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Stormy Music in the Eighteenth Century

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Introduction

The storm in Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony is a recognized masterpiece in the art of musical tone-painting. The tempest builds, reaches a noisy climax, and then subsides, with meteorological elements such as wind, rain, and thunder identifiable in individual musical devices. It is carefully constructed, and yet conveys a sense of chaos, including several startling effects that are unprecedented for the time. Beethoven evidently seeks to capture the progress of the storm, but also to give his audience a bit of a fright. He was not the first composer to do this, although his methods were a little more unconventional. Musical storm depictions were not a new idea, and examples stretch right back to the operas of more than a century earlier, where audiences could experience spectacular stage effects (including sound effects provided by wind machines and thunder sheets) as well as powerful music for a true assault on the senses. Storm scenes were especially popular in the operas of the French court at the beginning of the eighteenth century, where the plots frequently allowed opportunities for divine intervention. Storms and shipwrecks often reflect the actions of an irate deity, and deliverance could be effected by a benevolent one. This association between storms and the supernatural is of central importance. The Age of Reason could well offer sound scientific reasons to explain extreme weather conditions, but superstitions persisted, and storms still offered a very real sense of danger to anyone unfortunate enough to be caught in one.

Composers quickly came to realize that in order to write more effective storm music, they would need to find ways not just to represent the storm, but to convey that sense of danger to the audience. This was a gradual process, and it is difficult to pinpoint when this transition took place, but it is fair to say that at the start of the eighteenth century the emphasis was on representing the storm through simple tone-painting, yet by the end of the century there

was a clear intention on the part of composers to provoke feelings of terror in audiences. One of the aims of this book is to trace the path of this progression, and to show how it tied in with wider aesthetic trends that dealt with emotional responses to art and literature as well as music.

The devices that eighteenth-century composers employed for storms in the theatre began to find their way into other kinds of music, including sacred music, where texts that dealt with storms and other terrifying events such as earthquakes and damnation gave rise to appropriately frightening music, although in a church context there were naturally some constraints on excess. Programmatic instrumental pieces with stormy content soon began to prove popular, with picturesque depictions of storms in individual movements of concertos and symphonies. In particular, the emerging genre of the symphony provided the opportunity for composers to introduce stormy-sounding elements in an abstract context, including the so-called *Sturm und Drang* symphonies of Haydn and a few of his contemporaries. These examples are no mere attempt at tone-painting. The aim seems to have been to explore the territory for rhetorical effect, to gain the attention of the listener by looking for an emotional response. This is achieved by disrupting the conventional musical language of the day, introducing discontinuities in pitch, rhythm, timbre, and dynamics that would unsettle audiences.

The label *Sturm und Drang* is demonstrably unsatisfactory as an accurate identifier of such music. The stylistic origins clearly lie much earlier than the German literary movement of that name, deriving from storm scenes (including floods, earthquakes, and conflagrations) in early operas, and a supernatural association is evident because these scenes are invariably instigated, and often quelled, by irate deities. My substituting the term with *tempesta* avoids this misleading association. Composers and publishers of concertos and symphonies in the eighteenth century frequently used the word as a descriptive label for storm depictions (with works or individual movements headed *La tempesta*), and the term *aria di tempesta* for operatic arias of a stormy nature was widely recognised. The Italianate word reflects this tradition, and is intended to complement *ombra* (the style employed for the appearance of ghosts, witches, oracles, etc.) because the two have associations with the supernatural, and they share many musical characteristics. In both cases, discontinuous elements are incorporated into the music, but the most important difference between the two is the tempo of the music, the slower *ombra* giving rise to awe and fear, and the faster *tempesta* conveying terror and panic. When a composer employs either of these styles (or indeed both, since they often occur in tandem, especially in infernal scenes), he can therefore be seen to be going beyond mere pictorialism by aiming to move his audience. For

this reason, both *ombra* and *tempesta* must be regarded as important forerunners of the expressivity that came to be associated with Romantic music.

