and renovation of different types.[47] The Covid-19 pandemic has shaken many of our assumptions about the resilience of arts institutions; post-war Germany's era of rebuilding suggests diverse historical models for how to move forward in the wake of these disruptions. And extreme weather events, intensified by climate change, are likely to lead to more such reckoning in the future.[48] Last year, on 28 June 2021, a torrential thunderstorm in Stuttgart toppled several of the rooftop statues on the Großes Haus and caused parts of the copper roof to fly off entirely, causing internal water damage.[49] Again, seventy-six years hence, it rained into the auditorium of the Staatstheater. Repairs are now being planned.

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The Repercussions of George Rochberg's Rubble Rhetoric

AMY LYNN WLODARSKI

Abstract

During the Second World War, the American composer George Rochberg served as an infantryman with the US Army in Europe. There, he witnessed first hand the aftermath caused by massive firebombing of the French countryside by both Allied and Axis bombers, an image that would remain with him for the remainder of his life. In his post-war writings, the rubbled city of Saint-Lô soon became a metaphor for the precarious state of Western culture, which he believed had suffered a grave injury. This article considers how Rochberg reconstructed his wartime sketches – short miniatures composed during the European campaign – into material for his Sixth Symphony (1986). I argue that Rochberg clearly conceived of musical reconstruction as a means by which to symbolically confront the modernist forces he believed accountable for the decline of Western culture that he increasingly perceived towards the end of his life. The article ends with a cautionary epilogue to this time-worn narrative of rubble, reconstruction, and redemption that challenges Rochberg's false sense of moral superiority and the motivations of 'rubble narratives' more generally.

47 Staatstheater Stuttgart, 'Sanierung', www.staatstheater-stuttgart.de/sanierung/ (accessed 9 March 2022).

48 On the future trauma of climate change, see E. Ann Kaplan, *Climate Trauma: Foreseeing the Future in Dystopian Film and Fiction* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016).

49 Kathrin Hasselbeck and Viktoria Schulmann, 'Sturm- und Wasserschaden an der Oper Stuttgart: Es war Gespenstisch', *BR-Klassik*, 30 June 2021, www.br-klassik.de/aktuell/news-kritik/oper-stuttgart-sturm-wasser-schaden-regen-unwetter-dach-abgerissen-100.html.

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As the geographer Kenneth Hewitt argues, ruins are 'literally composed' through the process of place annihilation and are therefore 'endowed with an existence and a history that define the human attributes of a world'.[1] One such ruined site is the French city of Saint-Lô, which suffered near total destruction as Allied troops confronted the German Army during the Norman campaign in the Second World War. A central crossroads since the Middle Ages, Saint-Lô was nestled in a crook of the tranquil Vire River and possessed a city centre 'rich in historic and architectural treasures', among them its Notre-Dame cathedral that dated back to the thirteenth century.[2] For the Allies, however, it was a crucial inland choke point at which to delay German reinforcements to the coast.[3] During the initial Allied airstrike (5 June 1944) seventy-two American bombers dropped over 200,000 pounds of explosives on the city centre, followed by a subsequent round of 14,000 pounds dropped by the British RAF squadrons.[4] In the following days, Allied planes would make 'concentrated and repeated attacks that seemed to the inhabitants to have been motivated by the sole intention of destroying the city . . . with bombers return[ing] every day for a week to increase the devastation'.[5] Afterwards, US reconnaissance forces reported that the bulk of the firestorm had fallen directly on the city centre, which suffered nearly 95 per cent destruction.[6] It was reduced to what one eyewitness described as 'no more than a heap of smoking rubble'.[7]

The casualties – both human and architectural – were staggering. As Lois Gordon notes, 'Saint-Lô was charred and broken, every landmark now ash: homes, shops, the city hall, prefecture, hospital, theatres, hotel, prison, asylum . . . and finally, the great church, Notre Dame, which had taken three and a half centuries to build. Beneath the ruins were the dead and maimed. The town had become, in a great part, a living cemetery.'[8] The city's ruination quickly became a literary symbol for the impact of the war on Western culture and

1 Kenneth Hewitt, 'Place Annihilation: Area Bombing and the Fate of Urban Places', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73/2 (1983), 258.

