Circuit
Musiques contemporaines

Remembering and Forgetting: *Lizkor VeLishkoach* for String Quartet, after Schubert
Se souvenir et oublier : le quatuor à cordes *Lizkor VeLishkoach*, d'après Schubert

Dániel Péter Biró

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Résumé de l'article

Lizkor VeLishkoach est une pièce qui est conçue pour être au même programme que le *Quatuor en* sol *majeur* D887 de Franz Schubert. *Lizkor VeLishkoach* (qui signifie « *Se souvenir et oublier* » en hébreu) trouve tout son sens dans la racine des mots qui forment son titre. La racine de « lizkor » est « zekher », qui singnifie à la fois « mémoire » et « impression ». Le verbe « lishkoakh » contient le mot « koakh », qui singifie « pouvoir ». Dans cet article, l'auteur explore des aspects du temps, de la mémoire et du lieu auxquels se rattache son quatuor, des aspects qui sont « imprimés » dans sa propre mémoire subjective, mais aussi dans une plus vaste mémoire collective. Analysant sa propre perception du quatuor de Schubert, il vérifie à quel point sa forme et son matériau sont réappropriés dans son oeuvre à lui. Retraçant les rappels au quatuor de Schubert, il spécule sur ses propres souvenirs et oublis dans le contexte de la forme choisie.

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Dániel Péter Biró

for Márton Dornbach

PICTURE 1. Photo by Steven Kazuo Takasugi, Budapest, October 2007.
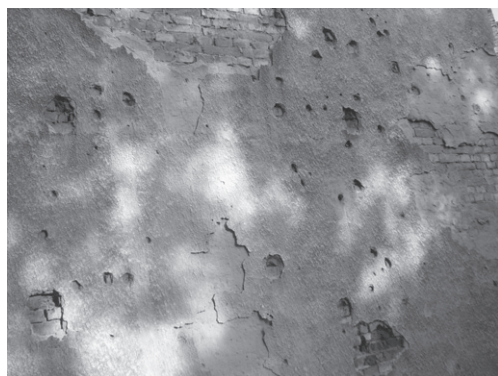
Memory, History, Place

The construction of history is dependent on the memory of the past but a memory that is always selective and malleable. Forgetfulness is thus itself an integral part of memory, for what is remembered is only remembered against the background of what is forgotten.[1]

Artworks are never creatures. They are rather targets in a shooting gallery that people hit: if the right one is hit, it tips over and allows reality itself to shine through. The power that hits them is human, not artistic: they are moved by human emotion. In no other way can the indifference of subject and object in the lyrical configuration be comprehended. The lyric poet does not immediately display his emotions in the creation. Rather, his emotions are the means that draw truth, in its incomparably small crystallization, into the creation. Truth itself does not sink into the artistic creation but is portrayed within the creation, and the revelation (unveiling) of its image remains to be done by people. The creator reveals the image. But the image of truth always exists in history. The history of the image is its decay.[2]

1. Elliott R. Wolfson, "Remembering the Covenant: Memory, Forgetfulness and the Construction of History in the Zohar" in Elisheva Carlebach, John M. Efron, David N. Myers (eds.), *Jewish History and Jewish Memory: Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi*, Hanover, University Press of New England-Brandeis University Press, 1998, p. 214.

2. Theodor W. Adorno, *Schubert*, Neu-Isenburg, Edition Tiessen, 1984, p. 8; trans. Dániel Péter Biró.

3. In 1918, with the end of World War I the Austrian Hungarian Monarchy collapsed. After Béla Kun attempted to form a communist state, Admial Miklós Horthy took over control of Budapest in November 1919. With left wing parties banned, Miklós Horthy was elected to become governor regent in 1920. That same year the Treaty of Trianon was signed by Hungary and the allied powers : Hungary lost over two-thirds of its territory and about two-thirds of its inhabitants under the treaty. The next nearly 25 years were characterized by the deeply conservative and authoritarian regime of Horthy. From 1936 on, increasingly short-term governments and their prime ministers became significantly pro-German. With the Vienna awards in November 1938, Hungary regained land it had lost in the Pact of Trianon. In 1939 the Tripartite Pact was signed, aligning Hungary with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. Hungary entered the war on July 1, 1941. In March 1944, German troops occupied Hungary. It was at this time that Hungarian officials initiated large-scale Jewish deportations, under the leadership of Adolf Eichmann : more than half a million Jewish citizens of Hungary perished in the Holocaust. After a late, unsuccessful attempt to get out of the war, the Red Arrow Party, closely aligned with the German fascists, ousted Horthy, coming to power in October, 1944. On January 20, 1945 an armistice in Moscow was signed and in 1946 Hungary was proclaimed a republic. With the treaty of Paris, signed on February 10, 1947, Hungary once again lost the territories gained between 1938 and 1941. In 1947 the secret police unit (ÁVÓ) was established and in 1949, after large-scale arrests of members of opposition parties, the Communist Party seized unprecedented control. **CF. FOOTNOTE AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE.**

4. The Hungarian writer György Konrád describes memory as " a process of selection from the past combined with a large amount of fantasy." György Konrád, Interview in *Kulturzeit,* 3-SAT, Dec. 11, 1999.

I write this essay in my friend's apartment in Budapest. Directly in front of me, through the window, I see the outer wall of the building overlooking the back courtyard; this outer wall is filled with bullet holes. With the plaster chipped and crumbling, the bricks and layers of material underneath exposed, the question arises as to when the shots were fired. Budapest is filled with such walls.

PICTURE 2. Photo by Steven Kazuo Takasugi, Budapest, October 2007.

Hungary changed government countless times during the last century, moving through countless shades of feudalism, fascism, communism and capitalism.[3] Budapest is a city crowded with such unrenovated architectural remains; these half-ruins, filled with bullet holes, posit questions not only in regard to their destruction and to the complicated history of their decay. They also point to the passing of time and to the people who have been silenced by the movements of history.