Tempesta operates not just as a piece of tone-painting, but as a way of expressing all kinds of turmoil, both literal and metaphorical. It can communicate rage, panic, passion, pursuit, conflict, or madness, all recurring themes in the Romantic repertoire, but also present throughout much of the music written in the eighteenth century. The audience is expected not just to listen and observe at a distance, but to participate emotionally in the experience. A heroine abandoned in a storm allows the composer both to depict the storm and to convey her terror, as well as inviting the audience to participate in her emotional experience. This dynamic also works when there are no characters or staging involved. In abstract instrumental works, the use of stormy elements is best accounted for in relation to topic theory, where a musical idea derives from one location and is used in another. From the 1760s onwards, *tempesta* is identifiable as a topic which derives from theatrical storm scenes but which can operate in abstract contexts to create a strong emotional impact on the listener. The prime function of *tempesta* as a topic within a piece of abstract instrumental music is therefore to stimulate the listener into engaging with the music more closely, and thereby gaining the reward of an emotional *frisson*. In an age when audience members were easily distracted by the various social activities that might be in progress at the same time as the music, *tempesta* was a useful way for composers to gain greater attention. By the time that Beethoven came to compose the storm music for the *Pastoral* Symphony in 1808, a well-established tradition of musical devices was available to him, including the use of flat minor keys, rapid and disjunct motion, dissonance, chromaticism, pauses, irregular metres and rhythms, and dynamic effects (these characteristics and more will be explored in the coming chapters). While such features had been developed to stand apart from the conventional musical language of the day, by Beethoven's time they had themselves become conventions, to the extent that they were parodied, and this led him to extend the boundaries still further to create the effects he desired. His stated aim had been to express feelings rather than to indulge in tone-painting ("Mehr Ausdruck der Empfindung als Malerei"), but in the case of the storm music, he was also deliberately working on the feelings of his audience.

Of course there are stormy passages elsewhere in Beethoven's symphonic output, notably in the first movement of his Symphony No. 5 (premiered alongside the *Pastoral*), where the music is equally capable of shocking, yet without an obvious programme. The music demands attention by powerfully signifying terror, and encourages active emotional participation by the

audience. In the hands of Beethoven, *tempesta* moves from localized topical reference to the subject of extended rhetorical discourse.

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The aim of this book is essentially to provide a companion volume to my earlier *Ombra: Supernatural Music in the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington, 2012) and for that reason I have preserved the same structure to allow for ease of comparison, since the styles share a number of characteristics. An important difference is that no reference to the term *tempesta* will be found in that book. It was with some reluctance I had used the phrase *Sturm und Drang*, as the term is widely understood in musicology, but it has become increasingly clear in recent years that its use is problematic, and it was this that prompted me to propose the new term. The idea was well received in a paper I gave at the symposium "International Conference on Music Semiotics in Memory of Raymond Monelle: Establishing New Musical Topics in the Repertoire and Popular Culture" at the University of Edinburgh in October 2012. Subsequently the term was adopted for my chapter "*Ombra* and *Tempesta*" in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory* (OUP, 2014). The present volume is therefore an expansion of this original idea, providing a more detailed context and a substantial collection of examples to illustrate the evolution of the style. Most importantly, the case is made for the adoption of the term *tempesta* to replace *Sturm und Drang* not only for a restricted range of a few middle-period symphonies by Haydn (and a handful of similar examples by his contemporaries), but to account for the wider range of music that exhibits stormy characteristics in opera, sacred music, and programmatic instrumental pieces.

I am principally concerned with the music, itself rather than the socio-historical factors that produced it. Consequently I have not set out to trace putative influences that one composer may have had on another, because the nexus of stylistic developments is too complex to convey with any clarity. Like *ombra*, the characteristics of *tempesta* simply evolved over time, and became part of the expressive toolkit for composers. There are necessarily quite a large number of musical examples, but for many of the case studies it will be desirable to consult a score to engage with the analysis completely. Nearly all of the works covered in any detail are available from online sources such as *IMSLP* and *BnF Gallica*, although some editions may not be quite the same there, and in some cases will only exist in manuscript scores or early printed editions, and therefore be lacking in bar numbers. At a local level within individual chapters I have often discussed works within a roughly chronological framework where appropriate, but not slavishly so. I have also grouped some examples from within a particular geographical area, but again this is not a

