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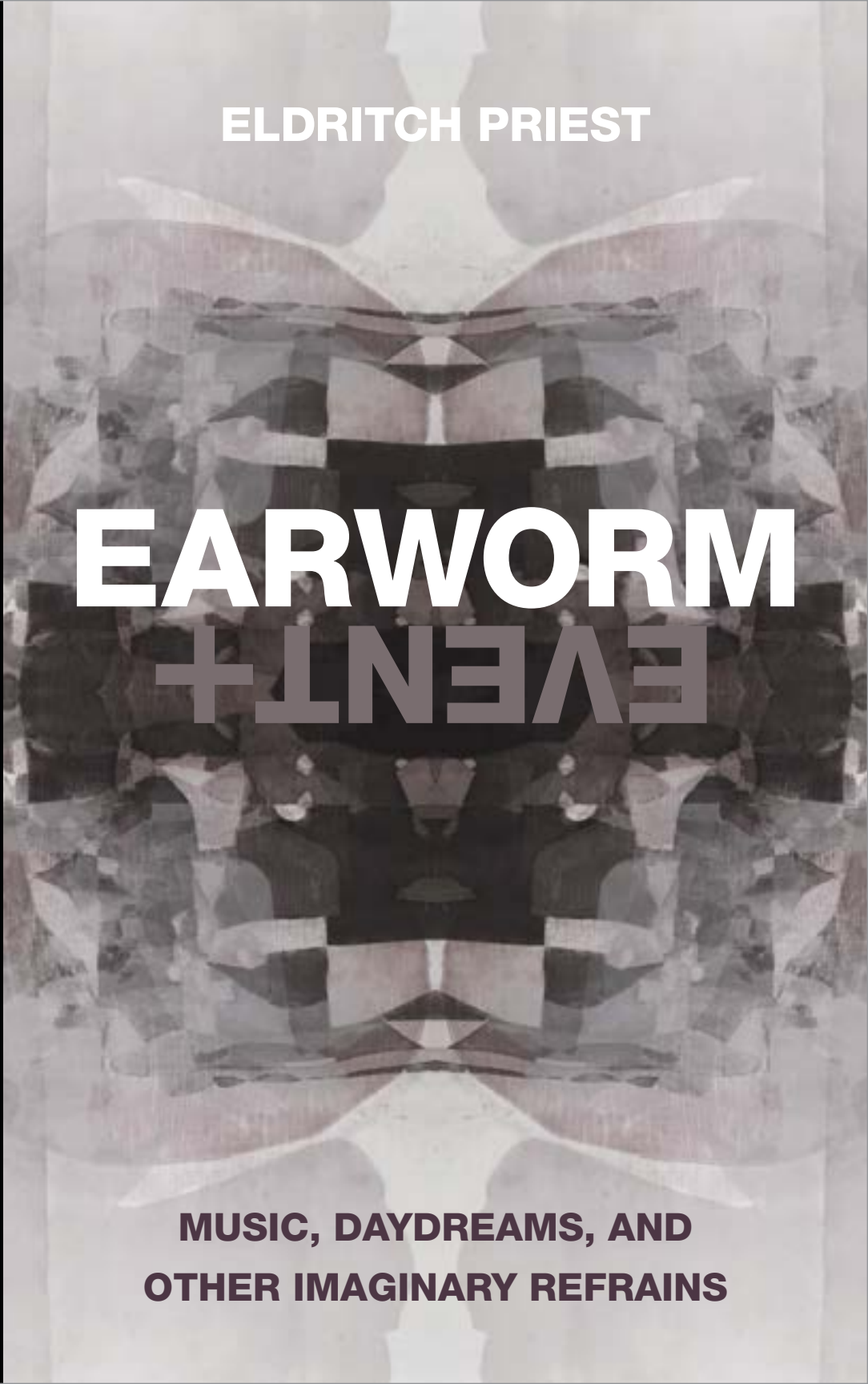

EARWORM

EVENT+

MUSIC, DAYDREAMS, AND OTHER IMAGINARY REFRAINS


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THOUGHT IN THE ACT

A series edited by Brian Massumi and Erin Manning

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Duke University Press · Durham and London · 2022