As in society, temporal structures in a composition are formed by way of memory. The memories brought forth, inherent in the musical material, also form a relationship to the memory of the place of production. In this sense musical material pre-exists, as it forms a dialogue with the material conditions of its production, the composer re-collecting this material within the compositional process.[4] The succession of musical material forms the temporal structure within the composition. These temporal structures create a sort of friction between the different temporal realities within the piece (the contrasting sections within the overall form) and outside the piece, (the temporal realities of the society in which it was created) thus producing a dialectical relationship between the individual composer and their place of production. In the same way, a friction is established between the temporal structures within the composition on the one hand, and the composer's relationship to

the past of the culture or community (as expressed in his choice and use of musical materials) on the other. The composition's inner forming of these temporal structures mirrors the composer's understanding of and ontological relationship to history.

לזכור ולשכוח *Lizkor VeLishkoach* (To Remember and to Forget)[5] is a composition that responds to questions of memory, history and place as it exists in dialogue with Schubert's quartet in G Major D. 997. *Lizkor VeLishkoach* addresses the historical nature of the string quartet genre, as Schubert's quartet exists in the piece much as an architectural ruin exists in a city. While citations of Schubert's work surface throughout the composition, the temporal form of Schubert's quartet is both extended and deconstructed, forming layers of dialogue between the two works.

The first movement of Schubert's quartet employs an unconventional synthesis of sonata and variation form: sections of directed, teleological movement are juxtaposed by sections of relative variational stasis. Re-contextualizing this temporal dichotomy, I consciously divided my composition into two sections, which serve to re-collect the form of Schubert's quartet. In re-collecting this form, the work also acts as a response and extension to the historical place and time of Schubert's musical production process.

Schubert's Form, Time and Place

The first movement of Schubert's quartet alternates between two temporal modalities; teleological time "pressing constantly forward,"[6] "meandering"[7] time. These two temporal realities refer to exploiting time, making it "useful" in the strategic, economic sense, and "killing time," actually undermining the flow of time through – in Schubert's case (relative) harmonic – stasis. The tension between these types of teleological and meandering time relates to the various sections of the movement. Sections of trajectory development, derived from processes of sonata form, juxtapose sections of variations, the relative stability or stasis of which allowing for complex hierarchies of *repetition* and *variation* employment.[8]

Such juxtaposition between repetition and variation can be observed at the beginning of the piece. The repetition of the descending and ascending minor seconds, changing the context from major to minor in measures 1-14, prepares the intervallic transformation in the following section of the primary subject. The double-dotted motive, first presented in mm. 2-3 is repeated, transposed to the key of D major/minor in mm. 8-9. Schubert gives specific emphasis to this descending minor second movement in the bridge section in mm. 11 – 14, making the listener wait for the re-contextualization of this

6. Carl Dahlhaus (trans. Rheinhard Thilo) "Sonata Form in Schubert : The First Movement of the G-Major String Quartet, op. 161, (D. 887)", *Schubert : Critical and Analytical Studies*, Walter Frisch (ed.), Lawrence, University of Nebraska Press, 1986, p. 7.

7. Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

8. In the course of the piece, Schubert constructs a hierarchy consisting of different *levels of repetition*. Schubert defines therein certain *temporal units* to repeat and measure time. The *smallest* level of repetition consists of the *successive repetition of notes,* which plays a central role both in the *textural* sense (as with the tremolo) as well as redefining motives and their intervals. Beyond this level is the *repetition of intervals and motives*. This level is followed by *phrase repetition*, which is then followed by *section repetition,* with the repeat of the exposition being the largest type of form of repetition in the movement.

interval; this happens in measure 15, the piece moving now from minor to major. Here Schubert *imprints* new intervallic information onto the rhythmic skeleton of the double dotted rhythmic motive derived from the introductory section. This dialectical relationship between intervallic and motivic structuring is strengthened as the two-part sequential section continues in mm. 15-33, with the descending half step movement lengthened by means of the cello's haunting passacaglia bass line. The previous major/minor relationship is evoked in the following consequent in mm. 24-33, as Schubert inserts diminished chords into the sequential framework.

FIGURE 1A. Beginning of Schubert's Quartet op. 161 D. 997

Schubert - Harmonic Reduction
"Antecedent" (mm. 15-24): Chromatic ascending 5th sequence (passacaglia bass line)

"Consequent" (mm. 24-33): Same chromatic ascending 5th sequence with diminished chord insertions

The repetition of harmonic progressions helps to emphasize the static nature of these harmonic landscapes wherein the theme is allowed to "meander." This "meandering" quality is emphasized again and again, as Schubert consistently adds an extension to the phrase, creating areas of *surplus time*, demonstrated in mm. 20-24 thereby allowing the theme time to *linger* for a bit longer.

FIGURE 2. Schubert's Quartet op. 161 D. 997 mm. 11-24

These sections provide a contrast to the goal-oriented time found in the trajectory sections of sequences. Even in these areas of forward movement, a complex dialectic between repetition and variation dominates. This can be seen in mm. 33-43. While employing the same harmonic progression as in the beginning of the first theme, Schubert infuses the section with topical elements from the introduction.

FIGURE 3A. Schubert's Quartet op. 161 D. 997 mm. 30-58

FIGURE 3B. Harmonic Reduction

Schubert - Harmonic Reduction:
"Elaboration" (in Bridge Section) mm. 33-43: Same Chromatic Ascending 5th Sequence as in Section of Primary Subject

I   V $\flat$VII   IV $\flat$VI   viidim7/V

A variant of this harmonic progression can then be found in the transition section in mm. 54-59.

