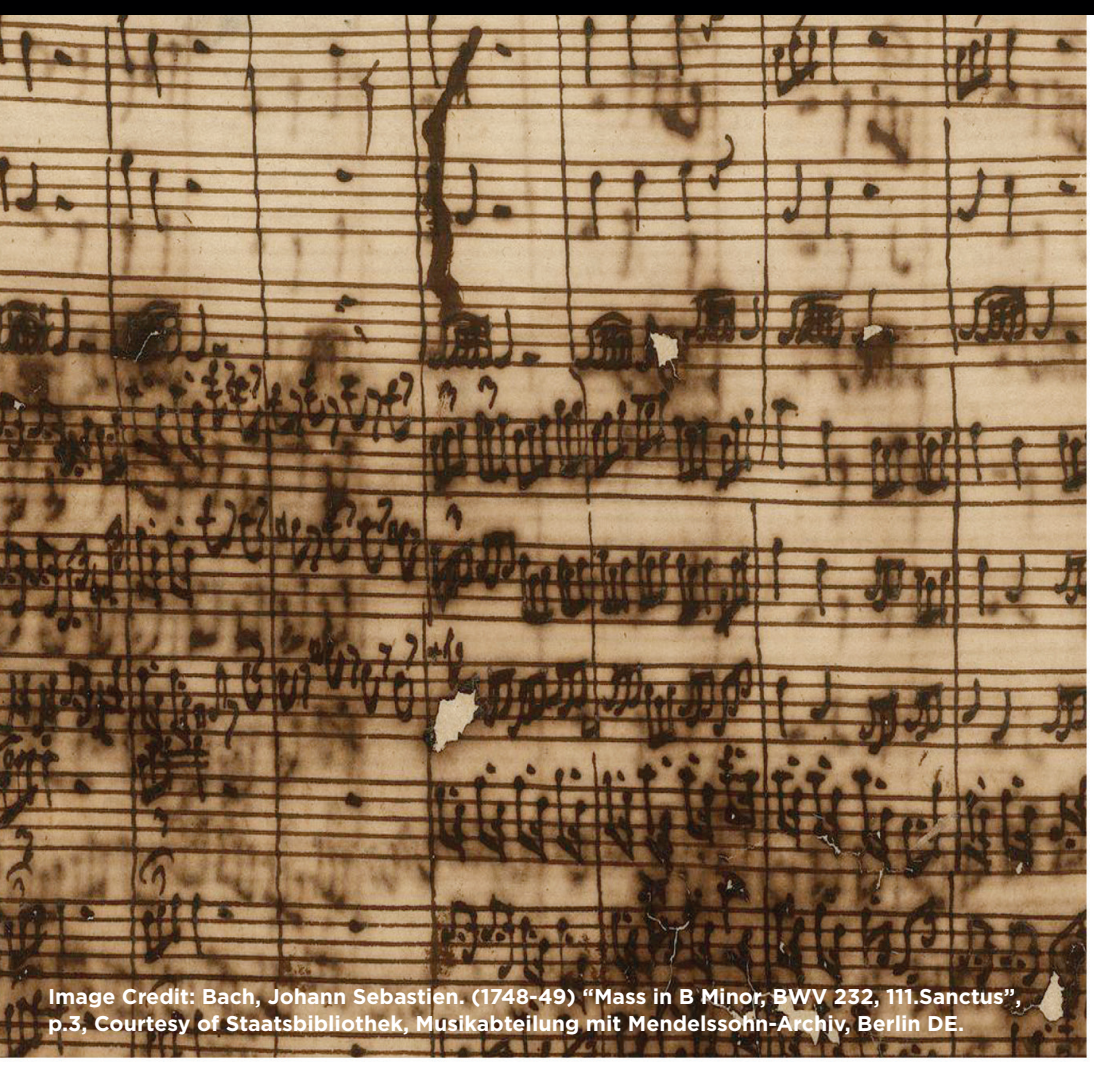

Image Credit: Bach, Johann Sebastien. (1748-49) "Mass in B Minor, BWV 232, 111.Sanctus", p.3, Courtesy of Staatsbibliothek, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv, Berlin DE.

