This is an extraordinary and challenging time for all of us, the Mozart Society of America included. Early this year, at MSA’s joint conference with the American Bach Society at Stanford University (see Michael Goetjen’s report in the last issue of the Newsletter), few of us suspected that this would be our last in-person meeting of the year. As various parts of the US and Canada started locking down in mid-March, we still hoped to be able to present our usual panel of speakers at the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center in New York City, and had sent out a Call for Proposals on this year’s theme, “Vienna, City of Music.” But before long, we heard that Lincoln Center had decided to cancel all scheduled public events through the end of summer. We still hope to be able to present a panel of papers for next year’s Festival.

In the meantime, we have prepared (in addition to this Newsletter) a stimulating and timely roundtable panel for our Business Meeting and Study Session at the joint meeting of the American Musicological Society (AMS) and Society for Music Theory (SMT) in November—originally set to happen in Minneapolis, but now moved online, across the weekends of November 7–8 and 14–15. Catherine Coppola (Hunter College/CUNY) will moderate five short presentations on the theme “Confronting Race and Gender in The Magic Flute,” by Micaela Baranello (University of Arkansas and Opera Fayetteville), Lily Kass (Temple University), Adeline Mueller (Mount Holyoke College), Kira Thurman (University of Michigan), and Jessica Waldoff (College of the Holy Cross). We don’t yet have a day or time (presumably in the evening) from the AMS, but we’ll announce that information as soon as we have it. The fact that our event will be presented online via Zoom (an app that our academic members know all too well!) means that more of our members than ever before will be able to attend and join in the discussion.

Also in the works for you (advancing through the editorial process) is Karl Böhmer’s study of the Cuvilliés-Theater in Munich, site of the 1781 premiere of Mozart’s Idomeneo. This richly illustrated booklet will be sent to MSA members, free of charge, as soon as it is published. If you enjoy receiving MSA special publications (such as the previous one in this series, Martin Nedbal’s study of the Estates Theater in Prague), you might consider making a donation to the Society’s Daniel Heartz Fund, proceeds from which are used primarily in support of MSA publications.

Finally, we are still on track to hold our next conference, “Mozart and Salzburg” (jointly with the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music, and hosted by the International Mozarteum Foundation), in the city of the composer’s birth. The conference will include a rich array of papers and other presentations, visits to both Mozart museums in Salzburg, and a day trip to Munich. We hope to see many of you there for what promises to be an unforgettable experience!

—Bruce Alan Brown
Announcements

MSA Elections

In the spring 2020 elections, MSA members reelected Samuel Breene as secretary and Alyson McLamore as treasurer. Three members were also named to the Board of Directors: Martin Nedbal (associate professor of musicology, University of Kansas), Janet Page (professor of musicology, University of Memphis), and Mary Robbins (The Joy of Mozart, www.JoyofMozart.com).

Membership Reminders

If you have not already renewed your membership for 2020–21, please do so. You can find the membership form on the MSA website, along with calls for papers and information on other Mozart topics. If your address has recently changed, please make sure to notify MSA Secretary Samuel Breene at sbreene@ric.edu. Thank you for your continuing support.

A Note from the Editors

This issue of the Newsletter will be the last for both me and Katharina Clausius. We pass it on to the very capable editorial team of John A. Rice (editor) and Beverly Wilcox (review editor). We are extremely grateful for the support and guidance of Paul Corneilson, Bruce Brown, Christopher Lynch, Janet Page, and all of the members of the Publications Committee. We have both truly enjoyed working on this publication and contributing to MSA.

—Emily Wuchner

CFP: MSA and SECM Joint Conference

The Mozart Society of America and the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music will host a joint conference in Salzburg from May 26 to 30, 2021, on the theme “Mozart and Salzburg.” This international conference will explore all aspects of Mozart and Salzburg, including Wolfgang’s early education and travel, especially to the nearby court at Munich; the music of Leopold Mozart, Michael Haydn, Giacomo Rusti, as well as the other singers and instrumentalists at the Salzburg court; traveling opera troupes, especially Emanuel Schikaneder’s residence in Salzburg in 1780; and finally the works that Mozart wrote for Salzburg: his chamber music and serenades, symphonies and concertos, masses and other church music, and operas. All relevant topics will be considered, though priority will be given to the theme of the conference.