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Project editor: Lisa Lawley
Designed by Matthew Tauch
Typeset in Garamond Premier Pro by Copperline Book Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Priest, Eldritch, author.
Title: Earworm and event : music, daydreams, and other imaginary refrains / Eldritch Priest.
Other titles: Thought in the act.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2022. | Series: Thought in the act | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021022847 (print)
LCCN 2021022848 (ebook)
ISBN 9781478015369 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781478017981 (paperback)
ISBN 9781478022596 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Music—Philosophy and aesthetics. | Music—Psychological aspects. | Upstream color (Motion picture) | BISAC: MUSIC / Essays | ART / Criticism & Theory
Classification: LCC ML3800 .P84 2022 (print) | LCC ML3800 (ebook) | DDC 780.1—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021022847
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021022848

Cover art: Eric Blum, *Pattern N° 077*, 2013. Archival pigment print. 30 × 30 in. Courtesy of the artist and RULE Gallery.

FOR THE BIRDS + TO THE MIMES

Contents

Acknowledgments

I worked on this book for the better part of a decade, hemming and hawing about its need to be written and wondering, if were to be written, whether I'd be the one to do it. That you have the book in your hands and that my name appears on it is because I was privileged to share its content, in a variety of guises, with friends and colleagues along the way who both encouraged the project and enriched my thinking about what I think it means to think with earworms, daydreams, and other imaginary refrains. A sincere thank-you goes, then, to Sanem Güvenç, Saygin Salgirli, T'ai Smith, Margret Grebowicz, Deborah Kapchan, Carla Nappi, the anonymous readers of the manuscript, and especially Claudette Lauzon, all of whom took the time to be the kind of intellectual companions we dream of having when sailing uncertain waters. Thanks go as well to Jonathan Adjeman for his incisive copyediting, and to Josh Rutner for the incredible indexes. I would also like to thank Brian Massumi and Erin Manning for inviting me to publish this work in their wonderful series, and Ken Wissoker, as well as Ryan Kendall along with the design team at Duke University Press, for supporting and helping me bring this project to light. The other members of The Occulture—David Cecchetto, Marc Couroux, Ted Hiebert, Rebekah Sheldon—and everyone who attended Tuning Speculation over the years should be thanked as well, for it is with them that I was able to conjure the context that sustained the experimental thrust of this project. I want to express my gratitude to Jack Rachman, Maureen Whittal, and Kyle Burns for helping me learn to think differently about thinking. And thanks to Rocket for keeping me on my toes, and for my favorite French coat.

An earlier version of "Felt as Thought" was previously published in *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience*, edited by Marie

Thompson and Ian Biddle (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 45–63. "Earworms, Daydreams, and the Fate of Useless Thinking" has been expanded from a version published as "Earworms, Daydreams and Cognitive Capitalism," *Theory, Culture and Society* 35, no. 1 (2018): 141–62.

This work was supported in part by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Simon Fraser University.

Introduction

EARWORM

Unbidden, uninvited, and always smack in the middle of things. Starting again and again without ending, which is to say, without clearly beginning, I hear a song, though less a song than scraps of a song, and these scraps are not really *heard* so much as they are *felt*, like an idea, or, better, like a suspicion or an inkling, an abstract feeling that cleaves to the spins and stalls of the virtual commotion called "thinking." What I'm describing is what it's like to have a song "stuck in your head," to have an earworm. There are other, punnier terms for this experience, like "humbug," "aneurhythm," "repetinnitis," "humsickness." And then there are the descriptive expressions such as "involuntary musical imagery" and "intrusive song phenomenon" favored by psychologists and cognitive neuroscientists. But like the thing it describes, "earworm," a literal translation from the German *Ohrwurm*, seems to have stuck.

This phenomenon, however, isn't new, nor is it rare. Accounts of earworms appear *avant la lettre* in literature before the twentieth century. Edgar Allan Poe, for instance, writes of the experience in his short story of 1845, "The Imp of the Perverse," in which his unnamed narrator says, "I could scarcely get rid of it for an instant. It is quite a common thing to be thus annoyed with the ringing in our ears, or rather in our memories, of the burthen of some ordinary song, or some unimpressive snatches from an opera" (3). And before Poe, a passing note on music's propensity to lodge itself in the mind is made by Immanuel

Kant in his 1790 *Critique of Judgment*. Contrasting musical and visual arts, he asserts that where the latter produce lasting impressions that sustain and entertain the imagination, the former produce only fleeting impressions that "are extinguished entirely or, *if the imagination involuntarily repeats them*, they are more likely to be irksome to us than agreeable" (1987, 200; my emphasis).