2 Stephen A. Bourque, 'Operational Fires: Lisieux and Saint-Lô – the Destruction of Two Norman Towns on D-Day', *Canadian Military History* 19/2 (2010), 33.

3 Bourque, 'Operational Fires', 25.

4 Bourque, 'Operational Fires', 37.

5 Martin Blumenson, *The European Theater of Operations: Breakout and Pursuit* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1993), 146–7. For a detailed description of the bombing campaign and its devastating impact, see Georges Bernage, *Objective Saint-Lô: 7 June 1944–-18 July 1944*, trans. Heather Williams (South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2017).

6 Overall, Saint-Lô suffered a 77 per cent rate of loss buildings, among the highest figures in the region. See Hugh Clout, 'Beyond the Landings: The Reconstruction of Lower Normandy after June 1944', *Journal of Historical Geography* 32 (2006), 131.

7 Blumenson, *The European Theater of Operations*, 146. It should be noted that Blumenson witnessed the rubble of Saint-Lô at first hand as part of the US military operations in the theatre.

8 Lois G. Gordon, *The World of Samuel Beckett, 1906–46* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 32. Estimates of human casualties associated with the raids on Saint-Lô range from fifty victims to over 3,000, depending on the source. The average estimate is 1,000 casualties during the first night of bombing, but this does not account for the total number of victims.

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society. In his essay, 'The Capital of the Ruins', Samuel Beckett described the city as 'a heap of rubble . . . a sea of mud' and reflected on its existential significance:[9]

> [Perhaps] some of those who were in Saint-Lô will come home realising that they got at least as good as they gave, that they got indeed what they could hardly give, a vision and sense of a time-honoured conception of humanity in ruins, and perhaps even an inkling of the terms in which our condition is to be thought again.[10]

As literary scholar Dúnlaith Bird contends, Saint-Lô represented a post-war paradox; capturing 'both the regrowth of civilization and the acme of its ruination' and raising timely questions about whether post-war culture might ever 'emerge from the ashes' or if it would lay 'irrevocably shattered and lost'.[11]

Composer George Rochberg (1918–2005), who had marched through the devastated Saint-Lô as an infantryman with the United States Army, similarly believed the war had left humanity in tatters.[12] In his private writings, he wrote movingly of his first glimpse of the rubble, an image that would haunt his traumatic flashbacks and nightmares: '[We] passed through St Lô [which] had been chewed up something ferocious. Giant eggbeaters had been applied to the town and environs. Nothing but ruination and destruction all around.'[13] Rochberg would consistently interpret the ruins of Saint-Lô not as mere geographical sites, but as 'material attributes [that revealed] vital clues to its larger meanings' for post-war society.[14] Place mortality and cultural morality had become interlaced conceptually, specifically suggesting to him that Western culture had suffered a grave injury.

Shortly after this encounter, Rochberg was seriously wounded and ferried to England, where he convalesced for the next two-and-a-half months before returning to the front. Upon release, the British nurses gifted him small sketchbooks that he filled with his musical ideas during his second tour of duty.[15] His musical sketches were all truncated settings – the gruelling marching and violent battles often left him too exhausted to compose – with the average length ranging between eight to sixteen bars. After the war, Rochberg developed

9 Samuel Beckett, letter to T.M. Ragg, as quoted in James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996), 345. Beckett wrote 'Capital of Ruins' as a radio speech to be broadcast on Raidió Éireann, but ultimately the piece was never aired. It was later published as part of his short non-fiction works.

10 Beckett, 'The Capital of the Ruins', in *The Complete Short Prose: 1929–1989* (New York: Grove Press, 1995). Not all early clearing efforts were entirely by hand. As Hugh Clout notes, American and British military engineers contributed trucks and powerful machinery to help demolish dangerous ruins, remove undetonated mines and bombs, and fill large craters. See Clout, 'Beyond the Landings', 132.