Topics should be proposed in abstracts of up to 300 words and submitted to Paul Corneilson (pcorneilson@packhum.org) no later than October 1, 2020. Please submit two versions of the abstract, one with title and abstract only and one with your name, address, email, phone number, institutional affiliation or city, and AV requirements. Presentations are expected to fill thirty-minute slots and should be given in English. One need not be an MSA or SECM member to submit a proposal, but all speakers chosen must be members of one of the societies by the time the conference takes place. The Program Committee will review the proposals and select the speakers, and will announce the program at the American Musicological Society meeting in early November.

The conference will be hosted by the International Mozarteum Foundation and will include visits to the two Mozart museums and a day trip to Munich. The Program Committee and the Mozarteum will monitor the current pandemic, and if necessary will postpone the conference before mid-February 2021.
Mozart’s Receipt for Lucio Silla
Christopher J. Salmon

Mozart’s receipt for Lucio Silla, K. 135, previously unknown to scholars, has recently been acquired by an American collector, and is reported here for the first time. It is the only receipt for a Mozart opera known to survive. It confirms that Mozart received the “130 zecchini gigliati” fee stipulated in the March 4, 1771 contract (or scrittura) for the opera, which now resides in the Mozarteum. The receipt, signed by both Mozart and his father, is dated December 29, 1772, three days after the premiere of Lucio Silla at the Ducal Theater in Milan, and reads as follows:


I have received from Signor Ambrogio Galeazzi, cashier of the Theater, zecchini gigliati in the amount of one hundred and thirty, that is 130, which at a rate of 16 lire 5 soldi yields 2112 lire 10 for the entire balance of my agreed honorarium for having composed the music of the first opera seria presented during the current Carnival. And in faith &c. Milan / 29 Dec 1772 — / Lire 2112.10 — / Leopoldo Mozart / Amadeo Mozart

The text of the receipt was written on the first page of a small bifolium and is thus similar in format to the earlier scrittura. The inscribed page measures 16.3 cm x 21.3 cm and retains original deckle edges along the free right and lower margins. A tiny pinhole penetrating both leaves of the bifolium is found near the left margin between the vertical fold and the word “Gigliati.” Leopold and Wolfgang’s signatures on the receipt are consistent with other genuine examples of their italic signatures from the same period.

Mozart’s payment of 130 “zecchini gigliati” for Lucio Silla—expressed also in equivalent local currency as 2112.10 Lire—was a substantial sum, significantly more than the 100 gigliati he had received from the same theater for Mitridate, re di Ponto, K. 87, at the end of 1770. It can even be shown to exceed the respective 100-ducat fees Mozart would earn years later for composing Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384, Le nozze di Figaro, K. 492, and Così fan tutte, K. 588, since Austro-Hungarian imperial ducats and Italian zecchini each contained about 3.5g of fine gold and passed in commerce at similar value. Mitridate had recently enjoyed a successful run of performances at the Ducal Theater when the scrittura for Lucio Silla was drawn up, and it may be that the popularity of the earlier work prompted the generous new honorarium. Lucio Silla was the capstone to Mozart’s youthful travels in Italy and, with novel sophistication and emotional insight, foreshadowed works of his maturity.

I would like to thank Dexter Edge for numerous recommendations, which greatly improved this report. A more detailed discussion of the receipt will follow later this year on the site Mozart: New Documents, edited by Dexter Edge and David Black.