FIGURE 4A. Schubert's Quartet op. 161 D. 997 mm. 49-59

FIGURE 4B. Harmonic Reduction

Schubert - Harmonic Reduction
"Transition" mm. 54-59: New chromatic ascending 5th sequence

G Major g minor D Major d minor A Major a minor E Major e minor B Major b minor F# Major

These temporal modes do not only dominate the form of Schubert's quartet but also assist in recalling temporal realities of the historical place of the quartet's production. The tension between these two types of temporal existence within the quartet can be seen to reflect temporal realties of a Viennese society torn between modernization and feudalism, to specific conditions brought about by societal changes in power in the Vienna of the time. The reforms of Joseph II, which allowed for a larger and more affluent bourgeoisie, also denied this bourgeoisie the freedom of further upward mobility and *cultural power* enjoyed by the aristocracy by means of continued enforcement of class hierarchy. In the time of Franz I this system of constricted autonomy became increasingly stifling and could not make up for the loss of cultural structure from previous eras. In his era of cultural and political anxiety, Schubert's music is an extreme example of what Bourdieu terms "art of disinterest,"[9] displaying the will for artistic expression within a system of confining uncertainty. Such uncertainty is reflected in the quartet: the shifts from major to minor throughout the quartet happen quickly and easily, *perhaps too easily, and not without violence.* The recurring Baroque topics also help to recall a time in which the more powerful aristocracy enforced an even more restricting stability, however one in which the alienating forces of early industrialization and the tyrannical state police terror of Metternich, which also had its repressive affect on Schubert and his circle, did not yet exist.

As Carl Dahlhaus has noted, the large scale trajectory within the first movement seems not so much to be projected by a *subjective will* but rather by "letting things run their course."[10] The formal juxtapositions and transformations of variation and sequence sections in the movement create a conflict between meandering and teleological time. Understanding the complexity of Schubert's class, this conflict can also be read as a reflection of the conflicting temporal structures of leisure and economic production in Schubert's Vienna. [11]

9. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, Chapter 1 – "The field of Cultural Production or: The Economic World reversed" Randal Johnson (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. Bourdieu's "field of cultural production" refers to the societal factors that underline artistic production. According to Bourdieu, societies build a hierarchy between "cultural capital" and "economic capital." These forms of capital are employed by players in the field (composers, audience, critics, publishers, etc.) to establish cultural authority. Art is produced out of economic "interest" or economic "disinterest." The latter is the basis for the formation of "cultural capital," which is displayed as more autonomous (having a smaller audience and is not directly profit driven) than market-based art. Bourdieu divides up the category of "art of disinterest" into two main opposing categories; one being "art for art's sake" and the other being "bourgeois art."

10. Carl Dahlhaus (Rheinhard Thilo, Translator) "Sonata Form in Schubert: The First Movement of the G-Major String Quartet, op. 161, (D. 887)" *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies,* Walter Frisch (ed.), Lawrence, University of Nebraska Press, 1986, p. 10.

11. Such musical tension can be heard as an expression of tensions within social temporal structures–the tensions between the economical, industrial structure and the private structure of time, between the demand for effective, rational use of time and leisure time. In Schubert's day, as now, these modes of temporal structuring were interdependent, standing in a dialectical relationship to one another: leisure is a concept that depends on the idea of a rationalized, limited work time, and the other way around. Moreover, the concept of leisure relates to temporal structures mainly enjoyed by the aristocracy. **CF FOOTNOTE AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE.**

As I began to write *Lizkor VeLishkoach*, I was pre-occupied by similar historical questions of individual and collective time. Using memory as a musical parameter, I set out to create an archeology of musical time in which processes of development and entropy, past and present, remembering and forgetting would exist in dialogue. In order to formalize this dialogue, I developed a conceptual plan for these types of temporal realities to transpire.

Landscapes

Throughout *Lizkor VeLishkoach* the first movement Schubert's quartet is employed as a palimpsest structure: like people or ghosts passing by an open window, citations of Schubert's quartet surface in various guises and constellations in the course of the work. Working with pencil, paper and erasers, I actually wrote over Schubert's quartet score. Each page of my sketches would be copied several times. In this way, I would not only remember and forget Schubert's quartet but also better observe my own remembering and forgetting within the compositional process.[12]

As I began to compose *Lizkor VeLishkoach*, I constructed various temporal zones, *temporal landscapes*. Within these sections, various types of musical topics and materials come to the surface while others disappear. These *temporal landscapes* were not conceived to exist as categorical blocks of time but rather to allow the various types of musical material to coexist, blend into, or develop from other types of musical material. While the musical material was conceptualized as a historical entity, which could be recognized as *topical* information, the processes of transformation were intended to imitate processes of memory and forgetting.[13]

The historical nature of the material is most evident in the sections incorporating citations from Schubert's quartet. In their first entrance, these citations are encountered not as parts of a completed work but rather like fragments from a musical ruin. Surrounded by silence and a slowly emerging dodecaphonic environment, fragmented chords, melodies and motives derived from the beginning of Schubert's quartet enter the composition in a ghost-like manner. As though covered by dust, these citation-fragments are alienated, as extended string techniques emphasize their noisy timbral aspects as well as their modes of sound production. As later in the work, overlapping sections of silence amongst the four instruments are structured via the Fibonacci series.

12. Intending to employ memory as a main compositional parameter, each page of the score was copied at least three or four times.

13. These various types of musical materials were always conceived not so much as a citation but as a historical referent. The all-interval dodecaphonic elements refer to the music of Webern while the employment of the Hungarian folk-song *Madárka, madárka (Little Bird, Little Bird)* not only calls forth elements of a foregone peasant society but also references the socialist-realist appropriation thereof, present in official methods composition production in the Hungarian communist era. Simultaneously, much of the noise material was considered "extra" or "non musical," almost as part of a landscape or cityscape. Movements from pitched structures to noise based structures were conceived to mirror the movement of time. Noise either exists as the "dust" of music, as an additional layer on top

FIGURE 5.   Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: Temporal Plan

Total Length of Sections 1-21= Total Length of Sections 22-34
Acceleration of Tempi occurs in Sections 1-21
Deceleration of Tempi occurs in Sections 22-34
Sections 21 and 22 are identical
Sections 1 and 34 are (almost) identical

Overtones and Noise

1)   68 Seconds Tempo 30 (60)
2)   66.3 Seconds Tempo 30.7692 (62)

Noise (contrapuntal Schubert segments) and Row

3)   64.6 Seconds Tempo 31.5789 (63)
4)   62.9 Seconds Tempo 32.4324 (65)
5)   61.2 Seconds Tempo 33.3333 (67)

Row (noise-producing octave displacement)