While these fleeting descriptions of music's imaginary repetition are uncommon (at least in English sources), the experience, is not. Anecdotally, this is simple to verify. Ask the next few people you meet what song is playing in their head, and you'll likely receive an answer rather than a blank stare. But several recent empirical studies have also confirmed this and suggest that the prevalence of earworms can be accounted for owing to factors such as recency of exposure to a music source and cortical thickness.[1]

These studies are interesting in their own right, but they are also notable for the fact that they represent a field of research into earworms that has developed only in the past twenty years or so. The vast majority of this scholarship, however, falls into research conducted in cognitive sciences and experimental psychology. While this gives earworms an empirical purchase beyond the shared complaints about how this or that tune has been plaguing one for days on end, the earworm has largely been treated as a pathology, and efforts are made to either determine the memory systems and brain networks implicated in their production and maintenance or make statistical correlations between variables such as the frequency of the event and the degree of musical training the subject/sufferer has. But this study, the one you have in your hands now, is decidedly philosophical and speculative in orientation, meaning that it takes the earworm as a point of entry into thinking about broader theoretical concerns regarding the nature of thought and perception today.

This book treats the earworm as an event that offers insight into not only how human brains process musical experiences but how lived abstractions and the imagination play key roles in the composition and expression of our contemporary social assemblages and more-than-human milieus. I propose, then, to consider earworms in two ways. First, I situate the earworm as a by-product of human-technology couplings that indexes the way techniques of listening and habits of thought are implicated in and transformed by a world of automated hyperattention. We are all acutely aware of how our world is saturated with electronic media. But this saturation is not without its tics. As

Elizabeth Margulis notes, the ubiquity of audio technologies brings forth "a degree and pervasiveness of repetition that was previously unheard of" (2013, 77), such that we are primed to contract the type of refrains that nurture earworms. It is partly this pervasiveness that gives earworms their purported catchiness. But it is also this pervasiveness that, I suggest, gives audition and thinking a peculiar functional autonomy that both aids and confounds contemporary capitalism's effort to draw value from involuntary nervous activities. Second, I treat the earworm as a conceit or a performative model expressive of how our broader powers of abstraction can be made to bend in on themselves and assimilate other imaginary refrains to a recursive logic. In this respect, I approach the idea of a song stuck in one's head from a point of view that takes it not as a cognitive anomaly but as a trope—an abstract lure for thinking, even—that promotes a recursive form of thought and simulates the schizoid style of being a contemporary subject of infinite distraction. Thus, in the *Earworm* side, I take up earworms as a technical affair, while the *Event* side engages with the phenomenon figuratively and (at times) ironically.

The tête-bêche binding reflects this organization and can itself be taken as a device that intensifies these two approaches. Therefore, the (mostly) straightforward scholarly approach of this side of the book, whose chapters are organized around particular themes, expresses a methodological contrast to the (mostly) experimental episodes of the flip side. Furthermore, the arrangement of the book produces a type of theory in action, to the extent that together the two sides perform a schizo-analytical act that honors the earworm, and thinking more generally, as a process characterized by flows and breaks. The binding can be thought, then, to carry out at the level of form a gesture similar to that which composes an earworm's intrusive refrain. In other words, the break-flow introduced by the binding scheme is continuous with the compositional logic of the earworm that runs throughout both sides of this book.

Ultimately, this means that you can start here or there. However, if you start here, you might want to take note of a little phrase—"felt as thought"—that appears again and again. This phrase is borrowed from Susanne Langer, who devised it as a way to reconceptualize the notion that organic processes somehow convert their goings-on into sentient experience. In her words, "If, instead of 'converted into thought,' we say, 'felt as thought,' the investigation of mental function is shifted

from the realm of mysterious transubstantiation to that of physiological processes" (1962, 18). This means that, for Langer, sentience can be explained as "a phase of vital process itself, a strictly intraorganic phase" wherein an organism "feels its own actions" (17). This also means that feeling "in the broad sense of whatever is felt in any way, as sensory stimulus or inward tension, pain, emotion or intent, is the mark of mentality" (1967, 4). Thus, what is felt is thought.[2]

In this book I use the expression a little differently than Langer does, deploying it instead to bring attention to the way in which processes of abstraction and cognition are continuous with processes of feeling. Although I follow Langer's reasoning, I also allow the phrase to become a refrain, and as such I make it function as more than a shorthand for how vital processes feel their own activities. As a refrain the phrase encourages "interactions between elements devoid of so-called natural affinity" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 349) such that domains as disparate as music, daydreaming, animal mentality, and imaginary technics come in this work to occupy and transform each other's territory.