11 Dúnlaith Bird, 'Light, Landscape, and Beckett', *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* 24 (2012), 242.

12 For an account of Rochberg's military service, see Amy Lynn Wlodarski, *George Rochberg, American Composer: Personal Trauma and Artistic Creativity* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2019), 8–42.

13 Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 24.

14 Hewitt, 'Place Annihilation', 258.

15 For a detailed discussion of these sketchbooks, see Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 26–35. The sketchbooks primarily contained short compositional exercises, although a few of them assumed more programmatic titles that could be read as commentaries on his personal experiences or mood: 'Pensive Air', 'Lullaby for Paul', 'Cacophony'.

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some of these fragments into his first post-war work: a three-movement sonatina for piano (1945).[16] But the majority of his wartime ideas remained unrealized – compositional rubble at the bottom of his desk drawer.

After his retirement from the University of Pennsylvania in 1983, Rochberg began a concentrated period of symphonic composition that he viewed autobiographically as 'continuing self-discovery and revealing of layers of existence'.[17] He had also begun to sift through his personal papers, a process that unearthed the old sketches from the war and ultimately sparked a new series of works.[18] As he remarked to his friend, the Canadian composer Istvan Anhalt, a few excerpts showed particular musical promise despite the passing decades. But mostly, the process triggered memories of the war and its aftermath. In a few rare moments, he would remember times of 'unhampered peacefulness', but more often he had traumatic flashbacks that caused him to 'feel the force of gravity, the heaviness of being'.[19] 'Life for us humans', he explained to his friend, 'has a way of accumulating events' that demand our repeated attention. 'I have war on the brain. That is what dominates me as I struggle to give life and shape to what I feel and hear.'[20]

Some of these wartime sketches became the thematic material for his Sixth Symphony (1986–7), which Rochberg subtitled 'in tempore belli' ('in the time of war'). The work unfolds in two movements – Fantasia and March – and incorporates fragments of Rochberg's more playful wartime compositions. The fantasia references Rochberg's 'Song of the Doughboy' (1944), a light-hearted, comical march written during his basic training service at Camp Shelby in Mississippi.[21] The second movement features three marches drawn from his early *Suite for Orchestra* (1947), his solo piano work *Carnival Music* (1971), and his unpublished 'March of the Halberds' (1943), an instrumental piece dedicated to the 65th Infantry Division Band.[22] At the bottom of the Sixth Symphony's manuscript, Rochberg specifically noted that the symphony had been 'reconstructed February 1986' rather than 'composed' or 'completed', as is more typical in his manuscripts. His deliberate rhetoric speaks to reconstruction as a compositional conceit guiding the symphony, most literally in its rebuilding of the symphony from surviving fragments of past works.

Rochberg clearly conceived of reconstruction not simply as a synthetic structuring of his musical shards, but also as a means by which to symbolically confront the modernist forces he believed were accountable for the levelling. In his post-war writings, he increasingly

16 For an analysis of the sonatina, see Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 32–4.

17 Rochberg, journal entry, 2 October 1985, Tagebuch 34, Lebensdokumente, SGR-PSS.

18 Initially, Rochberg had planned to deposit his papers at the New York Public Library, which accounts for the collection of his correspondence and sketches there. In the 1990s, he would receive a large offer from the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel, Switzerland, which ultimately acquired the significant remainder of the collection.

19 Rochberg, letter to Anhalt, 20 August 1988, in *Eagle Minds: Selected Correspondence of Istvan Anhalt and George Rochberg*, ed. Alan Gillmor (Waterloo, Ont: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007), 215–16.

20 Rochberg, letter to Anhalt, 1 May 1986, in *Eagle Minds*, 188.

21 See Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 19–23.

22 Joan DeVee Dixon, *George Rochberg: A Bio-Bibliographic Guide to his Life and Works* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), 166. In Rochberg's republished programme note, he comments that he no longer has a copy of the original march, but this statement is revised in *Five Lines, Four Spaces*. The march in question is the 'March of the Halberds'.