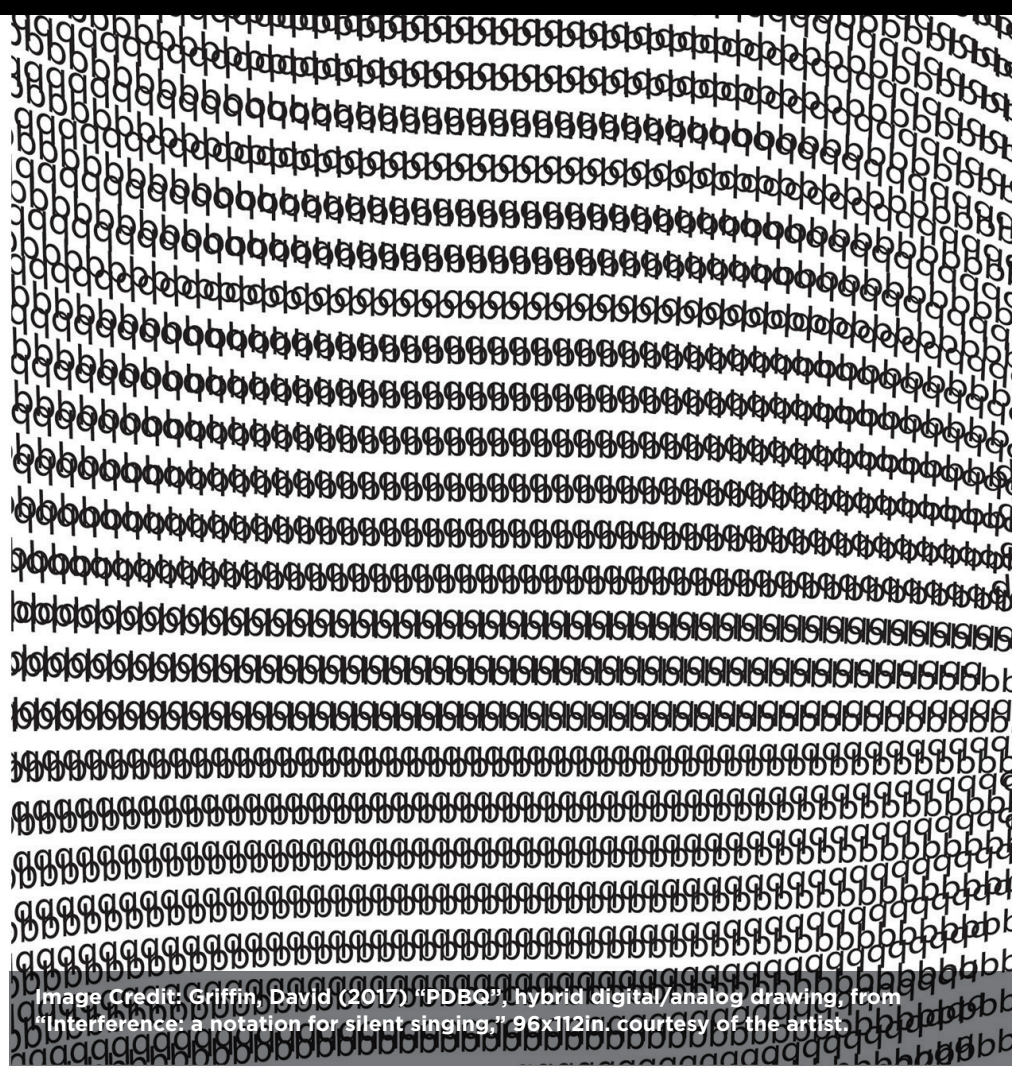

Image Credit: Griffin, David (2017) "PDBQ", hybrid digital/analog drawing, from "Interference: a notation for silent singing," 96x112in. courtesy of the artist.