6)   59.5 Seconds Tempo 34.2857 (68)
7)   57.8 Seconds Tempo 35.2941 (70)
8)   56.1 Seconds Tempo 36.3636 (72)
9)   54.4 Seconds Tempo 37.5 (75)
10)   52.7 Seconds Tempo 38.7097 (77)

Chromatic Scale (noise) and Schubert (segments, sustained pitches and noise remnants)

11)   51 Seconds Tempo 40 (80)
12)   49.3 Seconds Tempo 41.3793 (82)
13)   47.6 Seconds Tempo 42.8571 (85)

Row, (clean pitches) Noise (Schubert remnants) and Modality (Hungarian Folk Song)

14)   45.9 Seconds Tempo 44.4444 (89)
15)   44.2 Seconds Tempo 46.1538 (46) 2=1

Modality (Hungarian Folk Song) and Noise

16)   42.5 Seconds Tempo 48
17)   40.8 Seconds Tempo 50
18)   39.1 Seconds Tempo 52.1739 (52)

Modality (Hungarian Folk Song), Row and Noise

19)   37.4 Seconds Tempo 54.5455 (54)
20)   35.7 Seconds Tempo 57.1429 (57)

Modality (Hungarian Folk Song), Row, Noise, Overtones and Silence (Moving to Noise and Silence)

21)   34 Seconds Tempo 60
     1 beat per second
     Silence = 1 Ring modulation = 0

22)   34 Seconds Tempo 60
     1 beat per second
     Silence = 1 Ring modulation = 0

23)   36.8333 Seconds Tempo 55.3846
     0.923077 beats per second; 13/14 beats per second,
     Silence = 2 Ring modulation =

24)   39.6667 Seconds Tempo 51.4286
     0.857143 beats per second; 6/7 beats per second
     Silence = 3 Ring modulation = 1

25)   Seconds Tempo 42.5 48
     0.8 beats per second; 4/5 beats per second
     Silence = 4 Ring modulation = 2

26)   45.3333 Seconds Tempo 45
     0.75 beats per second; 3/4 beats per second
     Silence = 5 Ring modulation = 2

27)   48.1667 Seconds Tempo 42.3529
     0.705882 beats per second; 7/10 beats per second
     Silence = 6 Ring modulation = 2

28)   51 Seconds Tempo 40
     0.666667 beats per second; 2/3 beats per second
     Silence = 7 Ring modulation = 3

29)   53.8333 Seconds Tempo 37.8947
     0.631579 beats per second; 5/8 beats per second
     Silence = 8 Ring modulation = 3

30)   56.6667 Seconds Tempo 36
     0.6 beats per second; 3/5 beats per second
     Silence = 9 Ring modulation = 5

31)   59.5 Seconds Tempo 34.2857
     0.571429 beats per second; 4/7 beats per second
     Silence = 10 Ring modulation = 5

32)   62.3333 Seconds Tempo 32.7273
     0.545455 beats per second; 5/9 beats per second
     Silence = 11 Ring modulation = 5

33)   65.1667 Seconds Tempo 31.3043 (62)
     0.521739 beats per second 1/2 beats per second
     Silence = 12 Ring modulation = 8

Noise And Silence

34)   68 Seconds Tempo 30 (60)
     0.5 beats per second 1/2 beats per second
     Silence = 13 Ring modulation = 8

FIGURE 6A. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 86-93.

FIGURE 6B. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 86-93 – Structuring of Citations and Row

FIGURE 6C. Schubert Quartet in G Major: mm. 44-52

Here memory is activated on two levels: such *structural silencing* allows the listener to remember the segments that are not present, while the increasing emergence of dodecaphonic structures (and their historical associations) eventually conceal the historical material that previously dominated the musical fabric.

This situation is reversed later in the piece. I created a process of movement from static verticality to repetitive linearity: the register of these chords, spread out over four octaves, is slowly filtered down to eventually become an ascending chromatic scale repeating within more compressed registral confine; each note of this scale is defined as a specific timbre and duration. Here I employed *timbral scales:* with every repetition of the scale the timbre can either be developed or deconstructed, allowing for the eventual dominance of noise elements over their corresponding pitch components.

FIGURE 7. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: Timbral Scale Development and Deconstruction

First Number Corresponds to Duration

Development

8-1) *flaut. tasto*	v2) pizz.-arco	
8-2) *1/2 c.l. tasto*	v2) batt.- arco	v3) batt. arco gliss.
8-3) *1/2 c.l. tasto-pont.*	v2) slow trill	
8-4*) c.l. tasto-pont.*	v2) slow tremolo	v3) slow tremolo +trem. (beat repetition)
8-5) *flaut. on bridge*	v2) trem.- straight.	v3) trem. + straight- straight
8-6) *1/2 c.l. on bridge.*		
8-7) *c.l.t. pont.*		

Deconstruction

5-5) *trem. c.l.t. pont.*		
5-4) *trem. c.l.t. pont.-tasto pressed - l.h. 1/2 pressed*	v2) steady- gliss.	
5-3) *trem. c.l.t. pont.-tasto l.h. 1/2 pressed*		
5-2) *trem. 1/2 c.l.t. pont.-tasto l.h. 1/2 pressed*	v2) gliss.	
5-1) *trem. flaut. pont.-tasto l.h. 1/2 pressed*	v2) pizz. arco	

Development

3-1) *trill nat.- pont.*	v1) l.h. pizz.
3-2) *trill 1/2 c. l.t.*	v2) batt.

Deconstruction

3-3) *trill c.l.t. pont.*	
3-2) *gliss. trill c.l.t. pont.- nat.*	v2) batt.
3-1) *pizz. Trill c.l pont. – nat.*	

Development

2-1) *1/2 c.l.t., l.h. batt.*	v2) pizz.