A NOTE ON METHOD

In March 2020 a study was published that examined the cultural evolution of song variants in white-throated sparrows (see Otter et al. 2020). In this study it was found that a particular variant—a doublet-ending song—that was heard first in western Canada has been taken up by male sparrows across the continent to replace the original song that ends with a triplet. Using geotracking devices and examining field recordings made over two decades across North America, researchers propose that the rapid spread and nearly wholesale adoption of this otherwise-rare regional variant is due to a mechanism linked to a species preference favoring the introduction of novelty into the repertoire. The precise nature of this mechanism is still hypothetical and, as might be expected given that this research was conducted by biologists, largely assumes that this preference for novelty is in service to biological needs—that is, for attracting mates. But what if the spread of this doublet-terminating tune is not merely a biological matter? What if this song is just catchier? What if these sparrows are all singing "tweet-tweeee twee t-twee t-twee t-twee t-twee" because they have an earworm? It might indeed just be the case that the tune catches on because there is some biological reward to novelty—successful procreation—

and it may be entirely prudent to pursue such a hypothesis given that bird song is indisputably tied to behavioral functions in a way that a catchy tune for us is not. But it might also be the case that asking if birds get earworms opens thought up to other paths that take us on a very different adventure.

The aim of this side of the book is to consider that adventure, not exactly from a bird's-ear view (that's for the flip side), but from a position that draws from thinking about earworms a line of questioning that helps us consider a number of other issues, such as what it means for something to be felt as thought, for thinking to be a form of labor, and for a sense of self to be distributed among humans, worms, pigs, and flowers.

The first chapter builds on Susanne Langer's concept of semblance and draws from the model of feeling that she develops in her later work on the biological origins of mind, to develop a notion of sonic abstraction that sees the imagination as a speculative organ in which material powers and conceptual force converge as mood to impinge on our organism's affectivity. In particular, I ask what abstraction means in relation to the brand of virtuality that belongs to music by extrapolating from the latter's traditional meaning a concept of abstraction that resembles pure potentiality. Like Langer's in her pivotal *Philosophy in a New Key* (1942), the arguments I make about thought and abstraction follow from an analysis of musical experience that can be generalized to the wider field of perception and thought—aesthetic or otherwise. However, I reach beyond Langer's conclusion that art's semblances are cognitive tools for developing our ability to "make form expressive for us wherever we confront it" (1967, 87). Instead, I make the arguably more radical claim that under certain circumstances, such as those staged by John Cage's *4′33″*, wherein percepts and concepts fuse without becoming confused, sound is felt as thought more than it is listened to and so approaches the condition of a daydream.

Earworms are targeted more directly in the second chapter, where they are treated as an exceptionally thoughtful kind of feeling, one that realizes a tendency inherent in musical technics to be, as Brian Massumi says of every technique of existence, as "absolutely felt as it can experienceably be" (2011, 151). Although the cognitive neurosciences

are currently conducting research to determine the brain networks that are implicated in the production of earworms, in this chapter I address what I see as the technical nature of these abstract parasites. Intensified by the accelerating industrialized exteriorization of the mind (Stiegler 2010a, 9) that redoubles music's technique of existence, I suggest that a mutant form of listening has developed that gives music a fatal tendency to be felt as thought more than listened to. Drawing on a number of thinkers such as Bernard Stiegler, Paolo Virno, Vilém Flusser, and Jean Baudrillard, I argue that to the extent that musical abstractions are felt as thought, they are easily channeled into circuits of continuous nascent attention where they come to function, on the one hand, as a type of virtuosic labor but also, on the other, as a strange affirmation of the feeling of thinking, or, as I suggest, the expression of our onto-power.

