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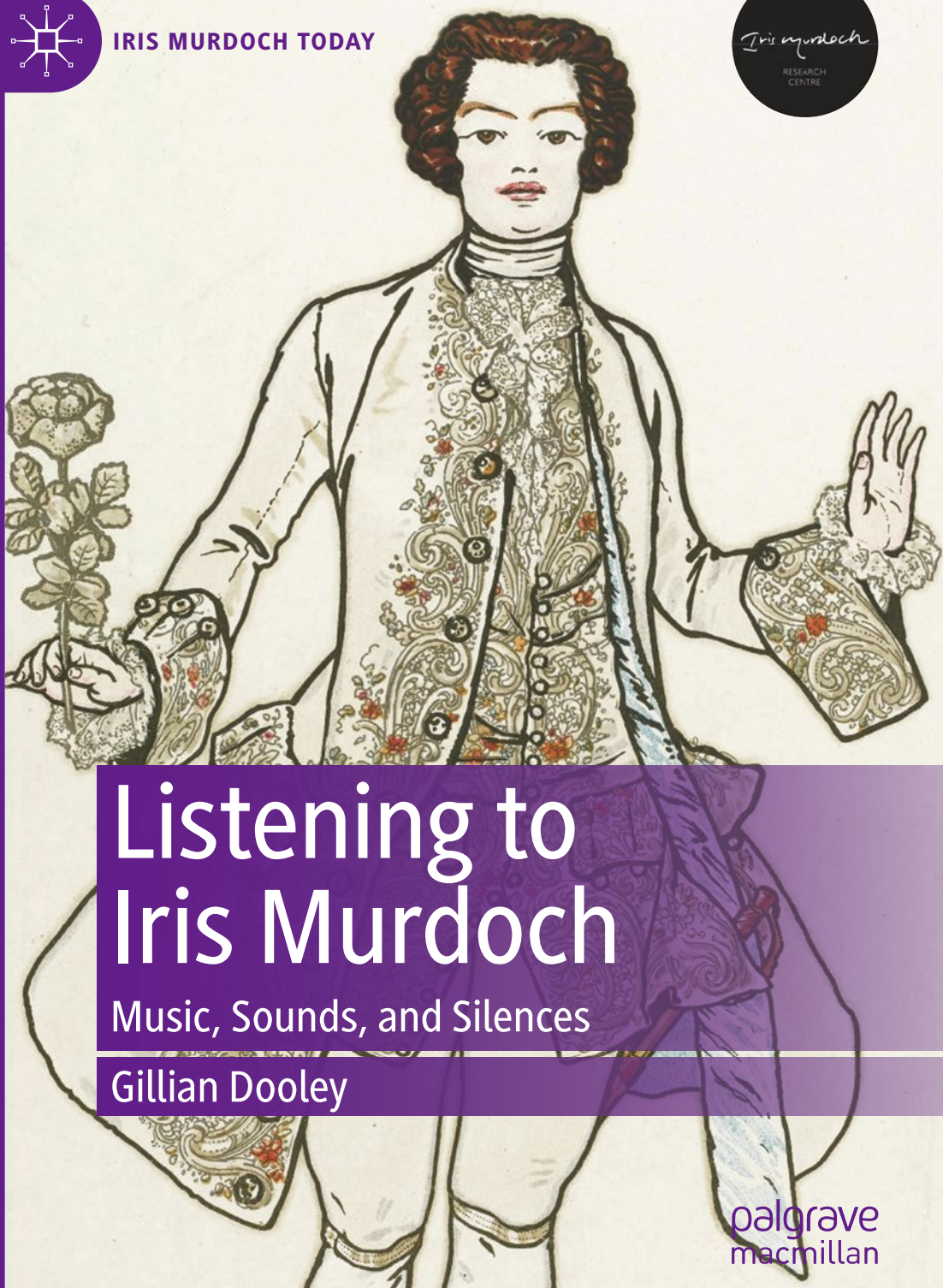

Listening to Iris Murdoch

Music, Sounds, and Silences

Gillian Dooley

palgrave macmillan

Iris Murdoch Today

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Foreword

The passion and pathos of orchestral music, the joys of communal singing and the power of the human voice itself, all so deeply embedded in Iris Murdoch's life and work, have been insufficiently remarked upon in Murdoch scholarship. Gillian Dooley's study of music, sounds and silences in Murdoch's novels remedies this loss, drawing the cacophony of sounds that haunts them out of the shadows onto centre stage. The result will delight not only seasoned Murdoch scholars but also more general readers with an interest in music.