Deconstruction

2-2) *c.l. batt.*	v2) gliss.
2-1) *pizz. c.l.t. batt.*	

This is a movement from a series of identifiable harmonic *objects* to a neutral serialized *process*: by m. 204 the dodecaphonic context becomes fully transformed. While a quintuplet pattern becomes established for these scales, their increasingly noisy timbral quality is contrasted by fragmented citations of Schubert's quartet that not only *break in* to this neutral zone of ascending chromatic scales but also *break out* of the composition itself. The citation also brings its own syntactic realm of 19th century period structure and harmonic rhythm into the present picture: not only the outer walls but the pillars of the non-existing architecture allow sounds to shine through which, in spite of their historical importance, are *no longer there*. Like in a palimpsest, the background structure now moves to the surface much like memories surfacing from the depths of consciousness. Here citations of Schubert's quartet exist *renovated* amongst the noisy ruins extracted from previous dodecaphonic development. This can be observed in mm. 214-222.

**FIGURE 8A.** Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 214-223

FIGURE 8B. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 214-223 – Schubert Citations

FIGURE 8C. Schubert Quartet: mm. 19-28

Towards the end of the first section a culmination occurs, in which the various types of musical material are presented simultaneously. The basic melodic structure of the first and second violin is based on that of a Hungarian folksong.[14]

FIGURE 9. *Madárka, Madárka*
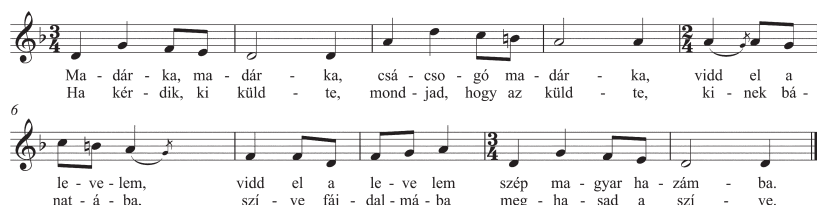
14. *Madárka, Madárka (Little Bird, Little Bird).* "Little bird, little bird. Chirping little bird. Take away my letter, take away my letter to my Hungarian homeland. If they ask who sent it tell them that who sent it was someone who in anguish, in pain broke his heart." in *Tiszán innen, Dunán túl,* István Borsy and Ernő Rossa (eds.), Budapest, Edito Musica Budapest, 1953, p. 144. Trans. Dániel Péter Biró.

FIGURE 10. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 329-339

In mm. 331-333 viola and cello initiate a contrasting dodecaphonic process. In mm. 333-334 two chords, clearly identifiable as those from Schubert's quartet, break into the scene only to be eclipsed within the rapidly changing topical environment.

Structural Silencing

The highpoint of such material culmination occurs in the second part of *Lizkor VeLishkoach:* here various types of musical material coalesce to form a single musical phrase.

FIGURE 11. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 349-359

This phrase is then repeated thirteen times, and each repetition happens at a slightly slower tempo. With each reiteration, the phrase is deconstructed little by little, as a type of *structured silencing* occurs: areas of silence are constructively cut into the composition, destroying the previous musical material and deconstructing the remaining material. These rests are inserted into the composition in a symmetrical manner; the numbers thereof being derived from the Fibonacci series.

Fibonacci Proportioning:
Repetition of Silence and Number of Insertions of Silence

INSERTIONS

21) Beats 33 - 34 (1 Insertion of Rest)   *(2x1 Insertion)*

22) Beats 33 - 34 (1 Insertion of Rest)

23) Beats 16 - 17, 33 - 34 (2 Insertions of Rest)   *(1x1 Insertion)*

24) Beats 10 1/3 - 11 1/3, 21 2/3 - 22 2/3, 33 - 34   *(2x 3 Insertions)*
     (3 Insertions of Rest)

25) Beats 10 1/3 - 11 1/3, 20 2/3 21 2/3, 33 - 34
     (3 Insertions of Rest)

26) Beats 5 4/5 - 6 4/5, 12 3/5 - 12 3/5, 19 2/5 - 20 2/5,   *(3x5 Insertions)*
     26 1/5 - 27 1/5, 33 - 34
     (5 Insertions of Rest)

27) Beats 5 4/5 - 6 4/5, 12 3/5 - 13 3/5, 19 2/5 - 20 2/5,
     26 1/5 - 27 2/5, 33 - 34
     (5 Insertions of Silence)

28) Beats 5 4/5 - 6 4/5, 12 3/5 - 13 3/5, 19 2/5 - 20 2/5,
     26 1/5 - 27 2/5, 33 - 34
     (5 Insertions of Silence)

29) Beats 3 1/4 - 4 1/4, 7 1/2 - 8 1/2, 11 3/4 - 12 3/4, 16 - 17,   *(5x8 Insertions)*
     20 1/4 - 21 1/4, 24 1/4 - 25 1/4, 28 1/2 - 29 1/2, 33 - 34
     (8 Insertions of Silence)

30) Beats 3 1/4 - 4 1/4, 7 1/2 - 8 1/2, 11 3/4 - 12 3/4, 16 - 17,
     20 1/4 - 21 1/4, 24 1/4 - 25 1/4, 28 1/2 - 29 1/2, 33 - 34
     (8 Insertions of Silence)

31) Beats 3 1/4 - 4 1/4, 7 1/2 - 8 1/2, 11 3/4 - 12 3/4, 16 - 17,
     20 1/4 - 21 1/4, 24 1/4 - 25 1/4, 28 1/2 - 29 1/2, 33 - 34
     (8 Insertions of Silence)

32) Beats 3 1/4 - 4 1/4, 7 1/2 - 8 1/2, 11 3/4 - 12 3/4, 16 - 17,
     20 1/4 - 21 1/4, 24 1/4 - 25 1/4, 28 1/2 - 29 1/2, 33 - 34
     (8 Insertions of Silence)

33) Beats 3 1/4 - 4 1/4, 7 1/2 - 8 1/2, 11 3/4 - 12 3/4, 16 - 17,
     20 1/4 - 21 1/4, 24 1/4 - 25 1/4, 28 1/2 - 29 1/2, 33 - 34
     (8 Insertions of Silence)

34) Beats 1 5/6 - 2 5/6, 4 1/8 - 6 1/8, 6 13/15 - 7 13/15,   *(1x13 Insertions)*
     9 1/2 - 10 1/2, 12 1/3 - 13 1/3, 14 2/3 - 5 2/3,
     17 1/3 - 18 1/3, 19 1/6 - 20 11/12, 27 1/3 - 28 1/4,
     25 1/4 - 26 1/4, 27 3/4 - 28 1/2, 30 1/4 - 31 1/4, 33 - 34
     (13 Insertions of Silence)

After each new section of silence, the ensuing material becomes distorted through a process of ring modulation, the modulating tones thereof being based on one from the twelve notes of chromatic scale: these divide each phrase into twelve equal sections. The timbre of each of these tones is associated with specified durations and each timbral category becomes more pronounced with every repetition, allowing for an unfolding transformation from pitch to noise.