As already noted, the earworm is an event whose comings and goings can be helpful for thinking about social assemblages. But it can also be helpful for thinking about imaginary ones and more-than-human rhythmic processes. By transposing the earworm's refrain into the fictional life cycle of a mesmeric parasite, chapter 3 turns to a pataphysical discussion of discontinuity and repetition as seen through the lens of a single film that makes of humans, pigs, worms, and flowers an elaborately lived abstraction. The film, *Upstream Color* (2013), by the American filmmaker Shane Carruth, is an impressionistic and nonlinear existential drama that sees various actors—human and nonhuman—struggling to overcome an inexplicable sense of loss that at the same time brings each of them either literally, metaphorically, or preternaturally together. Because the work is an experimental film that relies largely on music and sound design as much as editing techniques to present a vision of a sutured life, it doesn't lend itself readily to *any* kind of exegesis. In this respect, I explore the film's primary refrain of dis/continuity dis/continuously by composing a textual form that takes after Theodor Adorno's concept of the essay, a form that "constructs a complex of concepts interconnected in the same way it imagines them to be interconnected in the object" (1993, 23). The result is a text that in its performance rehearses the way experiential incoherence is itself, like the worm refrain found in the film, felt abstractly as a bizarre form of connection. Configured as such, the book comes to an end in a way that makes thought felt in the act of its speculative share, that starts again and again without ending, which is to say, without clearly beginning.

Notes

INTRODUCTION: EARWORM

1 See Bailes (2006, 2007); Beaman and Williams (2010); Farrugia et al. (2015); and Liikkanen (2011).

2 Although once extremely popular and highly influential, Langer's work has largely fallen out of favor. In one respect, this is owing to changes that took place within Anglo-American philosophy during the second half of the twentieth century that saw in the so-called linguistic turn a move away from the kind of speculative semio-bio-philosophy that Langer practiced and a move toward addressing the internal epistemological problems of philosophy. In another respect, the empirical studies on which she based so much of her philosophical anthropology of mind have changed in the decades following her death, which, although it doesn't entirely undermine her truly remarkable contribution to the field, does soften the farsightedness of her project. And in yet another respect, the neglect of this exceptionally lucid and original thinker is perhaps due to a rejection of what is taken as the overly formalist convictions of her aesthetic theory and the philosophical commitment she makes to the symbolic transformation of experience as a peerless human faculty. While it's true that, for her, art's import lies in its formal relations and that organic processes arise from a dynamic matrix of spatiotemporal processes—she calls these "acts"—that follow a form of impulse, acceleration, climax, and cadence, her formalism never excludes the role that the social and cultural play in philosophy's mission to interpret the conditions of interpretation. In fact, as Langer sees it, the abstraction of form is basic to all organic processes and can be understood to scale up from the simple cyclic act-event to symbolic processes that find expression in ritual behavior and myth and, finally, in the forms of art and the ideas of science. Her formalism is, then, not a reductive gambit but a heuristic that finds continuity between material forces and conceptual powers as well as variation in self-maintaining and self-reproducing systems.

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Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Project editor: Lisa Lawley
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Typeset in Garamond Premier Pro by Copperline Book Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Priest, Eldritch, author.
Title: Earworm and event : music, daydreams, and other imaginary refrains / Eldritch Priest.
Other titles: Thought in the act.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2022. | Series: Thought in the act | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021022847 (print)
LCCN 2021022848 (ebook)
ISBN 9781478015369 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781478017981 (paperback)
ISBN 9781478022596 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Music—Philosophy and aesthetics. | Music—Psychological aspects. | Upstream color (Motion picture) | BISAC: MUSIC / Essays | ART / Criticism & Theory
Classification: LCC ML3800 .P84 2022 (print) | LCC ML3800 (ebook) | DDC 780.1—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021022847
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021022848

Cover art: Eric Blum, *Pattern N° 076-3*, 2012. Archival pigment print. 30 × 30 in. Courtesy of the artist and RULE Gallery.

FOR THE BIRDS + TO THE MIMES

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Introduction

EVENT

Unbidden, uninvited, and always smack in the middle of things. Starting again and again without ending, without concluding, which is to say, without clearly beginning or commencing, I hear a song, though it's less a song than scraps of a song that are not really *heard* so much as they are *thought*, like an idea, or, better, like a daydream that winds in and out of the spins and stalls of that abstract commotion called "thinking." What I'm describing is what it's like to have a song stuck in my head, to have an earworm. It's not so unusual for me. I almost always have one of these parasites spinning around, competing for my attention. Sometimes they loop for days, but mostly they linger only as long it takes until they're replaced by another catchy louse that I pick up from the background music overheard in a coffee shop, from a spoken phrase that reminds me of a passage of a familiar tune, or from my daughter absentmindedly singing along to her own hangers-on. Often they change for no reason that I can put my finger on. It seems, then, that earworms are nothing if not opportunistic.