guiding principle. Some national characteristics are observable, but new ideas became rapidly disseminated across Europe. Chapter 1 is an exploration of the aesthetic context of *tempesta,* taking into account the scholarship of the past century that led to the idea of *Sturm und Drang* holding sway. It also includes a consideration of eighteenth-century attitudes to frightening music as well as modern ideas about the psychological effects of discontinuities in music. In the chapters that follow, I have restricted myself to the large-scale genres where stormy music had the most impact, mainly opera, oratorio, symphony, and concerto. *Tempesta* does appear in smaller-scale works such as solo cantatas, chamber music, keyboard pieces, and song, but there was a danger of expanding beyond the boundaries of practicality if the repertoire were widened any further. Opera is the obvious place to start, since the earliest examples are found here, and the storm references are unambiguous. In chapters 2–5 the various factors that contribute to *tempesta* are identified and examined, with the case studies in chapter 6 demonstrating how they work in combination. *Tempesta* is less prevalent than *ombra* in sacred music, but appropriate examples are examined in chapter 7. In discussing the instrumental repertoire in chapter 8, I have made an important distinction between programmatic and abstract music, even though the lines between the two were sometimes blurred. Some pieces are clearly exercises in tone-painting, while others exhibit certain aspects of *tempesta* for expressive purposes. For the bulk of the study, I have chosen the year 1791 as a cut-off point, as I did in the book on *ombra*, since this marks the death of Mozart, as well as the year when Haydn composed his last opera. Most sections in each chapter lead to examples by these two composers, thus acknowledging their pre-eminence in the craft of deploying *tempesta* characteristics. The 1790s saw the evolution of the *tempesta* style taking a new turn, even for Haydn, and the final chapter offers a brief survey of the stormy repertoire that was written around the turn of the century, including the innovations brought by Beethoven.

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Cross, Peter Holman, Marita McClymonds, and David Coronel. Peter Jones was very kind in sharing his unpublished opera editions, and Martin Lawrence has once again provided expert assistance in the esoteric science of eighteenth-century horn transpositions.

Translations are my own except where indicated otherwise, and I have adopted formal equivalence to keep as close to the originals as possible, which accounts for the occasionally inelegant flow of the English. I am indebted to Dick Andrews (Italian) and Fiona Smith (German) for their help when I got stuck. I am especially grateful to Charlie Gower-Smith for his meticulous and patient approach to the vital task of creating the music examples. I must also thank the School of Music at the University of Leeds for a one-semester sabbatical which allowed me to get the book started, for showing flexibility in arranging my teaching and administrative duties to allow for extra research time, and for approving funding to pay for the typesetting of music examples. Thanks too must go to my editor Lindsey Porambo and all at Lexington for their professionalism in supporting this project. On a personal note, I would like to acknowledge the continued love and support of my wife Pat, who has endured the process of me creating this book with considerable patience and understanding.

Most of my professional career has been devoted to the teaching of music. All I have really done is to keep the flame burning, a flame that was kindled by those teachers that inspired me. This book is therefore dedicated to all of them, and especially Ronald Cayless, Richard Hickman, Tom Dodd, Nigel Fortune, and Julian Rushton.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in endnotes to refer to music available in standard complete editions and other collections. Several examples are also available in online resources.

DTB	Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern, Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1962–
DdT	Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst, Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1892–
DTÖ	Denkmäler Tonkunst in Österreich, Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1959– .
FOSEC	French Opera in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, New York: Pendragon Press, 1984– .
GHS	German Handel Society, Ridgewood: Gregg Press, 1965.
GIO	Garland Italian Opera, New York and London: Garland, 1977–
GSW	Gluck, Sämtliche Werke, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1951– .
GTS	Garland: The Symphony 1720–1840, 1984– .
HHA	Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1955– .
JCBCW	Johann Christian Bach Collected Works, New York: Garland, 1985– .
JHW	Joseph Haydn Werke, Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1968– .
KASS	Kritische Ausgabe sämtlicher Symphonien, Vienna: Universal Edition, 1963–68.
MB	Musica Britannica, London: Stainer and Bell, 1951– .
NMA	Neue Mozart-Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1955–.
OCJBL	Oeuvres Complète de J. B. Lully, New York: Broude Brothers, 1966–72.

OOR	Opera Omnia Rameau, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1998–
PSE	Purcell Society Edition, London: Stainer & Bell, 1878– .
TMW	Telemann, Musikalische Werke, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1950– .
TOCM	Tutte le Opere di Claudio Monteverdi, Vienna: Universal, 1926–.

Chapter One

Tempesta in Context

The term *tempesta* has only recently been introduced to apply to a wide variety of music from the late sixteenth century to the nineteenth (and beyond) that exhibits stormy characteristics, and not just the narrow range of works traditionally covered by the label *Sturm und Drang*. Before examining the musical characteristics of *tempesta* in detail, it is first necessary to look at how the idea of *Sturm und Drang* in music took hold in the twentieth century, and why this term must now be regarded as misleading. Consideration will subsequently be given to how eighteenth-century minds viewed this kind of music, and also to the psychological factors that are in play when certain types of musical sound are used with the purpose of unsettling the listener.