Murdoch's inclusion of music to inform and expand the psychological scope of her novels must surely owe something to the emotional impact of music that was a defining feature of her childhood. Being the only child of a trained operatic singer, whose piano graced the family home at Eastbourne Road in Chiswick, her mother's beautiful soprano voice, singing the arias that she loved, would have echoed through the young Iris's early years. Her familiarity with music was enriched later in life through many friendships, in particular with the novelist and activist Brigid Brophy, with whom Murdoch discussed music ranging from the oratorios and operas of Mozart to the songs of the Rolling Stones and the Beatles. Her tastes were eclectic and music of all persuasion was to be enjoyed, devoured and debated.

Dooley casts her net wide here in the abundance of auditory influences she explores, not merely confining herself to musical allusion but also to the variety of other sounds—and silences—that saturate Murdoch's narratives. Some fascinating nuances of meaning occur on her journey, not least

her highlighting how the dynamics of musical performances shed fresh light on Murdoch's awareness of gender issues, pointing covertly towards divisive attitudes inherent in society. When Dooley's discussion deftly segues into formal concerns, she illustrates how evocations of sound contribute to the ways Murdoch's novels extend the formal boundaries of realist fiction, highlighting their still under-rated experimentation with the novel form.

As Dooley's discussions stretch out towards Murdoch's elicitation of accents, voice tones and silences in conversations between characters (even birdsong and animal noises are part of her repertoire), we learn how far auditory effects can work to provide more nuanced insights into the inner life of Murdoch's characters. As such, readers' subliminal dramatic and emotional engagements with the novels are intensified: 'If no sensory experience is present, no art is present', Murdoch has said. But Dooley is careful not to confine herself to rigid interpretations as she nudges the most seasoned Murdoch reader to be more curious about the role of sound and music in the novels, while inviting the ingenue reader to consider more closely what kind of novel they are reading. Her encouragement to *listen* more diligently to the acoustics within Murdoch's novels will entice readers, old and new, into reading Murdoch's novels quite differently, releasing them from the confines of conventional realism.

The lists of archival resources and appendices that conclude Dooley's book are inspirational in themselves as they reveal the range of Murdoch's impressive musicality and accomplishments: her work with established musicians, her role as a librettist and the musical enterprises her novels have inspired will surprise the most well-informed aficionado. However, it would be remiss not to pay tribute also here to the impressive strength of Gillian Dooley's own musicality and accomplishments which have enriched every page of this fine study.

Visiting Professor, University of Chichester
Emeritus Research Fellow with the Iris Murdoch
Archive Project, Kingston University

Anne Rowe

Acknowledgements

A project like this relies on the support, cooperation and generosity of many people. Much of this research has been presented at the regular Iris Murdoch conferences at Kingston University and more recently Chichester University, and the discussions, formal and informal, at those occasions have been invaluable. In particular, I have to thank Frances White, Miles Leeson and Anne Rowe for encouraging me to write this book. Miles and Frances have been warm and supportive as series editors, and Anne has been most kind in writing the Foreword, by which I am deeply honoured and flattered. I am grateful to Elin Svenneby, David Robjant and Melinda Graefe for detailed and expert commentary on specific parts of the book. The Iris Murdoch Appreciation Society (IMAS) on Facebook is a wonderful resource and meeting place, and IMAS member Caroline Meehan kindly alerted me to some material about the myth of Apollo and Marsyas and Murdoch's allusions to it.

I also must acknowledge the essential help of Kingston University archivists Katie Giles and Dayna Miller for their help in accessing the Iris Murdoch archives, including making me aware of various interesting items. They have supported me both on site and at a great distance when I was unable to travel from Australia to complete my research. Dayna has also helped me with permission to quote from unpublished sources. I would also like to thank my former colleagues at Flinders University Library who have obtained many publications for me via inter-library loan.

"Chapter 7: 'Just Bring Me the Composers': Musical Settings of Iris Murdoch's Words" chapter is largely about pieces of music which are not

publicly available in either recordings or scores, some of which I was initially unaware of. I am extremely grateful to Maria Peacock, who alerted me to Gary Carpenter's setting of *The one alone*. I was then able to get in contact with Gary. Similarly, Dayna Miller told me about Christopher Bochmann's cantata *The round horizon*. Both Gary and Christopher have been extraordinarily helpful, providing recordings and other information about their compositions.