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associated modernist aesthetics with a fascist or totalitarian mentality, citing a long list of international composers as destabilizing agents: Milton Babbitt, Krzysztof Penderecki, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Igor Stravinsky, and Anton Webern. Without irony, he read their musical techniques allegorically, as musical reflections of the very physical mechanisms of modern warfare that he had experienced during the war – 'sheer clutter, [which overloads one's] reception mechanism [and] consequently chokes off mental oxygen and produces carbon monoxide, poison fumes'.[23] Thus, when Rochberg juxtaposed his own neo-Romantic themes with more modernist soundscapes, he was, in his own words, commenting 'on the way the events of our time and the aesthetics of the same time are different aspects of . . . dread internal changes which have their outward reflection in external history as it unfolded'.[24]

Specific compositions such as the Sixth Symphony were intended to expose modernist aesthetics as evidence of a broader moral and humanistic injury within Western culture. Throughout the symphony, Rochberg bombards the pre-existing marches with compositional techniques drawn from one well-known target of his: Igor Stravinsky. In bars 99–100 of the fantasia, the Doughboy motive meets resistance in the form of a counter-motive in the brass that dissonantly accumulates into a sustained chord marked 'brutale' in the score.[25] This chord, which features prominently in Stravinsky's 'Lacrimosa' from the *Requiem Canticles* (1966), initiates a series of musical conflicts: between tonal and atonal forces, between lighter tropes and more imposing textures, between a single voice and an overwhelming larger entity.[26] As Rochberg notes, the intent was to overcome the original march with a forceful and dissonant mass to call attention to the 'false glories' and 'underlying tragic implications' of warfare.[27]

The modernist gestures within the second movement bear a striking similarity to the *Rite of Spring*, a resonance that Lorin Maazel signalled when he programmed both works for the 1987 premiere of the Sixth Symphony.[28] Rochberg's dance-like melodies, presented in the winds and strings, are pummelled by the brass section with forceful blows in irregular metres, recalling the sacrificial dance at the *Rite*'s conclusion. A second allusion appears in a later moment, in which a halting ostinato that precedes the 'March of the Halberds' (bb. 307–28) references a similarly anticipatory technique Stravinsky employed directly

23 Rochberg, journal entry, 26 January 1968, Tagebuch 11, Lebensdokumente, SGR-PSS.

24 Rochberg, letter to Anhalt, 21 May 1998, in *Eagle Minds*, 341.

25 While this small fragment might seem too musically generic to link it specifically to Rochberg's 'Song of the Doughboy' – it is, of course, also a common rhythmic trope associated with military music dating back to the French Revolution – Rochberg specifies in his memoirs that his own marches were the source for this particular symphony. The sketches add further evidence to this interpretation, in that Rochberg explores the idea of resolving the 'brutale' theme to the key of F major, the original key of the 'Song of the Doughboy'.

26 For an analysis of the 5-Z38 pentachord in Stravinsky's 'Lamentations', see Craig Ayrey, 'Stravinsky in Analysis: The Anglophone Traditions', in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*, ed. Jonathan Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 213–20.

27 George Rochberg, *Five Lines, Four Spaces: The World of My Music* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 209.

28 The pairing unsettled Rochberg at first, as he admits in his memoirs: 'I suddenly found myself extremely concerned. For reasons I have never fathomed, Maazel chose to couple [the Sixth] with Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps*. I wondered briefly how my new symphony would hold up cheek by jowl with *Le sacre*.' See Rochberg, *Five Lines*, 210.