FIGURE 13. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: Timbre Scales in Part Two

Pitch, Technique, Duration

TIMBRE SCALE #1

1) D = pizz. =1
2) D# = battuto = 2
3) E = tremolo = 5
4) F = 1/2 col legno tratto = 1
5) F# = 1/2 col legno tratto = 1
6) G = tremolo = 5
7) G# = battuto = 2
8) A = pizz. =1
9) A# = trill = 3
10) B = flautando = 8
11) C = flautando = 8
12) C# = trill = 3

TIMBRE SCALE #2

1) D = pizz. with nail = 1
2) D# = 1/2 col legno battuto = 2
3) E = 1/2 col legno tratto tremolo = 5
4) F = col legno tratto = 1
5) F# = col legno tratto = 1
6) G = 1/2 col legno tratto Tremolo = 5
7) G# = 1/2 col legno Battuto = 2
8) A = pizz. with nail =1
9) A# = 1/2 col legno trill = 3
10) B = flautando ½ on bridge = 8
11) C = flautando ½ on bridge = 8
12) C# = ½ col legno trill = 3

TIMBRE SCALE #3

1) D = 1/2 pressed pizz. =1
2) D# = 1/2 col legno battuto ½ pressed = 2
3) E = tremolo ½ pressed = 5
4) F = col legno tratto ½ pressed = 1
5) F# = col legno tratto ½ pressed = 1
6) G = tremolo ½ pressed = 5
7) G# = 1/2 battuto ½ pressed = 2
8) A = 1/2 pressed pizz. =1
9) A# = battuto trill = 3
10) B = flautando ½ on bridge ½ pressed = 8
11) C = flautando ½ on bridge ½ pressed = 8
12) C# = battuto trill = 3

TIMBRE SCALE #4

1) D = damped Pizz with nail =1
2) D# = col legno battuto ½ pressed = 2
3) E = 1/2 col legno horizontal tremolo ½ pressed = 5
4) F = 1/2 col legno ½ pressed = 1
5) F# = 1/2 col legno ½ pressed = 1
6) G = ½ col legno horizontal tremolo ½ pressed = 5
7) G# = col legno battuto ½ pressed = 2
8) A = damped pizz. with nail =1
9) A# = pizz. trill = 3
10) H = flautando on bridge = 8
11) C = flautando on bridge = 8
12) C# = pizz. trill = 3

TIMBRE SCALE #5

1) *D = bridge pizz. = 1*
2) *D# = col legno battuto damped = 2*
3) *E = tremolo on saddle = 5*
4) *F = horizontal col legno = 1*
5) *F# = horizontal col legno = 1*
6) *G = tremolo on saddle= 5*
7) *G# = col legno battuto damped = 2*
8) *A = bridge pizz. = 1*
9) *A# = left hand trill = 3*
10) *H = flautando on pegs = 8*
11) *C = flautando on pegs = 8*
    C# = left hand trill = 3

Continuation
Timbre-Duration Associations

SHORT (1)

Pizz., single battuto, short "tap" with tuning knob, 1/2 col legno tratto, col legno tratto

REPEATED (2,3,5)

Tremolo, battuto, battuto 1/2 col legno, battuto col legno, trill, trill battuto, Tremolo on bridge, Tremolo on saddle, Tremolo on tuning pegs

STABLE (8)

Ordinario, flautando, 1/2 col legno tratto, col legno tratto, bowing on bridge, bowing on saddle, bowing on tuning pegs, glissando with tuning knob

MELODY (VARIABLE)

Ordinario, flautando, 1/2 col legno, col legno, Tremolo, repeated battuto, repeated battuto 1/2 col legno tratto, repeated battuto col legno

As this ring modulation occurs, only the sum tones of the modulating tones are extracted and the remnants of the previous musical material fall with each repetition of the phrase increasingly into the upper registers. This can be seen starting at m. 473. The chromatic scale, now functioning to create *harmonic shadows*, also exists as a structural "memory" of its previous life. In this entropic sonorous landscape, the chromatic scale, and its timbral equivalents became thematized.

FIGURE 14. Biró - *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 480-488

Their resulting harmonic shadows exist in dialectical opposition to the trajectory of the piece as this constricting process of silencing continues. This entropic development eventually moves the piece into a final sonorous landscape of homogenized, ethereal flageolet-chords, identical to those at the very beginning of the piece. Returning to these remnants of harmony, the composition re-presents the familiar place of the beginning musical ruin.[15]

FIGURE 15. *Lizkor VeLishkoach*: mm. 489-507

15. In terms of objective clock time, this final phrase lasts twice as long as the initial phrase of the second section and the same length as the beginning of the piece. The entropic development of the musical material is accompanied by the entropic development of the beat-pulse. Simultaneously, the deconstructing process brings the listener back to a *familiar sonorous landscape,* proving the state of return to be a kind of formally alienating homecoming.

16. Many people have commented that this piece is "too long.". **CF FOOTNOTE AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE.**

After writing the first part of the piece, in which there is a clear developmental trajectory, composing this section was physically and psychologically painful: eliminating increasingly larger portions of the material was like destroying my own creation. Simultaneously the resulting ascending harmonic remnants are formed from the remains of the musical phrase, the fragmentary existence of which continuing within the strict temporal structure. While the previous content of the quartet is slowly destroyed, the form of the piece takes a new turn: the further development of the composition becomes artificially slow, almost as though the piece was put on *life support*.[16]

As each extended phrase repeats, the listener perceives the harmonic ruins again and again, each time observing a new layer of unloaded musical significance. At the end of the quartet we are left with an almost anonymous field of homogenizing chords.