Another fruitful line of enquiry came via David Cole, with whom I had discussed the difficulties I was having finding anything concrete about Malcolm Williamson's setting of *A year of birds*. David put me in touch with Oliver Soden, whose recent biography of Michael Tippett he had read, in case he could help me with contacts related to Williamson. Oliver kindly referred me to Paul Harris, the biographer of Williamson, and also Thomas Hyde, author of a forthcoming book on William Mathias, the composer of the opera *The servants*. Paul and Thomas in turn were extremely helpful and generous with their time and resources.

I had been in touch with Paul Crabtree at the time of the premiere of his work *Forgive me*, when he sent me a copy of the score. I contacted him again when I was writing about the musical settings. We have since had a series of fascinating email exchanges, not just about his setting of Murdoch's words, but more generally about choosing and setting texts for vocal works. These discussions have greatly enhanced my understanding of this difficult art and I am grateful for his detailed engagement with my sometimes incoherent queries.

The Iris Murdoch Centenary Conference at St Anne's College, Oxford, was an extraordinary three days of fellowship, discussion, words and music. The convenors, Miles Leeson and Frances White, indulged me, not for the first time, in my scheme to organise a concert of 'Words and Music for Iris'. Kent Wennman played two of his own powerful songs written in dialogue with Murdoch's philosophy and fiction, and he has kindly provided more background to his work so I can include it in my discussion of music inspired by Murdoch. And last but absolutely not least, Paul Hullah, the world expert on Murdoch's poetry and himself a wonderful poet and musician, has provided me with detailed background to the two poems he performed (with backing tracks) at our concert. Paul has allowed me to reprint one of his poems in full. He also sparked my interest in Murdoch's lesser-known works—poetry still unpublished, as well as his seminal collection of Murdoch's poems published in Japan in 1997, co-edited with the late Yozo Muroya.

Praise for *Listening to Iris Murdoch*

"In a study that fills a significant gap in Murdoch scholarship, Gillian Dooley explores music and sound in Iris Murdoch's novels by means of the symphonies, songs, sounds and settings that adorn them. This book will not only enrich the meaning of the novels, but also intensify the enjoyment of reading them. A pleasure to read."

—Anne Rowe, Visiting Professor, *University of Chichester*; Emeritus Research Fellow with the Iris Murdoch Archive Project, *Kingston University*

"With an impressive overview, Gillian Dooley in this highly readable and deeply interesting book picks out and shows her readers how different sounds have deeper meaning in Iris Murdoch's fiction, setting the tone for a situation, hinting to a character trait in a figure or creating a special atmosphere. We discover how music, sounds and silences are profound elements in Murdoch's endeavour to create and embody her characters. And yet, so far little critical attention has been devoted to what her novels *sound* like and the importance of the auditive aspects of her central concept of a 'just and loving attention.'

This book is firmly based in the author's deep and long personal interest in and experience with music, poetry, singing—and Iris Murdoch. Dooley gives fresh and often surprising comments on fictive characters in the novels from different decades in 'Murdoch-world', noticing the pleasure of music and other sounds as well as the pain of silenced voices. Readers once alerted and attuned to the sounds implied in Murdoch's novels, will not only come to understand more completely the complex effects of her narratives and the philosophy within them, but will find a new key to their own lifeworlds as well."

—Elin Svenneby, Former Associate Professor, *University of Tromsoe, Norway*

"*Listening to Iris Murdoch's* focus on the sonic, which in literary criticism is often treated like a poor relation to the visual, is most welcome. Through perceptive close readings, Gillian Dooley uses the lens of music, sound and silence to draw out gender, sexuality, Irish politics, domestic conflict and much more in Murdoch's novels. Her critical landscape is populated with fascinating unplayed pianos, nationalistic songs and operatic cross-dressing. This detailed and well-written book also discusses musical settings of Murdoch's words and includes a comprehensive inventory of allusions to music in her work. It will delight Murdoch fans but will also be of great interest to those who are attentive to sound studies and the relationship of music to literature."