Christopher J. Salmon, MD is a retired thoracic radiologist. He currently serves on the Advisory Board of the Mozarteum and is writing a book on the lifetime printed editions of Mozart’s music.
**Remembering Daniel Heartz (1928–2019)**

Daniel Heartz made an indelible impact on all of our lives. Some knew him as a teacher and mentor who was generous with his time. He took care in editing dissertation drafts, graciously guided students on the path to their exams, and even—every once in a while—hosted impromptu singing sessions. Others knew him as a scholar. Many have pored over every word, absorbing countless insights that have shaped our understanding of Mozart and his world. And every one of us has benefited from his generosity to MSA. His major gift in 2015 established the Heartz fund to support publications and research on Mozart—including the very newsletter you hold in your hands. To honor Professor Heartz, we reached out to several MSA members who knew him well. What follows is a collection of their remembrances.

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**Daniel Heartz, Teacher, Scholar**

As one of the older generation of Daniel Heartz’s students, I felt blessed to have had in him not only a kindly yet rigorous mentor during my years at Berkeley (1969–73), but one who continued to support (and prod) my efforts for decades afterward. During the period of my dissertation research (1972–73), he maintained regular contact by letter, inevitably penned in his large hand. The vicarious thrill he expressed when I recounted discoveries regarding my topic—opera and ballet in Milan during the 1770s—spurred me to deal with it in greater breadth and depth than even he had envisioned. It was Dan’s idea that I take over the critical edition originally assigned to him of Mozart’s *Lucio Silla* which then prompted my forays into the archival studies surrounding the entire theatrical enterprise of which it was a part. The topic would lead to commissions for the burgeoning *New Grove Dictionary* of articles on associated singers and composers, and eventually on the choreographer Noverre—one that Dan also passed my way despite the long hiatus preparing these caused in my thesis writing. When finally I was able to turn over to him the completed dissertation text and music (1,150 pp.), he worked through it with the thoroughness that any of his doctoral students would recognize. The page bearing his signature and date, December 27, 1979, remains a treasured evocation of his unfailing zeal.

Dan was notably solicitous of his female former students, especially compared to what it seemed was often the situation met by others of the cohort to which my good friend and fellow Heartz advisee Marita McClymonds and I belonged. Long after we had our degrees, he was always on the lookout for opportunities for us. I will never forget the letter of recommendation he wrote for me in 1986 (and which he made it a point to let me see) indicating that before I received the PhD I had had, as a young mother then, many calls on my time, but that in the future he foresaw a brilliant career for me and proceeded to list some of my recent achievements. I could only admire him all the more for his candor and support.

As a teacher Dan was more than an inspirational example of commitment to his own students: his outreach extended much farther. To over two generations of scholars far outside the Berkeley confines he generously made himself available as a friendly advisor. Yet he was also careful about husbanding time for his own research. When asked to review books or articles, or manuscripts for possible publication—as happened a few times when I was music acquisitions editor at the University of Chicago Press—he would invariably demur. Either he replied “I am trying as hard to make X’s thesis as good as I can make it, as I once worked on your thesis,” or else he pointed to the research and writing he was engaged in, especially for his three massive Norton volumes on the eighteenth century. Dan’s long engagement in putting the icons of the period’s music into their proper historical setting among their peers began long before this, as he sought to reinscribe the era’s historiographical context, beginning publicly with his noted paper “Opera and the Periodization of 18th-Century Music” given at the 1967 International Musicological Society meeting in Ljubljana. To this ambitious goal he devoted much of his prolific writing, in prose graceful, elegant, and witty, yet introspective and with meticulous attention to data derived from years of studying and reconsidering the complexities of the era’s cultural networks. Daniel Heartz’s outlook was indeed as encyclopedic as that of his enlightenment forebears and a model for generations to come.