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before the 'Augurs of Spring'. By the end of the movement, the marches are disfigured by the superimposed modernist frameworks, including irregular mixed metres (creating a limping effect); mixed modal scales (generating harmonic ambiguity); and irregular entrances (simulating metric disorientation). The overall effect is the reduction of iconic symbols (the marches) to rubbled fragments by modernist forces, an effect that Rochberg described metaphorically as his 'testament' to how individuals can be 'swept up into a sense of false joy and optimism in the midst of. . .terrible realities'.[29]

Such comments align with Rochberg's provocative (and problematic) statements about modernism in general and Stravinsky in particular. In his autobiography, Rochberg accused Stravinsky of advancing an 'unstable [and] psychological' musical spectrum that threatened classical humanism.[30] Within the *Rite* specifically, Rochberg identified a 'world of dark fear and passion' akin to the 'same passions that drive political beliefs, especially [those] witnessed in the twentieth century [that] drove artistic convictions and beliefs to violent extremes'.[31] Such accusations intensified as he grew older and more paranoid, as in a letter to Anhalt that described modernist music as a 'nihilistic-destructive withdrawal' that had brought Western culture 'almost to the breaking point'.[32] In his mind, post-war modernism – and what he perceived as an almost cultish devotion to its aesthetics – had allowed the 'sociological-political disintegration in Europe' to continue after the war. In response, he believed the world needed a hero to fight for Western music's renewal, lest figures such as Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart be relegated to the rubble heaps of history themselves.[33]

Rochberg envisioned himself in such a redemptive role from an early age. After his encounter at Saint-Lô, Rochberg fashioned an artistic mission for himself from his recovery bed in England: 'I believe the artist's mission is to raise mankind to a higher level of consciousness and appreciation of the beauties inherent in man and nature.'[34] In the decades thereafter, he authored essays on aesthetic recovery that valued tonality for its 'beauty and power of expression' as well as the balance necessary to reclaim 'sanity and spiritual serenity'.[35] Among his most influential models for the renewal of music was what he called the 'promise in Beethoven', which he understood as an ethical charge to 'make clarity and beauty against chaos'.[36] In one exegesis dedicated to the legacy of the Ninth Symphony, he imagined how Beethoven might rail against the post-war language of modernists such as Milton Babbitt

29 Rochberg, journal entry, 12 November 1987, Tagebuch, Lebensdokumente, SGR-PSS. In his memoirs, Rochberg notes that marches had long held a place in his imagination, and he had long associated them with idealistic memories of American patriotism from the interwar period: 'My earliest . . . memory is of flag flying, bands playing, and soldiers marching [down] Main Avenue in downtown Passaic, New Jersey. The crowd went wild . . . It remains one of the most vivid scenes in a long life – alive, unforgettable.' See Rochberg, *Five Lines*, 209.

30 Rochberg, *Five Lines*, 31–2.

31 George Rochberg, *The Aesthetics of Survival: A Composer's View of Twentieth-Century Music* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 33 and Rochberg, *Five Lines*, 105.

32 Rochberg, letter to Anhalt, 21 January 1980, in *Eagle Minds*, 80.

33 Rochberg, letter to Alexander Ringer, 19 January 1976, Korrespondenz, SGR-PSS.

34 Rochberg, 'The Artist and Society' (1944), George Rochberg Papers – Additions, NYPL, JPB 13-04, Box 17, Folder 12.

35 Rochberg, 'A Composer's World' (1944), George Rochberg Papers – Additions, NYPL, JPB 13-04, Box 17, Folder 12.

36 Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 89.

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and George Perle: 'Oh friends, not these sounds . . . The sounds that destroy peace and harmony? The sounds that bring disruption, pain, unhappiness, sadness, depression? Was this a prophetic insight into the darkness yet to break loose in the twentieth century and wreak havoc in music?'[37]

Around the same time, he began to fashion imaginative representations of rubble landscapes in musical works that featured direct quotations of canonical figures from the Baroque and Classical periods. In 1969, he completed his massive Third Symphony – which I interpret as an earlier companion piece to the Sixth Symphony – in which quotations of Heinrich Schütz, J.S. Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven are overwhelmed by modernistic soundscapes until they crumble.[38] In his autobiography, Rochberg revealed the explicit subject of this work to be the mid-century catastrophe: 'I knew it could be done only indirectly, because the means of human expression are insufficient and inadequate to "name" the horrors . . . [of] the twentieth century. Terms like *holocaust*, *ethnic cleansing*, *killing fields*, *gulags*, and *concentration camps*.'[39] And yet, the Third Symphony also spoke to his belief in stylistic allusions as a means to rebuild musical humanism after what he perceived as total collapse. 'Despite frequent intensification through atonal, expressionistic chromaticism that clearly identifies it[self] as music of the mid-twentieth century, despite the *giant eggbeater*', he wrote, 'when all is said and done, the overall sense [of the Third Symphony] . . . is [the character, ethos, and indelibility] of the Baroque.'[40]