—Hazel Smith, Author of *The Contemporary Literature-Music Relationship*, Emeritus Professor, *Writing and Society Research Centre, Western Sydney University*

"The centrality of art in many forms to Iris Murdoch's philosophy and fiction is striking and illuminating. For Murdoch herself, songs and singing were a major source of joy in her life. In this sensitive and insightful analysis of music and Iris Murdoch, Gillian Dooley certainly broadens the field of Murdoch scholarship but also demonstrates the rich and beautiful possibilities when one opens one's eyes, heart, mind and ears to the lyricism, musicality, and silences in Murdoch's work."

—Lucy Bolton, Author of *Contemporary Cinema and the Philosophy of Iris Murdoch* (2019)

"This book is an important contribution to Iris Murdoch studies. Murdoch is a truly musical writer, not only in the rhythms and textures of her novels, but the way music itself sounds within her narratives.

Gillian Dooley explores the fascinating relationship of sound, silence and music in Murdoch's output as well as her collaborations and relationships with composers. This book will be treasured by admirers of Murdoch's work and musicians alike."

—Thomas Hyde, Composer, *Worcester College, Oxford*

Contents

About the Author

Gillian Dooley is an honorary senior research fellow at Flinders University in South Australia. She has had her work published widely on Iris Murdoch, as well as other authors such as Jane Austen, V.S. Naipaul and J.M. Coetzee. She is the editor/co-editor of *From a tiny corner in the house of fiction: conversations with Iris Murdoch* (2003); *Never mind about the bourgeoisie: the correspondence between Iris Murdoch and Brian Medlin* (2014; pbk 2019) and *Reading Iris Murdoch's Metaphysics as a guide to morals* (Palgrave Macmillan 2019). She is also an active musician, and organised and performed in a musical evening for the Iris Murdoch Centenary Conference in Oxford in July 2019. Email: gillian.dooley@flinders.edu.au

Abbreviations—Fictional Works by Iris Murdoch[1]

AM	*An accidental man* (1971; Triad Grafton, 1979)
B	*The bell* (1958; Penguin Classics, 2001)
BB	*The book and the brotherhood* (1987; Chatto and Windus, 1987)
BD	*Bruno's dream* (1969; World Books by arrangement with Chatto and Windus, 1970)
BP	*The black prince* (1973; Book Club by arrangement with Chatto and Windus, 1974)
FE	*The flight from the enchanter* (1956; Penguin, 1962)
FHD	*A fairly honourable defeat* (1970; Penguin, 1972)
GA	*The good apprentice* (1985; Chatto and Windus, 1985)
GK	*The green knight* (1993; Penguin, 1994)
HC	*Henry and Cato* (1976; Penguin, 1977)
IG	*The Italian girl* (1964; Penguin, 1967)
JD	*Jackson's dilemma* (1995; Chatto and Windus, 1995)
MP	*The message to the planet* (1989; Penguin, 1990)
NG	*The nice and the good* (1968; Penguin, 1969)
NS	*Nuns and soldiers* (1980; Penguin, 1981)
PP	*The philosopher's pupil* (1983: Penguin, 1984)
RG	*The red and the green* (1965; Chatto and Windus, 1965)
S	*The sandcastle* (1957; The Reprint Society by arrangement with Chatto and Windus, 1959)

[1] This list gives the initials used for each work's in-text references; the title of the book; the year of first publication; the edition used in references in this book.

SPLM	*The sacred and profane love machine* (1974; Penguin, 1976)
SS	'Something special' (1957; *Winter's tales*, no. 3, 1957, 175–204)
SH	*A severed head* (1961; Penguin, 1963)
TA	*The time of the angels* (1966; Penguin, 1968)
TSTS	*The sea, the sea* (1978; Triad Granada, 1980)
U	*The unicorn* (1963; Penguin, 1966)
UN	*Under the net* (1954; The Reprint Society by arrangement with Chatto and Windus, 1955)
UR	*An unofficial rose* (1962; The Reprint Society by arrangement with Chatto and Windus, 1964)
WC	*A word child* (1976; Viking, 1975)

Chapter 1: Listening to Iris Murdoch

Introduction

Writing about music in the fiction of Iris Murdoch is often an exercise in noticing particulars, easily overlooked; of attending to glancing references or passing remarks, or of investigating narrative mysteries. In some cases, these hints and mysteries remain opaque—to me, at least—but in other cases, intriguing discoveries can be made by following these threads. Music is rarely foregrounded in Murdoch's novels, but there are several significant characters who are musicians or music-lovers—or distinctly unmusical. Asking oneself what music and musicianship means to these characters and those around them, and listening for the various resonances in the novels (be those express or implied), opens up new dimensions of understanding and appreciation for readers.