PICTURE 3. Photo by Steven Kazuo Takasugi, Budapest, October 2007.
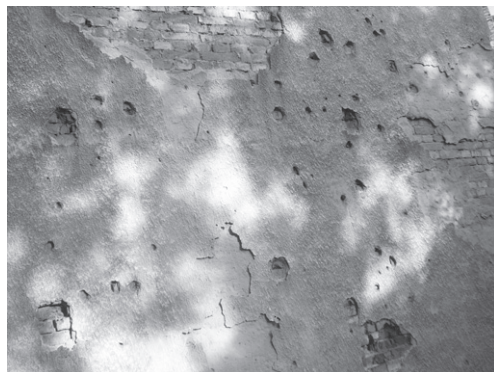
Dying Slowly

> Practically, we perceive only the past, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future.[17]

> The lyrical contents will not be produced: they are the smallest cells of existing objectivity, of which pictures stand, after the long periods of objective existence, already long since their authoritative right, have fallen in to decline.[18]

Observing the bullet-stained wall directly in front of me, one finds clues to its history in its destruction. While the bullet holes, the signs of past violence, are still present, the memory of the time of destruction becomes increasingly distant. A renovation of this wall, which might happen in the near future, would not only cover this history but would further suppress questions about the forces that ravaged it and which ravaged so many other walls.[19]

I began to write the first part of *Lizkor VeLishkoach* in Budapest, Hungary. The second part of the composition was written in Princeton, New Jersey, USA. The physical, cultural and historical landscapes of both places affected my compositional production process.[20] For me, Hungary has always been a place overburdened with history, even stuck in history; one feels as though the whole country is engaged in traveling down the same dead-end street again and again, each time reviewing the past once more. Such historical obsession

17. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margeret Paul and W. Scott Palmer, New York, Zone Books, 1988, p. 50.

18. Adorno, *op. cit.*, p. 8. "These pictures do not penetrate the soul of the human, open to the lyrical, like rays of sunshine into a web of plants. Artworks are never creations. CF FOOTNOTE AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE.

19. If one compares Budapest to Vienna the possibilities and problems of renovating become immediately apparent. Vienna, enjoying a new capitalist prosperity after the Second World War, is a city seemingly fully renovated. CF FOOTNOTE AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE.

20. Parts of *Lizkor VeLishkoach* were written in Frankfurt and Wiesbaden, Germany, as well as in Haifa, Israel. Both places affected my writing at the time. While there are certain dodecaphonic sections within the beginning that recall old Wiesbaden and new Frankfurt architecture and cityscapes as well as the desert landscapes surrounding Haifa, the connected histories of Israel, Germany, Hungary and the United States were a main point of concentration at the time.

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21. For more on the changing American landscape see Alexander Wilson, *The Culture of Nature : North American Landscape from Disney to Exxon Valdes,* Cambridge, Blackwell, 1992, Andreas Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Jeff Speck, *Suburban Nation : The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*, New York, North Point Press, 2000, and Bob Thall, *The New American Village,* Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

22. For more on the discursive nature of the string quartet see Daniel Chua's *The « Galitzin » Quartets of Beethoven,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1995, as well as Brian Ferneyhough's *Collected Writings,* James Boros and Richard Toop (eds.), Amsterdam, OPA, 1995.

23. This "transcendental distance" refers to Schubert and also to his relationship to the "lost proximity" of folk music. "Nowhere does truth draw nearer than in Schubert's folklore, which has a completely different meaning than in the music of anyone who troubled with folklore after him. Schubert did not attempt to correct the lost proximity through the unreachable distance : for him the transcendental distance is reachable in the closest proximity. This lies at the front door like Hungary and is simultaneously so far away as the unintelligible Hungarian language. This is where the secret stems from, which not only trickles throughout the Ungarisches Divertissement through the F-minor fantasy and throughout the secondary movements of the A-major Rondo, but also into the finely parted ramifications throughout all of Schubert's work, moving up to come within reach and then vanishing again like a phantom in the C-sharp-minor theme in the finale of the A-minor Quartet. The language of this Schubert is that of dialect, but this is a dialect without ground. This dialectic has the tangibility of a homeland, yet it is not a homeland of here but a remembered homeland. »

has very little place in the pragmatic society of the United States. Writing the second part in the U.S., it is possible that my technique of composition, the slow eradication of musical topics into homogenous structural masses was perhaps a reaction to an increasingly de-historicized and homogenized American cultural landscape, ever more forcefully dominated by trajectories of modern corporate capitalism.[21]

In *Lizkor VeLishkoach* the place and functionality of the string quartet, as ensemble and genre, mirrors such problems of architectural memory in the sonorous plane. While the string quartet continues to be employed as a vehicle for musical contemplation, the formal development of my quartet functions to thematize the loss of *musical significance and musical place*.[22] Such loss implies a kind of forgetfulness, haunting the composition as well as the compositional process, imprinting qualities of time in a malleable landscape of past recollection. Traveling the "transcendental distance"[23] of this landscape, we are left with a *sonorous ruin* beckoning us to remember the forgetting of its history.

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3. The rapid industrializing of the country, forced agricultural collectivization and the dictatorial methods of the party led to the revolution of 1956. On the 4th of November the Soviet army moved into Budapest and the revolution was crushed. János Kádár, supported by Moscow, formed the new government, the prisons were filled and some 200,000 citizens fled the country. A new socialist political system, one similar to that before the revolution, was established. While the general political climate improved, new measures were introduced such as small-scale capitalism and increased freedom to travel. The so-called "gulash communism" of the seventies and eighties was maintained only at the expense of enormous debts, mainly to Western banks. By the end of the eighties the weak and inefficient economy collapsed, which, with the waning of Soviet hegemony, allowed for the peaceful revolution and the overthrow of the communist system of government. In 1990 the first free elections were held and a new coalition government was formed. The following years have been characterized by the rapid development of Hungarian capitalism, managed and coordinated by governments of the Socialists and center right as power has changed with every four-year legislation period. In addition, the return of extreme right wing activity in the country, as well as increased nationalism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism has dominated political debates. Although Hungary entered the European Union in 2004, political corruption continues on the highest levels. Because of these and other problems, many Hungarian citizens, like the author of this article, have left Hungary, hoping to find a better way of life outside of the country. For more on Hungarian history see Ignác Romsics *Magyarország története a XX. században,* Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 1999, also in English *Hungary in the Twentieth Century,* Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 1999.