Yet even if opportunistic, they are not predictable. Certain factors appear to favor their occurrence—formal and situational factors such as recency and tempo are thought to play a role, as is one's level of musical training and/or interest as well as cortical thickness in brain regions relevant to auditory processing.[1] I've also suggested that our musical

technics and audio technologies establish conditions that exploit our powers of abstraction and thereby set the stage for the proliferation of earworms.[2] All of this just makes earworms seem more like the weather than a proper thought. But maybe there's something to be said about the earworm's weather-esqueness that's more interesting and important than its etiology or even its phenomenology. Maybe the way an earworm trends is worth considering because its chaotic unfolding says something about how thought might behave when it's taking place not under but to the side of conscious awareness. Perhaps, then, like a weather pattern, an earworm's event is something to track rather than define. And because its event moves across all manner of psychic terrain—an earworm carries on whether you are reckoning, daydreaming, strategizing, or problem-solving—it might be more illuminating to contemplate the ways in which it entangles itself with other events. To do this, however, requires an approach that takes seriously an event's sensitive dependence on initial conditions. In other words, the kind of thinking about the kind of thinking that I want to do is a thinking that takes its cue from the fact that even though it starts somewhere, it can't already know how it will go.

In some ways, this is to say that the earworm is my starting point for a series of thought experiments. But the thought experiments that I have in mind are not like the thought experiments familiar to analytical philosophers that help guide (or, as Daniel Dennett [2014] suggests, deflect) thinking through a set of hypotheses using subjunctive expressions to articulate a conclusion whose status is necessarily counterfactual. Instead, my thought experiments resemble those that Steven Shaviro attributes to science fiction, experiments that are not so much interested in the truth conditions of this or that issue as they are in imagining "*what it would be like* if they were true" (2016, 9). For Shaviro, science fiction "*embodies* . . . issues in characters and narratives" that make its aims "pragmatic and exploratory." But where science fiction's methods are "emotional and situational" (9), mine are paralogical and expressive. This means that the fabulations I concoct about earworms follow a dreamlike logic that draws out certain lyrical and rhythmic aspects of repetition and obsession. Simply put, my experiments, while also embodied and interested in *what it is like*, are driven less by "speculative extrapolation" (9) than by oneiric transformation.

In this side of the book, through a series of thought experiments, or what I'll simply call "reveries," I explore the earworm's event by asking

questions that, when considered oneirically, can be understood to address what might be called "the earworm unconscious." For the most part, my method seeks productive and/or imaginative distortions between multiple focal points rather than bootless explications of a unified phenomenon. This means that instead of supposing that the earworm's dream-life matters because it discloses something otherwise unsayable about it, I take the life oneiric to be a transversal technique for assigning significance to the world polyphonically. Hence, I play fast and loose with concepts and writing styles drawn contrapuntally and without pretense to mastery from a variety of sources including animal studies, process philosophy, stand-up comedy, philosophy of language, stream of consciousness, and neuroscience to perplex certain of the metaphysical distractions of recent sound studies as well as to lighten up the unduly sober remit of the cognitive sciences that overlook just how funny earworms are.[3]

Although I'm not entirely opposed to metaphysical distractions, nor is my take on the earworm entirely free from its own such diversions, one of the primary aims of this work, especially on this side of the book, is a writerly aim. That is, what motivates this study is an abiding interest in the way thinking takes place *in the act of writing*. For me, writing is not about transcribing the ideas that I have already thought. It's not first and foremost a medium for the *conveyance* of ideas but rather, as Eric Hayot suggests, "a medium for research and discovery," such that writing should not simply "involve saying things you already understand and know, but instead let you think new things" (2014, 1). And this is precisely what I endeavor to do here, with the earworm as my dreaming companion—to think thoughts that come unbidden, uninvited, and always smack in the middle of things, starting again and again without ending, without concluding, without clearly beginning or commencing. In this regard, I make writing in circles a form of thought that, like an earworm, like a dreaming earworm, is best experienced in medias res. But this approach also means that my thoughts have a way of getting away from me. These vermicular refrains go where they want to go, which is to say that my writing often wanders into territories where symbols and metaphors begin to function factually and literally. In other words, the ideas created by this writing do more than explain or elucidate—they modulate thinking to bring it into a new key, a key where it makes perfect sense that mimes are truthful liars, that melodies are heard backward, and that language is a virus. The key to

this key, then, is not simply understanding what's written but spiraling along with it.