—Kathleen Kuzmick Hansell

**Bayreuth—Wien, 1981**

During the fall of 1981 I had a modest fellowship from the University of California, Berkeley, for dissertation research in European libraries and archives. My advisor, Daniel Heartz, had guided my choice of a topic—Gluck’s Viennese opéras-comiques—by asking me to translate various enticing texts from 1750s and ’60s Vienna, in my work as his research assistant. But his mentorship took on an added dimension thanks to his suggestion that I join him in Bayreuth, after
my first few stops in Europe, for the annual meeting of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, where he was to give a paper on his discovery that the first movement of Haydn’s Symphony no. 8, “Le Soir,” is based on the *ariette* “Je n’aïnai pas le tabac beaucoup” from Gluck’s 1759 *opéra-comique* _Le Diable à quatre_. Afterward, we’d proceed to Vienna, where I’d examine sources for my dissertation and held look at materials for his book on Classical-period music for W. W. Norton.

Had I been on my own, this conference, my first outside the US, would have been fairly intimidating. But I was able to experience it also through the eyes and ears of my *Doktorvater*—not just the scholarly papers, but also more social aspects (as when he noted that a local dignitary had given his welcome address entirely in dialect—a “boorish” gesture), and the sights of the host city (in particular, Giuseppe Galli Bibiena’s Markgräfliches Opernhaus of 1748). Dan also introduced me to a number of the presenters, notably the French-opera scholar Herbert Schneider, who graciously forgave my novice German-speaker’s error of addressing him as “Du,” and Eva Badura-Skoda, a leading authority on music in Vienna, who kindly offered to drive Dan and me there after the conference.

In delivering his paper (namely, in German), Dan thanked me conspicuously for my help in transcribing a few of the sources, also mentioning my incipient work on Gluck. Other Berkeley grad students from that period likewise experienced his public generosity. This paper, like most of Dan’s, abounded in *son et lumière* (his term), i.e., visual and musical examples, the latter including his singing of Gluck’s tobacco tune, in his slightly tremulous but beguiling tenor voice.

After a convivial and scenic drive to Vienna, Dan continued to assist me in multiple ways, introducing me to local scholars and librarians, and helping arrange for me to cat-sit for a former UCB student of his while she was away from her embassy-district apartment. Though our focus was on music in Maria Theresia’s Vienna, we naturally took in various sites associated with Mozart. And while examining Philipp Gumpenhuber’s manuscript chronicle of Viennese theatrical offerings during the early 1760s (a source then little known), we found one of the seeds of Mozart’s later success in the Habsburg capital: the earliest recorded mention of a performance in Vienna of a fortepiano concerto, by Johann Baptist Schmid, in May of 1763.

I have many other memories of that long-ago *Forschungsreise*, but in recollecting it today, my main feeling is gratitude for Dan’s sustained mentoring, and his example of immersive engagement with the musical and cultural objects of his study.

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*We are All Dan’s Students*

Daniel Heartz was one of the most generous scholars I ever met. I did not attend the University of California, Berkeley, but I consider myself one of Dan’s students; indeed, anyone working in eighteenth-century music is indebted to his voluminous writing, which covers practically all aspects of the period.

I first met Dan in Austin in 1989 after giving my first paper at an AMS meeting. I wrote to invite him, but that was unnecessary, since Bruce Brown and Marita McClymonds were giving papers on the same session. In his article “The Genesis of *Idomeneo*,” Dan stated that “*Idomeneo* is Mozart’s Mannheim opera,” and I was trying to prove him right in my dissertation. In the thirty years that I knew him, he was a faithful correspondent and supporter of my work. He was always willing to read drafts and help with translations, and his feedback made my work stronger in every way. My constant goal, seldom realized, has been to meet his expectations.

One of my fondest memories is a dinner that a few of us had with Dan at the Rathskeller in Munich during a conference at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences in July 1999 to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the death of Elector Karl Theodor. The theme of the conference was “Mozarts *Idomeneo*” (his term), i.e., visual and musical aspects (as when he noted that a local dignitary had given his welcome address entirely in dialect—a “boorish” gesture), and the sights of the host city (in particular, Giuseppe Galli Bibiena’s Markgräfliches Opernhaus of 1748). Dan also introduced me to a number of the presenters, notably the French-opera scholar Herbert Schneider, who graciously forgave my novice German-speaker’s error of addressing him as “Du,” and Eva Badura-Skoda, a leading authority on music in Vienna, who kindly offered to drive Dan and me there after the conference.