Embedded in the preceding quotation is a quiet reference to Saint-Lô – the French city torn up by a 'giant eggbeater' – which leads me to Rochberg's celebrated Third String Quartet, written three years after the Third Symphony, in 1972. In one set of programme notes, Rochberg describes the first movement as setting the 'essential gargoyle-like character of the Quartet', but he points out that these modernist allusions are 'mixed with music of an opposite character', namely a set of marching tunes.[41] The work therefore anticipates the materials, dramatics, and programmatic language of the Sixth Symphony, but the Quartet offers what the symphony withdrew: the tonal variations of the second movement as an epilogue to the aesthetic war. In a journal entry, Rochberg privately described the second movement as a 'clear[ing] away of the *rubble* of twentieth-century mistakes', envisioning it as an ethical rejection of the brash dissonances heard in the opening movement.[42] Rochberg confirms this therapeutic vision in two later essays, describing the variations as a 'turning away from . . . the cultural pathology' and 'destructive pressures' of the mid-century towards the 'possibility that music can be renewed by regaining contact with the tradition and means

37 Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 91.

38 David Metzer, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2003), 126–7.

39 Rochberg, *Five Lines*, 175.

40 Rochberg, *Five Lines*, 175. Italics added for emphasis.

41 Rochberg, programme note for the Third String Quartet, as reprinted in Dixon, *A Bio-Bibliographic Guide*, 143–4.

42 Rochberg, journal entry, May 16, 1988, Tagebuch, Lebensdokumente, SGR-PSS. Italics added for emphasis.

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of the past'.[43] The goal, as he noted, was an aesthetics of survival that relied not on total place annihilation but on a reconstruction of cultural memory from the ruins of human tragedy.

At this point, however, I wish to offer a cautionary epilogue to this time-worn narrative of rubble, reconstruction, and redemption. Rochberg's polemical associations of specific styles (modernism) and figures (Stravinsky) with extreme cultural threat ultimately advanced his own false sense of moral superiority. As I read them, I was reminded of how Stravinsky was similarly targeted at the Degenerate Music exhibition (organized by Nazi functionary Hans Ziegler and held in Düsseldorf in 1938) despite having enjoyed a measure of popular success in German musical circles.[44] As Joan Evans notes, Ziegler claimed that his aim was 'to provide a "helpful contribution to the mental, spiritual and moral renewal of the German people"' by warning attendees of the dangers of modernist – meaning, racially and politically inferior – music.[45] To that effect, an introductory lecture given by Nazi music and theatre scholar Otto zur Nedden decried the *Rite*'s 'destructive tendencies' and accused Stravinsky of consciously 'demolish[ing] musical form' in order to 'stir up the basest instincts'.[46] The most vilified subjects within the exhibition – including the Jewish composers Arnold Schoenberg and Kurt Weill – were also blamed for the desecration of German culture, but the impact on their careers was, by that point, minimal.[47] Stripped of their positions and their lives forever torn apart (both emigrated to the United States and never returned to Germany), they became victims of what happens when vitriolic rhetoric is amplified to national ideology.