When I began this project, music itself—either heard, referred to or performed—was my focus. However, as I re-read the novels with this in mind, I found myself hearing their broader soundscapes, or sound-worlds, including the silences. In her book *Hearing things: The work of sound in literature*, Angela Leighton writes,

> The silent page may become a trove of riches or a Pandora's box, but either way, there is such a complex orchestration of noises in it, such a 'roar' within

G. Dooley, *Listening to Iris Murdoch*, Iris Murdoch Today,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00860-3_1

> its silence, that to read without listening for those noises might be to miss much of what literature is about.[1]

What literature is 'about' might mean different things to different readers, but for her part, Murdoch said in an interview with Bryan Magee,

> Literature could be called a disciplined technique for arousing certain emotions. … The sensuous nature of art is involved here, the fact that it is concerned with visual and auditory sensations and bodily sensations. If nothing sensuous is present no art is present.[2]

She was concerned in that interview to clarify both the similarities and differences between philosophical writing and literature, both of which she practised extensively:

> Though they are so different, philosophy and literature are both truth-seeking and truth-revealing activities. They are cognitive activities, explanations. Literature, like other arts, involves exploration, classification, discrimination, organised vision. Of course good literature does not look like 'analysis' because what the imagination produces is sensuous, fused, reified, mysterious, ambiguous, particular. Art is cognition in another mode.[3]

As Nora Hämäläinen, points out, Murdoch's conception of the 'philosophical labour' of literature is 'explorative' rather than 'rhetorical':

> Literature is a lesson in how to picture and understand; it teaches us how to engage in the fundamental moral activity of making sense of the world, richly, at multiple levels, and yet aware of our own limitations. But it does not, primarily, give us philosophical answers or illustrate philosophical positions.[4]

Murdoch, while being a highly intellectual novelist, is also a great chronicler of the material textures of the world in which her characters

[1] Angela Leighton, *Hearing things: The work of sound in literature* (Cambridge [Mass.]: Belknap Press, 2018), 25.

[2] Iris Murdoch, 'Literature and philosophy: A conversation with Bryan Magee' in *Existentialists and mystics: writings on philosophy and literature* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1997), 3–30; 10.

[3] Murdoch, 'Literature and philosophy', 10–11.

[4] Nora Hämäläinen, *Literature and moral theory* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 168.

exist. I suspect that Murdoch's deployment of sounds, which forms part of her poetics, adds to her enduring popularity with readers even though they might not be consciously listening while they read, or be aware that what they are reading is 'a lesson in how to picture and understand'.

Later in the Magee interview, Murdoch said: 'We have so many *kinds* of relation to a work of art. A literary work is an extremely heterogeneous object which demands an open-minded heterogeneous response.'[5] Her own novels offer so much, with their idiosyncratic blend of compelling plots, memorable characters and philosophical sophistication conveyed in supple, richly textured and sensuous prose, that there are many ways of reading them with enjoyment and appreciation. Her skill at plotting can make one read swiftly, but there is much to be gained from slowing down one's reading enough to notice the details.

Music and Sound in Fiction: A Review of the Field

There has only been one monograph to date that has considered the sonic elements of Murdoch's work in detail, and that is Darlene D. Mettler's *Sound and sense: musical allusion and imagery in the novels of Iris Murdoch* (1991). This book-length study of music in Murdoch's work does not consider other aspects of Murdoch's sound-worlds. Although it has some fine features, it contains several mistakes and what seem to me to be overly schematic interpretations. It was, however, a ground-breaking work in its time, and Peter Conradi writes, in his Foreword to Anne Rowe's book *The visual arts and the novels of Iris Murdoch*:

> It seems extraordinary that Darlene Mettler's study of musical allusion preceded Dr Anne Rowe's *Salvation by Art*: Dame Iris's love of the visual arts goes back into her youth, while her feeling for music developed late.[6]

I would say that a 'feeling for music' also went back into her youth, although a more intellectual grasp of music certainly came later in her life, as will be shown below.

In suggesting the importance of sound in Murdoch's fiction, I am not implying that she is unique. Literary soundscapes have a long history.