Sturm und Drang in Recent Musicology

In the study of literature, *Sturm und Drang* (usually translated as "storm and stress") refers to an early manifestation of Romanticism in Germany, in which increased subjectivity and extremes of emotional expression are forefronted.[1] The name *Sturm und Drang* derives from the revised title of Friedrich Maximilian Klinger's play originally entitled *Der Wirrwarr* (1776), in which the somewhat overblown words and deeds of two feuding families are played out against the backdrop of the American War of Independence.[2] Other examples of the style pre-date this, however, including Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg's *Ugolino* (1768) and Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) and *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774). Following the aesthetic agenda set by Herder, first Goethe then other writers such as Schubart, Schiller, and Lenz raised the level of this artistic passion to new heights, hence the other label often applied to this movement, *Geniezeit*. Yet by the early 1780s,

the passionate excesses of *Sturm und Drang* were in decline, with Goethe in particular turning to the loftier ideals associated with Weimar Classicism.[3] It should be remembered that the writers in this group showed little interest in the supernatural. Since the origins of *tempesta* lie in musical representations of supernaturally-inspired storm scenes in the theatre, a different tradition would appear to apply.

The initial use of *Sturm und Drang* in relation to music was by the Polish musicologist Théodore de Wyzewa in 1909, in an article marking the centenary of Haydn's death.[4] In writing about certain minor-key movements in Haydn's symphonies of the late 1760s and early 1770s, he attempted to draw parallels between the perceived emotional content in the style of this music and the heightened expressivity of German *Sturm und Drang* literature. While the proposition is clearly attractive because of the coinciding dates, the evidence of any direct link is non-existent. Haydn wrote plenty of music during that period that did not exhibit these restless qualities, and there are other periods in his life when he did employ "stormy" features in his music. Wyzewa also undermines his own argument by pointing to contemporaneous examples by other composers (namely Gluck, Mozart, C. P. E. Bach, Vaňhal, and Dittersdorf). Furthermore, his odd suggestion that Haydn's change of style reflected some kind of personal artistic crisis following the death of an unknown woman in 1772 is without historical foundation.[5] Two eminent Haydn scholars, Jens Peter Larsen and H. C. Robbins Landon, helped to perpetuate the idea of "crisis" contributing to the change of style, although they avoided Wyzewa's more serious errors.[6] According to Larsen, the musical *Sturm und Drang* was a reaction to the undemanding elegance of the established *galant* style, which was itself created out of a need to supplant the rigidity of Baroque practices. Landon spoke of an "Austrian musical crisis," placing it at an earlier date than the German literary *Sturm und Drang* yet maintaining the idea of a wider creative upheaval.[7] Landon's pre-eminent position as the virtually unquestionable authority on Haydn's music undoubtedly contributed to the wider acceptance of this view. Yet dissenting voices began to emerge. Jack Westrup wrote briefly of the "popular legend that Haydn had a *Sturm und Drang* period," and Barry S. Brook was certainly critical of Landon, yet without dismissing the idea of the revolutionary *Zeitgeist* altogether.[8] He was unable to resist the appeal of linking figures as prominent as Haydn and Goethe, despite the differences in their geographical locations and social backgrounds. The first writer to say categorically that the term *Sturm und Drang* should not be applied to music at all was literary scholar Walter Hinck, whose assertion is quoted in the entry on that subject in *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*.[9] Written in 1980, R. Larry Todd's "revaluation" of Haydn's *Sturm und Drang* highlights the disagreements

about attempting to link the literary and musical movements, but falls short of dismissing the idea of a musical movement altogether.[10] The same year saw the appearance of Leonard Ratner's seminal book on topic theory, *Classic Music*, where *Sturm und Drang* is identified as a clear "topic."[11] This helps to shift the focus away from the idea of an artistic movement to concentrate on specific features of musical style, but he ought to have chosen better illustrative examples. One is the first movement of Haydn's String Quartet in F minor Op. 20 No. 5, written in 1772, which is rather lacking in the stormy characteristics that ought to define this topic, the restless nature of this music having more in common with *Empfindsamer Stil*.[12]

An important breakthrough in understanding Haydn's *Sturm und Drang* style was the recognition of the influence of his own operas, especially as the first examples for the Esterházy court theatre were written at the same time as the so-called *Sturm und Drang* symphonies.[13] In particular, the storm scenes included in some of these stage works provided stylistic models for the traits displayed in the symphonies. Elaine Sisman observes that "much of Haydn's symphonic music of the period . . . was either originally destined for the stage, or composed with a view to possible later use as overtures and entr'actes," while Neal Zaslaw makes the point that "these tempestuous effects had been invented in the opera houses to portray nature's storms as well as storms of human emotion."[14] Significantly, Zaslaw's comments come in a book not about Haydn, but Mozart (in relation to his early G minor symphony K183), which helpfully pushes the debate beyond Haydn's *oeuvre*. Zaslaw also neatly dispatches the "romantic crisis" theory, as well as pointing to the prescience that composers would have needed to contribute consciously to the wider cultural *Sturm und Drang*.[15] Both Sisman and Zaslaw argue convincingly in support of a purely musico-dramatic origin for the style, although neither looks to earlier examples in order to identify the origins of specific characteristics.