11. The temporal aspects within Viennese society are reflected in Schubert's form. For Adorno Schubert's concept of form stands in opposition to that of Beethoven, as he views the mode of musical growth within Schubert's work not to be cellular but rather crystal-like, as he finds Schubert's music to recall the form of the potpourri. Adorno writes : "Filled with terror, rigor mortis hangs terribly over the opera potpourris of the nineteenth century. But with Schubert the themes throng forward without coagulating into a figure before the Medusa. Still, the randomly attempted assemblage sets the themes, opens up the path to their origin and, at the same time, finds a back entrance into the Schubertian form. This is because the potpourris, as a game of combining and blending, wish to happily regain the lost unity of artworks. Only such a unity was not a subjectively produced one that can never be brought home from the carnival shooting gallery ; the potpourris will be granted the possibility of such a unity only when they arise from the configuration of the hit pictures. In this sense it seems certain that a particular school of understanding of Schubert has misspoken, as its conventional opinion about the lyrical is wrong. This is particularly true in that sense that it sees Schubert's music as an organic plant-like being that unfolds, without any consideration for any preplanned form and practically every form that, perhaps bare, grows out of itself and refreshingly blooms. But it is precisely such a logical organic theory that is strictly denied within the construction that stems from the potpourri. Such an organic unity would be necessarily teleological in nature ; every cellular element within it would make the next cellular element necessary, and their interconnectedness would stem from the moving life of subjective intention, which has died and the restitution of which is definitely not consistent with the potpourri. Wagner's music, which establishes itself on the premise of organization, by its very nature does not allow for the potpourri ; however the music of Bizet and Weber does, which actually relates them to Schubert. The cellular elements that the potpourri layers one upon another must be joined together by another principle than by that of living unity. Even if we grant Schubert's music to be, in the larger sense, grown rather than produced ; its growth, fragmented through and through, and never actually self sufficient, doesn't have the quality of a plant but rather that of a crystal." Theodor W. Adorno, (Trans. Dániel Péter Biró) *Schubert,* Neu-Isenburg, Edition Tiessen, 1984, p. 5-8.

16. Like other composers I have found this criticism curious. Helmut Lachenmann has said "I know composers who use golden means and all those things to have the guarantee that the proportions are correct, and at the end they make a good piece. I hate good pieces ! Good pieces are so boring. I want to make a disturbing piece, not a good one ! And then it is good – much better than a

piece with good form. People say, 'This is a good piece, but, it's form is bad …' or, 'This piece is too long.' I say, 'Well, I am also too long. What should I cut off ? !'" See *Circuit*, vol. 17, no. 2 : « De la musique comme situation – Entretien avec Helmut Lachenmann », Abigail Heathcote (trans. Yves Saint-Amant), p. 89. In some regards I actually find this critique very apt with regard to my quartet because the piece dies slowly, *too slowly,* just as the listeners' wait for the final breath of the composition was not conceived to be a painless experience.

18. They are much more targets in a shooting gallery that people hit ; if the right number is hit, they fall over and allow reality itself to become visible. The power that hits them is human, not artistic : they are moved by human emotion." This concept of the "lyrical" is, in Adorno's view, directly tied up with history. "Truth does not occur in the artistic creation but truth is represented in the creation, and the revelation of the artistic creation remains to be the deed of man. The artist reveals the picture. But the image of truth stands forever in history. The history of the image is its decay ; it is the decay of the illusion of truth of all the intrinsic values that it intends to display, and the uncovering of its transparence in regard to the contents of truth, which are intended with the image and first come forth amongst this decay."

19. While its renovation helps to cover up the traces of the Second World War, as well as its fascist past, this fails most noticeably through the large fascist anti-artillery bunkers (Flaktürme) present in the Arenberg Park and near favorite tourist destinations throughout the city : these are so sturdy and massively built that they can not be easily eradicated, and they have, until now, no need for renovation. Budapest, although similar in architecture to Vienna, displays a different history of renovation. After the destructive Second World War, the Stalinist period, and the 1956 revolution Budapest was never completely renovated because the economic development and capability to support such renovation was not available : while public buildings became partially or fully renovated according to government plan, residential buildings were often left un-renovated. Even after the fall of communism, privatization of residential buildings did not help the process of renovation, as the owners still did not always have the necessary capital. Nonetheless, some of the most radical architectural renovations can be observed after 1989, with American fast food chains occupying and renovating some of the most attractive buildings in the center of the city. In some cases, industrial complexes have been replaced by the most modern shopping malls in Europe. For more on archectural developments in Budapest see Gábor Preisich, *Budapest Városépítésének története*, *1945-1990*, Budapest, Műszaki Kónyvkiadó, 1998, and András Gerő and János Poór, *Budapest : A History from Its Beginnings to 1998*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1997.

23. Nowhere is Schubert farther away from the earth than in that place where he adduces it. The earth opens itself in the images of death ; but when faced with the nearest proximity, nature eliminates itself. This is why no passage leads from Schubert's music to frivolous genre and homeland art (Genre- und Schollenkunnst), but merely one passage leads from here to deepest depravation and one passage to the but barely addressed reality of the liberated music of a transformed human being. With its seismograph-like irregular lines, Schubert's music transcribes the message of the human being's qualitative transformation. This music is rightly answered by crying : crying of the poorest sentimentality in the Dreimädelhaus, that is no different from the crying coming from the devastated body. Faced with Schubert's music, the tears fall from the eyes without first asking the soul. This music penetrates our being in such an immediate and real way. We cry without knowing why. Because we have not yet become like that which this music promises, and because, in unnamed happiness, this music must be just like it is in order to reassure us that we will once become like this. Although we cannot decipher this music, in front of the fading, tear-flooded eye the music holds the ciphers of finite reconciliation." Adorno, *op. cit.*, p. 21.