansion/contraction foreground/background harmony/voice leading structural/ornamental tension/resolution</p>
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Sets of Poles

PAINTING	MUSIC
detail vs. whole	detail vs. whole
light vs. shade	brightness vs. darkness (timbre)
color vs. form	texture vs. phrase
brushstroke vs. area	pitch vs. motive
etc.	etc.

“...the artist’s job is to create a perceptible unity out of the complexity resulting from just this multiplicity of tensions.”

– Edward T. Cone, *Music: A View from Delft*

Quotable

“Since **music is a temporal art**, certain possibilities are open to it that are unavailable to painting.”

“Time, of course,
yields the dimension of rhythm.”

“Music, as it moves through time,
must make its formal relationships clear
from moment to moment...”

“...the unity of the musical composition
must be perceptible within the medium:
it must be heard.”

“...the apparently simple surface of some music
may in fact conceal great richness.”

“In music, the appearance of each new detail
is an occasion for suspense.”

“In music, there is the possibility for: “suspended saturation:
the development of an idea
which on first presentation
may seem of insufficient moment,
but which through its treatment grows in interest.”

“It would be as hard to write music without expressive pattern
as to write literature independent of verbal connotations.”

“Traditional tonality was fortunate in having at its command a built-in technique, so to speak,
for producing and controlling suspense; and one of the fundamental tasks
of the atonal idiom has been to find substitutes or analogues for its powerful effects.”

– Edward T. Cone, *Music: A View from Delft*