Since 2000, scholars have continued to question the validity of *Sturm und Drang* in music from a cultural perspective. Raymond Monelle suggested that we had reached the point where it "has become a modern myth to associate the Haydn symphonies of this period [i.e., the late 1760s and early 1770s] with the literary movement thus named," and later, in the context of a discussion about topic theory, he concludes that "it is probably no longer OK to speak of a 'Sturm und Drang' topic."[16] It is hard not to agree with this latter point, even though it leaves open the question of replacement terminology. Margaret Stoljar highlights the effect that the development of instruments (especially keyboards) had on expressivity, particularly because dynamic contrasts could be achieved more effectively as a result.[17] She also makes the important point that while the literary *Sturm und Drang* was transient

and swiftly rejected, the musical style survived as a precursor to Romantic expressivity.[18] Meanwhile Abigail Chantler's approach has been to separate the musical *Sturm und Drang* from the literary by highlighting the wider context of the sublime.[19] This is a crucial point, as the Burkean concept of the sublime certainly pre-dates the *Sturm und Drang* period, and is a much more compelling candidate for explaining the sentiments that lay behind the stylistic innovations that took place. It is therefore necessary to turn now to examine how ideas about expressivity in general and artistic depictions of storms in particular were regarded in the eighteenth century.

The Eighteenth-Century Context

Neither *tempesta* nor *Sturm und Drang* would have been terms recognisable to musical theorists of the eighteenth century, yet clearly there was plenty of music that exhibited "stormy" characteristics, and in a wide variety of genres. Storm scenes in operas appear frequently because they are a recurring feature in the Classical mythology on which the plots are so often based. They were immensely popular throughout the century, partly because of the opportunities for spectacular stage effects, but also because the imaginations of composers were stimulated to provide music that could have a comparable impact. It is clear that there was much more to this kind of writing than tone-painting. From quite early on in the eighteenth century, composers were expected to be able to elicit a range of emotional responses from their listeners, guided by the principles of oratory and the *Affektenlehre*.[20] Once they had learnt to convey terror through the use of fast, loud, and disjointed music, they could then appropriate these techniques for metaphorical storm references, for instance in rage arias, mad scenes, conflicts, and pursuits. While an individual composer's intentions at any one time can be difficult to pinpoint, the increasing use of devices that shock and disorientate means that such intentions can reasonably be inferred.

Although sacred music provided fewer opportunities for such extremes (a certain amount of decorum would be expected in an ecclesiastical context), similar approaches began to be adopted. From here the language of the storm naturally progressed to the area of programmatic instrumental music, and thence to abstract music, where it could contribute most effectively to the rhetorical discourse.[21] This provides a perfect illustration of how topics work in eighteenth-century instrumental music. The musical signifiers associated with a particular context (here a storm scene in the theatre) are transferred to an abstract setting where they contribute to the unwritten narrative, allowing both the intellect and emotional state of the audience to be worked upon.

When it comes to the strong emotions associated with feelings of horror and terror, there is no shortage of eighteenth-century writings on the subject.

The Sublime

One of the main reasons why the term *Sturm und Drang* cannot apply to music is that the dates do not coincide between the literary and musical traditions. As will be seen in later chapters, there are several musical examples exhibiting strong stormy characteristics that predate those in the literature, so the question of an external influence simply does not arise. Moreover, the German literary *Sturm und Drang* has little by way of supernatural content, whereas in the music the origins of the style in stage depictions of mythological storms caused by irate deities is demonstrable (and will be discussed in detail below). In identifying a more appropriate expression of the *Zeitgeist*, the sublime is an obvious candidate, since it deals with the idea of elevated emotions, of which the most exalted were fear and terror.[22] The dissemination throughout Europe of the "sublime of terror" was in large part due to Edmund Burke's widely published *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), where terror is identified as the strongest emotion that could be felt:

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.[23]