[5] Murdoch, 'Literature and philosophy', 24.

[6] Peter Conradi, 'Foreword' in Anne Rowe, *The visual arts and the novels of Iris Murdoch* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2002), vii-viii.

Murdoch was very conscious of being part of a tradition of novel-writing which she saw as beginning with Jane Austen, and including other writers such as Charles Dickens, Emily Brontë, Leo Tolstoy and Marcel Proust. Austen does not strike one as a particularly sensuous novelist: when her world becomes tangible, visible or audible it is usually something of a surprise. However, as the nineteenth-century novel developed, it became more audible. John Picker, in *Victorian soundscapes*, details the many ways in which Victorian novelists heard their world and conveyed the noises they heard to their readers. He dates a change from Dickens's 1840s novel *Dombey and son*, 'a novel dominated by and absorbed with the effects and intelligibility of sounds and voices'.[7] Picker notes the importance of the railways for Dickens: 'the train represents an expressive ideal. Its furious speed, sound and power allow for an immediacy and dynamism that Dickens the author longs to possess in language.'[8] Technological developments—railways, factories, mechanisation of all kinds—throughout the period were, of course, an important influence on all the arts. *Sounding modernism* deals with the new world emerging from the Victorian era. Its editor's introduction proposes:

> [F]ew would contest that 'representing' sound becomes a more complex process in the wake of the invention of 'modern things' such as the phonograph, the telephone, radio and the talkies; a process that means that it is impossible to separate the representation of sound from the mediation of sound.[9]

No-one could accuse Murdoch of a Modernist sensibility or approach to ethics. However, the technological trappings of Modernism listed above are very much of Murdoch's pre-digital world—the gramophone, the landline telephone, the wireless radio; even television scarcely makes its presence felt, and computers not at all. It is striking, though, that when music is heard in her novels, it is reproduced electronically as often as it is played or sung live.

What seems 'old-fashioned' to a current reader of Murdoch's novels is really the modernity of her youth and middle years—bearing in mind, of

[7] John Picker, *Victorian soundscapes* (Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.

[8] Picker, *Victorian soundscapes*, 27.

[9] *Sounding modernism: Rhythm and sonic mediation in modern literature and film*, ed. Julian Murphet, Helen Groth and Penelope Hone (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 9–10.

course, that the radical changes in technology which have engulfed us since her writing career drew to a close in the early 1990s make that era seem even further in the past. Murdoch often expressed her disapproval of Modernism and the 'art for art's sake' doctrine that the Modernists were thought to endorse, although it had arisen during the Romantic era of the early nineteenth century. Frances White argues convincingly that 'Murdoch's suspicion of [Virginia] Woolf derives from associating her with the unethical aesthetic which was at that time commonly thought prevalent in Modernism in general and Bloomsbury in particular'.[10]

Stephen Benson, in his book *Literary music: Writing music in contemporary fiction*, writes that 'the incorporation of music into the narrative text is everywhere a matter of tropes and figures: of voice, song, silence, absence', and goes on, 'Close reading of the language of literary music is thus a necessity, however much such a critical practice has fallen out of favour.'[11] I agree, but feel no need to apologise for continuing in that critical tradition. Close reading is one element of that 'open-minded heterogeneous response'[12] which Murdoch believed was demanded by a work of art: 'criticism must remain free to work at a level where it can judge truth in art.'[13] There is, of course, room for many critical and theoretical approaches in the study of literature and music. I concur with Murdoch that in undertaking criticism, I am 'better off without any close-knit systematic background theory, scientific or philosophical'.[14] As Hazel Smith writes, 'Post-Benson, I think we can afford to be more relaxed about the formalism-culturalism divide within musico-literary discourse and adopt a multifarious range of approaches.'[15]

[10] Frances White, '"Despite herself": The resisted influence of Virginia Woolf on Iris Murdoch's fiction' in *Iris Murdoch connected: Critical essays on her fiction and philosophy*, ed. Mark Luprecht (Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 2014), 12.

[11] Stephen Benson, *Literary music: Writing music in contemporary fiction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 10.

[12] Murdoch, 'Literature and philosophy', 24.

[13] Murdoch, 'Literature and philosophy', 26.

[14] Murdoch, 'Literature and philosophy', 24.

[15] Hazel Smith, *The contemporary literature-music relationship: Intermedia, voice, technology, cross-cultural exchange* (Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 5.