In the first reverie, "What It's Like to Think Like What It's Like to Think Like What It's Like," I ask if animals can get earworms. I ask this not because I think it matters whether they do or not but because the question opens a line of thought that treats thinking about thinking as a necessarily creative and poetic affair. By ventriloquizing J. M. Coetzee's alter ego, Elizabeth Costello, and hijacking Susanne Langer's theory of symbols, I suggest that it's possible to think our way into the being of another to the extent that what is thought is what Brian Massumi calls "the being of analogy" (2011, 123). For Massumi, the being of analogy describes a nonsensuous similarity that, through Langer, I read as a symbol whose "factor of significance is not logically discriminated, but is felt as a quality rather than recognized as a function" (Langer 1953, 32). Such a symbol is presentational rather than discursive and appeals to another semantic order in which the meaning of a symbol is understood through the relationships of its elements to a total structure. This kind of symbol lends itself to articulations that, as Langer argues, are expressive of the patterns of sentience, or, as she says, the inner life. But because the sense these symbols make can't be separated from the forms that express it, they are often not experienced as symbols but as the thing symbolized. In other words, a symbol of the inner life has a way of being (mis)taken as the being of inner life. And creatively mistaking the being of analogy is exactly what I exploit in order to develop the thought that we might be able to think what it's like to think that animals might get earworms.

Having set the ground rules for how we might ask if animals can get earworms, the second chapter, "Beating a Dead Beetle," tackles the question head-on. However, in proper oneiric form it pivots into a discussion on the seeming impossibility of answering such a question, only to find itself confronted not with a worm but with a beetle in a box. Drawing on Ludwig Wittgenstein's famous thought experiment, which challenges the position that the inner life can have a private presentation, I suggest that asking whether animals can get earworms is a way of playing a game with language. As Wittgenstein (who goes simply by "W" in the chapter) notes, speaking about interior experience is like telling others that you have a beetle in a box without ever being able to show this bug to anyone. This, W insists, does not negate private experiences but makes anything we might say about them, even to

ourselves, reliant on a shared way of using language. W calls this sharing of language use a game and suggests that its rules of play are not only highly contextual but radically pragmatic. Language use is so pragmatic, in fact, that by turning inward upon itself, it effectively takes leave of the means by which it is able to convey meaning. From W's perspective, this leaves the kind of talking that philosophy gets up to particularly hamstrung. However, from my perspective, this doesn't leave philosophy hamstrung so much as it shows it to be a very peculiar language game, a game whose rules encourage a type of play that requires that its rules be continually made and remade *for the sheer sake of doing so*. Thus, where W might say that philosophy uses language in a way that puts language out of play, I suggest that it not only keeps it in play but ups the ante. Taken this way, the question of whether animals get earworms should be understood as a move in a language game that doesn't play for truth but rather for the fun of making language dizzy, which, by the way, makes language say new things.

What a dizzied language can say is the thrust of the next two reveries. "Impractical Enthusiasm" is the title of the third chapter, which is concerned primarily with transposing the question about animals and earworms into a refrain that turns Langer's "act concept" into a literary strategy. In her philosophy of mind, Langer developed the notion of the act to conceptualize a "formal unit, or modulus, of living processes" (1967, 288). This unit, which encompasses events as disparate as a shiver down the spine, a sudden sense of disappointment, a sneeze, or a random thought, is characterized by a distinctive phase structure marked by incipience, acceleration, consummation, and cadence (288–89). For Langer, these acts arise from "a situation [which] is a constellation of other acts in progress" (281) to concatenate with one another and produce a matrix of interdependent hierarchies that give vital processes their characteristic forms and functions. The act as I take it up in this chapter is similarly conceived but also deployed as a conceit that directs, motivates, and elicits the conceptual moves that mark the text as a dynamically charged field. As such, the earworm's repetitive act becomes a trope of enthusiasm that finds expression in the gyrations and revolutions of a cockroach, a hedgehog, a mouse, a cat, and a gorilla. Mimes, too, make an appearance as event-artists just before I end with a telling of the further adventures of Gregor Samsa, who learns that his metamorphosis into a bug was only one part of a spiraling series of further transformations.