Burke's ideas were by no means new. Concepts such as "boldness and grandeur in the thoughts" and "raising the passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree" had been identified as early as the first century as potential sources of the sublime, and were circulating in translation towards the end of the seventeenth century.[24] An important precursor of Burke was poet and critic John Dennis, who in 1704 includes obviously supernatural sources of the sublime such as "gods, daemons, hell, spirits and souls of men," as well as "thunder, tempests, raging seas, inundations, torrents, earthquakes, [and] volcanoes" but his idea of the ultimate source of the sublime is clear:

> Now of all these ideas none are so terrible as those which show the wrath and vengeance of an angry God, for nothing is so wonderful in its effects; and consequently the images or ideas of those effects must carry a great deal of terror with them.[25]

Dennis also makes a distinction between terror (characterised by violence and passion) and horror (involving a state of suspense and awe), one of the few literary critics in the eighteenth century who does so.[26] This is important because the two have their counterparts in *tempesta* and *ombra* respectively. Burke is less clear on this separation, although he does refer to horror in his discussion of astonishment:

> The passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror.[27]

In one notable example of a purely musical context, Mattheson makes a clear distinction between the different effects that a sublime experience might cause:

> If I hear a solemn *sinfonia* in church, a prayerful trembling comes over me. . . . If the organ begins to roar and thunder, I am seized with the fear of God.[28]

It is evident from this that sound alone is sufficient to give rise to the most powerful emotional reactions. In 1735, Hildebrand Jacob's list of sublime sources highlights the effect made by their sound, and includes waterfalls, roaring seas, tempests, thunder, and warfare.[29] Burke also recognises this:

> Excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror. The noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and aweful [*sic*] sensation in the mind, though we can observe no nicety or artifice in those sorts of music.[30]

Later, when discussing beauty in sounds, Burke identifies some features in music which are its opposite (although he is at pains to point out that music is not "an art in which I can say I have any great skill"):

> the beautiful in music will not bear that loudness and strength of sounds which may be used to raise other passions; nor notes, which are shrill, or harsh, or deep . . . great variety, and quick transitions from one measure [i.e., tempo] or tone [i.e., note] to another, are contrary to the genius of the beautiful in music. Such transitions often excite mirth, or other sudden and tumultuous passions; but not that sinking, that melting, that languor, which is the characteristical effect of the beautiful, as it regards every sense.[31]

Immanuel Kant, who was strongly influenced by Burke, similarly defines the sublime and the beautiful by placing them in opposition, although here there is no attempt to relate anything to music:

> The finer feeling that we will now consider, is pre-eminently of two kinds: the feeling of the sublime and of the beautiful. Being touched by either is agreeable, but in very different ways. The sight of a mountain whose snow-covered peaks arise above the clouds, the description of a raging storm, or the depiction of the kingdom of hell by Milton, arouses satisfaction, but with dread; by contrast, the prospect of meadows strewn with flowers, of valleys with winding brooks, covered with grazing herds, the description of Elysium, or Homer's depiction of the girdle of Venus also occasion an agreeable sentiment, but one that is joyful and smiling. For the former to make its impression on us in its proper strength, we must have a feeling of the sublime, and in order properly to enjoy the latter we must have a feeling for the beautiful.[32]

Kant then describes the demeanour of someone experiencing sublime feelings as "serious, sometimes even rigid and astonished," which suggests a state of horror rather than terror, and goes on to subdivide the sublime into three categories, the first of which he calls the "terrifying sublime," characterised by feelings "sometimes accompanied with some dread or even melancholy."[33] Again he does not refer to the more violent emotions associated with terror.

Burke is clear that experiencing extreme emotion at a step removed from genuine terror is a source of pleasure:

> When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are, delightful, as we every day experience.[34]

This echoes a passage in Jean-Baptiste Dubos's *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music*, where he discusses the effect of instrumental "symphonies" in opera, and storms in particular:

> The truth of the imitation in symphonies consists in their resemblance with the sounds they are intended to imitate. There is truth in a symphony composed for the imitation of a tempest, when the modulation, harmony, and *rhythmus*, convey to our ear a sound like the blustering of the winds in the air, and the bellowing of the waves, which dash impetuous against one another, or break against the rocks.[35]

Dubos continues by explaining that music, by imitating nature, allows the experience of extreme emotion, but in the comparatively safe surroundings of the theatre, before again using a storm to illustrate his point:

> For instance, the imitation of the noise of a tempest, which is just going to sink a personage in whose favour the poet has deeply engaged us, affects us exactly as we should be moved with the blustering of a tempest just ready to plunge into the waves a person for whom we had a sincere affection, were this a real