I point out these resonances not to equate Rochberg uncritically with the fascism that he abhorred and fought against but to illustrate how seemingly innocuous 'rubble narratives' can easily tip into anti-humanist tendencies that require the demonization (if not destruction) of another for their symbolic power. For, as architectural scholar Leen Katrib astutely conveys, 'rubble is not only a product'; it always holds the potential to become an 'agent of ruination' in the hands of custodians who seek to heal the wounds of culture themselves.[48] We must therefore openly acknowledge that within the 'beautiful rubble clearing' of the Third String Quartet – with its canonical references to Beethoven and neo-Romantic impulses – lies the dark underbelly of Rochberg's own insecurities, which would gradually emerge in several of

43 Rochberg, programme note for the Third String Quartet, as reprinted in Dixon, *A Bio-Bibliographic Guide*, 141 and 'Reflections on the Renewal of Music', in *Aesthetics of Survival* (1984), 242.

44 Albrecht Dümling observes that Nazi propagandist Alfred Rosenberg adopted similar metaphors in his early writings, including the language of struggle and renewal that appeared in his anti-modernist writings. See Albrecht Dümling, 'The Target of Racial Purity: The "Degenerate Music" Exhibition in Düsseldorf, 1938', in *Art, Culture, and Media Under the Third Reich*, ed. Richard Etlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 49, 56.

45 Joan Evans, 'Stravinsky's Music in Hitler's Germany', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56/3 (2003), 569.

46 Evans, 'Stravinsky's Music in Hitler's Germany', 570–1. Evans argues that the inconsistencies of Nazi policy meant that Stravinsky's works generally enjoyed a notable measure of success in Nazi Germany, despite the composer's inclusion in the exhibition.

47 Pamela Potter, 'Defining "Degenerate Music" in Nazi Germany', *OREL Foundation*, http://orelfoundation.org/journal/journalArticle/defining_8220degenerate_music8221_in_nazi_germany.

48 Leen Katrib, 'On Archiving Rubble', *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation History, Theory, and Criticism* 15/2 (2018), 33–4.

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his most bigoted public statements: his misogynistic dismissals of women composers, his descriptions of works by homosexual composers as having given rise to a cultural form of AIDS, and his racist attitudes towards cultures he feared were slowly eroding the primacy of Western art music.[49] As he admitted to Anhalt around the time of his eightieth birthday, he could only see himself through his own suffering, as one 'who tried to make his way through the hail of bullets and orange/red/black flashes of mortar shells. I see all of it as war: symbolic and actual.'[50] Saint-Lô had long been cleared and reconstructed, but nearly fifty years later, the French city persisted symbolically in the indelibility of Rochberg's traumatic encounter with its rubble.

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Destroying the Imagined City

ARIANA PHILLIPS-HUTTON

Abstract

The transformation of rubble into aestheticized ruins turns on the relation of aesthetics, politics, and power alongside questions of memory, imagination, and embodiment. Working outward from this suggestive confluence, I investigate contemporary practices of commemorative composition that resituate elements of the historical archive, and so turn sonic rubble into ruin. Using Mary Kouyoumdjian's 2014 composition *Bombs of Beirut* as an example, I consider how the composer uses witness testimony and archival recordings of wartime sounds from the Lebanese Civil War (1975–90) to first construct, and then destroy, a version of the city of Beirut. In so doing, she engages in what Marianne Hirsch would call a 'postmemorial act' that reconfigures the relationships between physical, mental, and social spaces. The resulting palimpsest of meanings not only offers an important contemplative space for approaching the past but also suggests intriguing futures for the musical art of the ruin.

What do ruins sound like? If you were an American radio listener during late 1940 and 1941, you might have turned on your set one evening to hear Columbia Broadcasting System journalist Edward R. Murrow intone 'This . . . is London' before describing the sights and sounds of a blacked-out London during the Blitz. These *London After Dark* programmes were among the earliest live, on-location radio broadcasts. Part of their communicative power was the very real sense of urgency imparted by Murrow's surroundings, whether the air raid siren blaring in Trafalgar Square during his first broadcast on 24 August 1940, or the sound of anti-aircraft guns booming ('like someone kicking a tub') and bombs

49 For a fuller account, see Wlodarski, *George Rochberg*, 155–61.

50 Rochberg, letter to Anhalt, 21 May 1998, in *Eagle Minds*, 341.

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