It was characteristic of Prokofiev never to let anything he had written go to waste. Sooner or later he would either revise the whole composition or use some fragments in a new work. He firmly believed in this kind of “building” of the composition. Yet he was very critical of the material already written and particularly watchful, not to repeat himself. Certainly he never “borrowed” from other composers, and above all, he avoided the beaten path, always searching for something new.

Many years later, Aram Khachaturian showed Prokofiev his piano concerto. Prokofiev scanned it and said, “It is not easy to write a concerto – you must always invent something….. I would advise you to note down all your own discoveries, in the way you would like to execute your ideas, before the subject itself has come to full fruition in your mind. Later, from these “bricks” you will build the whole.”
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I recall one morning when Casals rehearsed Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll* – the “symphonic birthday greeting to his Cosima from her Richard”, written in commemoration of their son’s birth. After the opening bars had been played very beautifully, Casals stopped the orchestra, closed his eyes, and quietly clasped his hands together. For a long moment he became quite still, absorbed in contemplation. His transfigured expression reflected a oneness with the spirit from which this music is born: infinite devotion, profoundest love. Then, without a single word, he indicated that the orchestra should begin again. Aware or not, of how or why they had been moved, the musicians brought to their playing a more inward quality of feeling, drawn from a source of deep tenderness; and from this source the entire work sang as if shimmering from a golden mirror. Although Casals paused to rehearse points of detail, the continuity of feeling remained unbroken.

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In 1837 Schumann reviewed what he felt were “the two most important compositions of the day”: Meyerbeer’s opera *Les Huguenots*, and Mendelssohn’s oratorio *Saint Paul*. The comparison of the two composers was developed in the most vivid terms, and created a scandal: Meyerbeer’s work is common, perverse, unnatural, immoral, unmusical, while Mendelssohn’s has total musical mastery, a nobility of song, a marriage of words and music, and a perfectly formed style. Mendelssohn’s “road leads to happiness, [Meyerbeer’s] to evil.” This was Schumann’s final affirmation, “and I have never signed anything with such conviction as this,” he added. The violence of the contrast is particularly ironic today: no other composers of the early nineteenth century have lost as much of their former prestige as these two. In neither case is the fall from glory inexplicable; for both it is, at least in part, unmerited and unjust.
Placido Domingo cannot imagine himself retiring the way many opera stars do: by announcing a farewell tour and going from company to company, accepting tributes. “Rather,” he said, reflecting on his astonishingly long career during an interview in the tiny press office at the Metropolitan Opera, “I think it will be one evening, after a performance, to say, ‘That’s it.’” Mr. Domingo, 68, came close to doing that in January 2007 at the Met, at the end of the premiere run of Tan Dun’s opera “The First Emperor,” commissioned by the Met expressly for him. He was feeling well vocally, he said. But rehearsing and performing a demanding lead role in an unconventional new opera had taken enormous effort. “I was very tempted,” he said, “at the end of the last performance to walk on stage and say, ‘Ladies and gentlemen, that’s it for opera.’ But then I said to myself: ‘Why? If you are in good shape, and you are box office, and you sell out the house, you should continue.’”

U2 has entered the fourth decade of a career that began in 1978, when its members were teenage schoolmates in Dublin; they are now in their late 40s. And U2 may well be the last of the megabands: long-running, internationally recognized rockers whose every album, from “Boy” in 1980 to “How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb” in 2004, has sold millions of copies worldwide. In an era when CD sales have plummeted, radio stations favor hip-hop and teenpop, albums are fractured by MP3 players’ shuffle mode and the old idea of a rock mainstream seems more and more like a mirage, U2 still, unabashedly, wants to release a blockbuster. “How do you puncture pop consciousness with a tune anymore?” Bono said later over a pint of Guinness. “That’s actually your first job as a songwriter.”
Musicology is the scholarly study of music. The word is used in narrow, broad and intermediate senses. In the narrow sense, musicology is confined to the music history of Western culture. In the intermediate sense, it includes all relevant cultures and a range of musical forms, styles, genres and traditions. In the broad sense, it includes all musically relevant disciplines and all manifestations of music in all cultures.

In the broad definition, the parent disciplines of musicology include history; cultural studies and gender studies; philosophy, aesthetics and semiotics; ethnology and cultural anthropology; archeology and prehistory; psychology and sociology; physiology and neuroscience; acoustics and psychoacoustics; and computer/information sciences and mathematics. Musicology also has two central, practically oriented subdisciplines with no parent discipline: performance practice and research, and the theory, analysis and composition of music.

Today, historical musicology, ethnomusicology, and systematic musicology are approximately equal in size.