> tempest, and we near enough to hear it. 'Tis needless to repeat, that the impression of the symphony cannot be so strong as that which is made by a real tempest; for I have several times observed already, that the impression arising from an imitation, is much weaker than the thing imitated. 'Tis not therefore at all surprizing, that symphonies should move us exceedingly.[36]

It is important to bear in mind that the emphasis here is on the expressive power of the music and its ability to affect the listener's emotions. A direct imitation of a thunderstorm would not serve in the same way at all. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's entry on "Imitation" in his music dictionary of 1767 makes this clear:

> the art of the musician consists in substituting, in the place of the insensible image of the object, that of the movements which his presence excites in the heart of the contemplator. He will not only agitate the sea, animate the flame of a conflagration, make rivulets flow, the rain fall, and torrents swell, but he will paint the horrors of a boundless desert, calm the tempest, render the air tranquil and serene, and spread over the orchestra, a new and pleasing freshness. He will not directly represent things, but excite in the soul the same movement which we feel in seeing them.[37]

This idea is echoed in 1780 by the German theorist Johann Jakob Engel, whose treatise addresses the whole issue of tone-painting in music:

> the composer should always paint feelings rather than objects of feelings; always the state into which the soul and with it the body are conveyed through contemplation of a certain matter and event, rather than this matter and event itself. . . . So in the kind of storm symphony that appears in various operas, it is always better to paint the inner movements of the soul in a storm than the storm that occasions these movements.[38]

Just how a composer might achieve this is not addressed by either Rousseau or Engel, but other writers provide some clues. Writing just a year later than Rousseau, Daniel Webb suggests:

> That in music we are transported by sudden transitions, by an impetuous reiteration of impressions. . . . That a growth or climax in sounds exalts and dilates the spirits and is therefore a constant source of the sublime. . . . If [musical impressions] agitate the nerves with violence, the spirits are hurried into the movements of anger, courage, indignation and the like.[39]

"Sudden transitions," "impetuous reiterations," and "a growth or climax in sounds" describe in fairly general terms some of the characteristics of the *tem-*

pesta style. Johann Georg Sulzer's dictionary entry on "Expression in Music" offers an even more detailed set of musical devices for conveying violence:

> If the mood is violent or recalcitrant, however, the [harmonic] progressions should move haltingly, and there should be fairly frequent modulations into more remote keys; the progressions should also be more complex, with frequent and unexpected dissonances, and suspensions which are rapidly resolved. . . . Dynamic variations, too, contribute significantly to expression.[40]

These descriptors are written at precisely the same time (1771) as the so-called *Sturm und Drang* music was being written, which might strengthen the case in favour of retaining the label, but all that Sulzer is doing is putting in more musicological terms ideas that have been in circulation for many years, as the preceding extracts demonstrate. Some of the more banal methods used by composers are criticised by Michel-Paul-Guy de Chabanon, but he is not against the idea of storm depictions, as long as they focus on expression rather than mere pictorialism:

> The sky is overcast, the winds whistle, the thunder prolongs its long reverberations from one end of the horizon to the other. . . . How ineffective music is in depicting such effects, especially if the musician strives to detail them, and introduces the expectation of a painted likeness! Here a volley of ascending or descending notes will express either the lightning, or the force of the wind, or the thunderclap. For he has a choice among all these effects; the same vivid trait belongs to them all, and suits them equally. Instead, do away with all these busy pictures that depict nothing, and paint in broad strokes! Let the fracas, the tumult, the disorder of the symphony depict the disorder and the noise of the storm, and above all let the melody be such that no-one can say: *All this is mere noise, without expression or character*.[41]

This is entirely in keeping with the precept expressed by Arteaga in establishing the basic principles of opera composition in 1785, that the composer only had two aims: "the principal object is to move, the subsidiary to depict."[42]

What none of these commentators addresses is the process by which such sounds instil an emotional reaction in audiences. James Beattie comments on the effects of sympathetic vibration on the body and the mind caused by storms:

> By the shouts of multitudes, by the uproar of the ocean in a storm; and, when one can listen to it without fear, by that "deep and dreadful organ-pipe" [Shakespeare *The Tempest* III/3], the thunder itself. . . . Sounds are disagreeable, which hurt the ear by their shrillness, or which cannot be heard without painful attention on account of their exility. But *loud* and *mellow* sounds, like those of thunder, of a storm, and of the full organ, elevate the mind through the ear; even

> as vast magnitude yields a pleasurable astonishment, when contemplated by the eye. By suggesting the idea of great power, and sometimes of great expansion too, they excite a pleasing admiration, and seem to accord with the lofty genius of that soul whose chief desire is for truth, virtue and immortality, and the object of whose most delightful meditation is the greatest and best of beings.[43]