Music in Murdoch's Life

This study is focused on music and sound in Murdoch's literary writing. However, music also occupied an important place in her life and her philosophical writings.

Composer Malcolm Williamson reports that, 'deny it though she may, Iris herself is a delightful mezzo-soprano'.[16] I am not aware of any recordings of her singing, although recordings of her speaking voice reveal that it is rich and musical, with the hint of an Irish lilt. Yozo Muroya writes, in his 'Biographical introduction' to *Poems by Iris Murdoch*, that music was 'something of a passion' for Murdoch,

> though she refers to it less often than to painting in her writing. … Murdoch is in fact a very musical person; her mother … had trained to be an opera singer before she married and her own fine singing voice would seem to indicate that she inherited her mother's musical talent.[17]

Murdoch recounts that when she first went to Oxford she assumed that she would be able to join the Bach Choir,

> but they asked if I could sight-read, and I said 'No', and they didn't even hear me sing! That caused me such rage! I moped about it for a very long time. I suppose I *might* have gone away and learned to sight-read.[18]

Murdoch's correspondence with her friend Brigid Brophy is an important source of information about her musical knowledge and interests. Her letter to Brophy of 17 February 1963 confirms that, despite her interest in and attraction to music, she had not received much systematic musical training as part of her otherwise excellent education. Murdoch wrote, in response to a letter that does not survive: 'thanks for your nice letter with educational suggestions. I possess a record of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* but of course no score. I am not sure that I desire to know how to read a score, though it is just possible that I desire to desire to know how to read

[16] Malcolm Williamson, 'Sir Malcolm Williamson writes about his adaptation of *A year of birds*,' *Iris Murdoch news letter*, 9 [Autumn] (1995): 3.

[17] Yozo Muroya, 'Biographical introduction' in *Poems by Iris Murdoch*, ed. Yozo Muroya and Paul Hullah (Okayama: University Education Press, 1997), 22.

[18] Shena Mackay, 'When Shena met Iris,' *Independent Magazine* (11 September 1993): 42.

a score.'[19] Brophy was a particular devotee of the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and in 1964 published *Mozart the dramatist: A new view of Mozart, his operas and his age*. Many of the references to music in Murdoch's correspondence are in her letters to Brophy. Her influence might be traced in the fact that Mozart is the most frequently mentioned composer in all of Murdoch's novels (see Appendix A). Two 1950s editions of the libretto of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, presumably acquired in the context of her friendship with Brophy, are among the music books in the Iris Murdoch Archive at Kingston University. Both are in Italian, and one also includes an English translation.

The sheet music collection in the Archive, listed in Appendix B, provides interesting (but inevitably inconclusive) evidence of Murdoch's own knowledge about music. A good deal of it consists of popular sentimental songs from the 1920s and 1930s. I suspect most of these belonged to her mother Irene, some of them being inscribed with her name. Murdoch often mentions in interviews that her mother was a singer. There are also a few volumes of part songs in the collection—the *Handel school song book* and *Eight madrigals by Elizabethan composers*, arranged for soprano and alto voices—presumably from girls' choral singing during Murdoch's school days. There are French songs from the 1940s, including four albums of songs by Charles Trenet (she spoke in 1990 about 'My Paris in the 1940s', which meant, among other things, Edith Piaf and the *Compagnons de la Chanson*[20]) and some other European folk music. There is a good deal of Irish music, too, from both sides of that divided society, including the songs of Percy French. One item that stands out is *The left song book*, published by the Workers' Music Association and the Left Book Club Musicians' Group. This book is inscribed 'Iris Murdoch Party Summer School July 1939'.

The most personal part of the music collection is a series of handwritten notebooks, titled *Make a joyful noise*, containing the words (and sometimes music) of a miscellany of favourite songs, often annotated with a friend's name. These notebooks show that Murdoch had an active interest in collecting songs and sharing them with friends. Many of these songs

[19] Iris Murdoch, 'Letter to Brigid Brophy, 17 February 1963' in *Living on paper: Letters from Iris Murdoch 1934–1995*, ed. Avril Horner and Anne Rowe (London: Chatto and Windus, 2015), 239.

[20] John Russell, 'Under Iris Murdoch's exact, steady gaze,' *New York Times* (22 February 1990): 20. *Les Compagnons de la Chanson* was a French vocal group from Lyon founded during the Second World War.