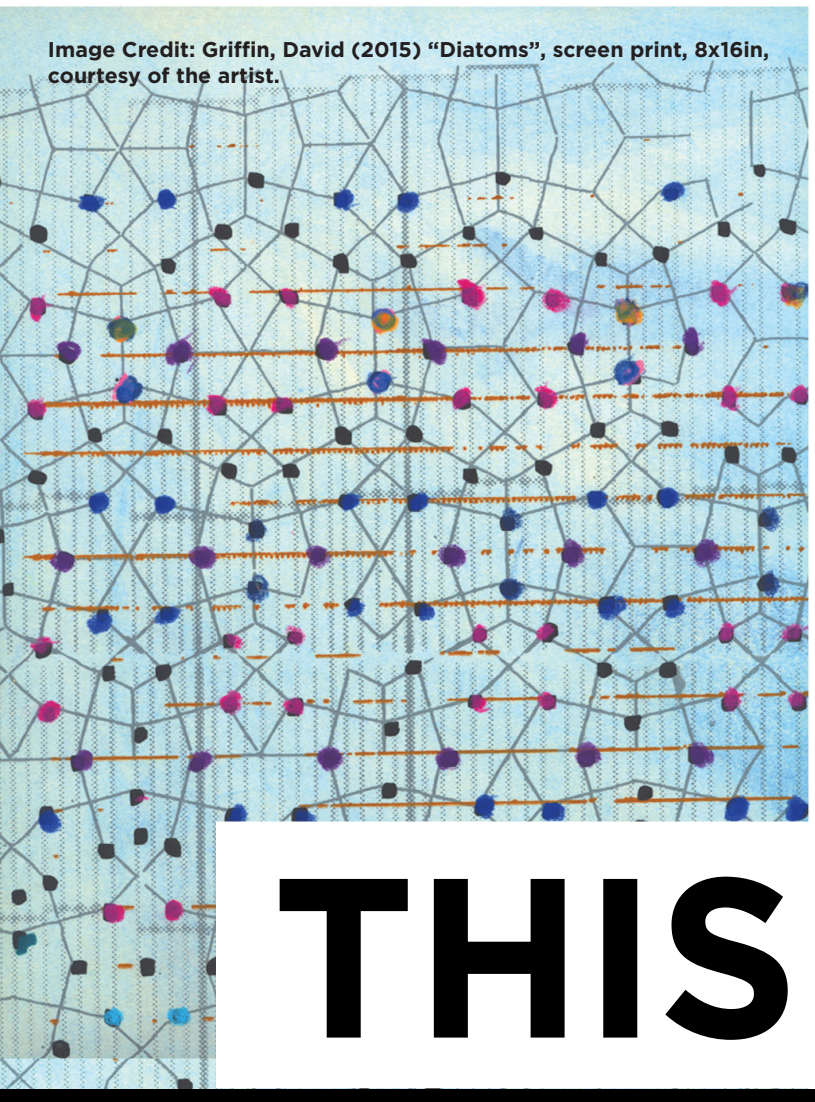

Image Credit: Griffin, David (2015) "Diatoms", screen print, 8x16in, courtesy of the artist.

Image Credit: Griffin, David (2018) "Widening Gyre", hybrid digital/analog drawing, 40x40in, courtesy of the artist.

THIS IS RESEARCH

Becoming Music: drawing space-time

David Griffin PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Art

A music notation is an almost-impossibly complicated bit of drawing. Calling it a map does not quite do the trick, even if the page is somehow map-like. Labelling it a diagram — typically a didactic visual/text — is off the mark as well. Moreover, the traditional 5-line staff notation, as an example with significant historical authority, is a richly developed system for reading and writing — for composition.

This mixed bag of structure and function makes the staff notation a persistently vital teaching tool, even in our vexing era of computational solutions to making music. In its hybrid display, a music notation gives its many user-communities a 2-dimensional mechanism for cross-modal analysis and annotation, and ultimately performance, in higher dimensions. How does a music drawing relate to other drawing systems? And how is it that we are enabled to fix and re-fix the multi-dimensional complexes of musical performance onto a page?

The article that lays out this research can be found in "Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice," Vol.3:2, November 2018, Intellect Press, London UK, ISSN 2057-0384 [Print]; ISSN 2057-0392 [Online])

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