This last reference to God elevates the idea of natural terror, with all its associations of supernatural causes, to an experience of the religious sublime. The idea of the storm as a manifestation of the Christian God is an old one, but one which occupied the thoughts of eighteenth-century writers a great deal, particularly in Germany.[44] In another essay, Beattie discusses how music might operate in the same manner:

> Musick is sublime when it inspires devotion, courage or other elevated affections: or when by its mellow and sonorous harmonies it overwhelms the mind with sweet astonishment: or when it infuses that pleasing horrour [*sic*] . . . which, when joined to words descriptive of terrible ideas, it sometimes does very effectually.[45]

Karl Heinrich Heydenreich, writing in 1790, similarly highlights harmony as the principal means of conveying strong emotion (although it should be said that neither he nor Beattie were musicians, so "harmony" needs a slightly looser interpretation):

> Sounds can exhibit every shade of strength and feebleness, coarseness and refinement, gentleness and violence that we find in the emotions and passions. If, for example, mood melts into mood, as it were, in feelings of tenderness, sounds can imitate this. If, on the other hand, the soul is tossed savagely by some tempestuous emotions which batter against one another at random, as it were, sounds can equally well imitate such a state. . . . If a predominantly powerful emotion is to be evoked, what can richness and fullness of harmony not achieve? What powers do dissonances (and these may of course be resolved) not have in the expression of a savagely exuberant and volatile passion?[46]

A more precise consideration of the emotional effects of harmony is given by Christian Friedrich Michaelis:

> The maintenance of one fixed unchanging idea, and the holding and piling up of dissonances are techniques that are employed in music solely for two purposes: either to express the sublime or to intensify the music's impact and to give it bite. Such procedures always cause a certain degree of unrest or pain, which in turn arouses our vital forces and enhances our joy when the rest is assuaged.[47]

This description emphasises that the discomfort experienced by the listener is actually a source of pleasure. Michaelis is drawing on ideas he had

expounded a year or so earlier in a different publication, and in much greater detail. The relevant passage is worth quoting in full as it provides a wealth of revealing insights:

> The composer also expresses sublimity through the use of the marvellous. This is achieved by the use of unconventional, surprising, powerfully startling, or striking harmonic progressions or rhythmic patterns. Supposing, let us say, the established tonality suddenly veers in an unexpected direction, supposing a chord is resolved in a quite unconventional manner, supposing longed-for calm is delayed by a series of stormy passages, then astonishment and awe result and in this mood the spirit is profoundly moved and sublime ideas are stimulated and sustained. But when the sounds impinge on the ear at great length, or with complete uniformity, or with frequent interruptions, or with shattering intensity, or where the part-writing is very complex, so that the listener's imagination is severely taxed in an effort to grasp the whole, so that it feels in fact as if it is poised over a bottomless chasm, then the sublime manifests itself. The objectification, the shaping of a coherent whole, is hampered in music in two principal ways. Firstly, by uniformity so great that it almost excludes variety: by the constant repetition of the same note or chord, for instance; by long, majestic, weighty or solemn notes, and hence by very slow movement; by long pauses holding up the progress of the melodic line, or which impede the shaping of the melody. Secondly, by too much diversity, as when innumerable impressions succeed one another too rapidly and the mind being too rapidly hurled into the thundering torrent of sounds. Sublime notes, figuration and harmonies stimulate the imagination, which must exert itself and expand beyond its normal bounds to grasp, integrate and recall them. They offer it, not flowing melodies with gentle cadences, but something that appears intractable to rhythmic laws; they have no immediately pleasant effect on the personality and the imagination, but an almost violent one of frightful and terrifying aspect. To the extent that music can depict greatness exceeding the normal capacity of the imagination, thrilling the listener with horror and rapture, it can express the sublime. But because the sublime does not readily appeal to the mind or to the imagination, but is able to satisfy us only because of its very incompatibility with both and because of its impact on the mind; frivolous, feeble and blinkered temperaments are not responsive to it. It appeals only to men of spirit and sensitivity, men of the noblest intellect.[48]

Characteristics of *tempesta* abound, including tonalities that "veer" unexpectedly, "unconventional" or "surprising" harmonies and rhythms, the absence of "flowing melodies and gentle cadences," "calm that is delayed," "constant repetitions of the same note or chord," "long pauses" that interrupt the line, "frequent interruptions," and sounds of "shattering intensity," all combining to produce a "frightful and terrifying aspect" and "thrilling the listener with horror and rapture." In short, this description provides