The fourth reverie, "Ex Post Facto ex Ante," is something of a send-up of Wittgenstein's offhanded remark that a philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes (quoted in Malcolm 2001, 27–28). Although not all of this chapter is made of jokes (nor is it entirely philosophical), it borrows the rhythms and gestures of jokes to put into play thought's propensity to split itself into multiple series. Thus, rather than advancing an argument, there is expression, the expression of a non/sense that, in Deleuzean terms, "resonates across all of [thought's] disjuncts" (Deleuze 1990, 176). After an opening wisecrack that demonstrates an initial ramification of sense, the chapter rapidly wends its way through a daydream, talk of rumors, the psychoanalysis of fire, a musing on frisson, the abstraction of waves, the logic of having a song stuck in your head, and the perfidy of melody to conclude that everything is in the setup. And, in a way, this daydream is itself a setup for the next reverie, which has been more imagined than written.

The fifth chapter, "Do Earworms Have Daydreams?" takes the experiments of the previous reveries further by presenting itself explicitly as a reverie on reveries. Borrowing this conceit from Gaston Bachelard, I think about—and think by—daydreaming in order to say something about both its recently acquired reputation as a cognitive resource for the labor of the self and its emerging pathological profile as a new form of obsession. I do this for two reasons: One, the new daydream imaginary very literally puts reverie to work composing and maintaining a sense of self, and I want to suggest instead that daydreaming has a more fundamental role in bringing the imagination of material to lyrical expression. Two, as Bachelard argues, the imagery of dreams "can only be studied through the image, by dreaming images as they gather in reverie" (1969, 53). In other words, reveries are not explained but expressed, and their expression takes the form of more imagery. Thus, in multiplying the imagery of daydreams, I simulate the drifts and divagations of a wandering mind in a way that mimics its compulsive condition, a condition also known as "maladaptive daydreaming."[4] I suggest that maladaptive daydreaming, although not yet officially recognized as a mental disorder, is poised to replace ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) as our new favorite inner affliction, for the more continuous distraction becomes, the more seductive daydreaming is. The kind of reverie on reverie that I have in mind, then, dreams of music that is unplayingly played, of the way distraction resembles attention, of the way some thoughts don't take account of their own appear-

ance, of whether I would want my ideas if someone else had them, and of the possibility that an excessive use of metaphor might risk turning language into a virus that can be cured only by singing. In this way, I want to valorize thought in the act of taking its expressive share, a share that risks capture by an apparatus of distraction that in multiplying the images of an intensive surreality starts every image over and over again, each time without ever really getting anywhere, which is to say, without clearly ending, and so without clearly beginning or commencing.

Notes

INTRODUCTION: EVENT

1 On musical disposition, see Beaman and Williams (2010). On musical features and recency effects, see Jakubowski et al. (2017). On cortical thickness, see Farrugia et al. (2015).
2 See *Earworm*, the flip side of this book.
3 See Brian Kane's (2015) insightful and critical essay that redescribes the so-called ontological turn in sound studies as a form of niche scholarship that generalizes from local metaphysical commitments a broader onto-aesthetic perspective that claims to address "universals concerning the nature of sound, the body, and media" (3).
4 See Somer (2002) as well as Freeman, Soltanifar, and Baer (2010); and Robinson, et al. (2014).

CHAPTER 1. WHAT IT'S LIKE TO THINK LIKE WHAT IT'S LIKE TO THINK LIKE WHAT IT'S LIKE

1 See chapter 2 of *Earworm*.
2 There are actually a number of turkey circles that can be viewed online, but here's the link to the one that I'm thinking about: Eric Campbell, "Turkeys Circle a Dead Cat," video, 0:24, YouTube, March 3, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbnfCsAI0ps.
3 More accurately, Langer (1972, 45–102) would say that animals are not motivated by a series of conceptually framed purposes and means as much as they are motivated by a desire to consummate the overall tension of acts that arise intraorganically from situation to situation.
4 I want to be clear that I am sensitive to the fact that, as Derrida (2008) argues, there is no such thing as "animal," but only "giraffe," "wasp," "worm" . . . "virus," etcetera. (And of course within each of those categories there are species of giraffe, wasp, worm, and then individuals, and so on.) Homo sapiens are animals, too, and their appellation "human" is as much a construct as "animal."