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*Bruce Alan Brown*
Dan was a prince among us; as Sarastro would have said: “Noch mehr—er ist Mensch!”

—Paul Corneilson

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When Dan was elected an honorary member of the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music in 2004, I wrote a tribute in the SECM newsletter. My final paragraph, as I reread it now, still expresses my feelings of gratitude.

As I think about Dan as a teacher, the image of an open door comes to mind. The year is 1980, and I am a young, insecure graduate student, trudging up the stairs of Morrison Hall (the music building at Berkeley). From the top of the stairs I can see only one door, the door to Professor Heartz’s office. When it is open, as it very often is, it means that Dan is there. If I need some advice on an assignment, he is always eager to help. If I don’t receive a hoped-for grant, he is generous with his sympathy. If he likes a paper I have submitted, I bask in his approval while trying to keep in mind his suggestions for improvements. Dan’s office door, in short, was my door to a life of studying, listening to, and writing about music. I will always be grateful to him for keeping it open.

—John A. Rice

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My lack of appreciation for Mozart was a long-running joke by that point, dating back to when I first became Dan’s “editorial assistant” (i.e., typist) in 2003, for the last of his great Norton volumes. Dan knew that my heart had always belonged to Haydn. He was tolerant of this, to the point where during my preparations for a qualifying examinations topic on Haydn, he gamely played “Name That Tune” with me, perched on his office chair, the two of us warbling back and forth. While Mozart remained Dan’s great passion, I would like to think that it was sessions such as these that led to Dan’s confession in Chapter 6 of Mozart, Haydn, and Early Beethoven that “no music has elated me more in old age than The Seasons.”

These singing competitions in his office occurred under the imperious gaze of Mlle Duplant, as she appears in the lithograph of François-André Vincent’s posthumous (as Beverly Wilcox discovered) portrait, gifted to Dan by his dear friend Alan Curtis. As Dan wrote in Artists and Musicians, her “pride, not to say haughty” glance “enslaved [him] altogether,” and she similarly enslaved me. Dan remarked once as we were admiring her that he could imagine she and I were much alike. She was tall, like me, and I believe he implied that I was as persistent, if not to say difficult, as was she in pursuing her own path. It was with awe and humility that I accepted the gift of this lithograph when I left Berkeley, and now she intimidates (or welcomes?) anyone who visits my own office.

Over the years, my role evolved, and so did our relationship. My work on the Norton volume complete, I still performed the occasional research task for him, but we became much closer. Our long letters back and forth when I was in Berlin in 2009–10 sustained and inspired me. Upon my return, for his 82nd birthday, I invited him to my home in Berkeley and gave him a concert of solo viol repertoire by Carl Friedrich Abel, including a sample of the type of adagio that Burney had praised. He had never heard Abel’s solo music live, and while I apparently failed to convince him with my interpretation (based on what he wrote of Abel’s adagios in Artists and Musicians), I could at least impress with my cooking. We dined on “Yankee” pot roast and his favorite lemon cake pudding and he honored me by saying it was “just like mother always made.”

Dan had little patience for mediocre work, and even less for closed minds. How fortunate I feel to have learned so much from him, my “fairy grandfather,” my mentor and guide, who taught me to appreciate also Mozart, though who delighted, as I do still, in Haydn.

—Rebekah Ahrendt

Irvine and Berkeley, 2009

One of the first pieces of advice given to me by my dissertation advisor, D. Kern Holoman, was to “go and see Dan Heartz in Berkeley.” Suiting action to words, he immediately phoned Dan and said I would call soon. I did not, because I could not imagine that the author of such magisterial works as Haydn, Mozart and the Viennese School, Music in the European Capitals, and Mozart, Haydn and Early Beethoven would have time to spare for a mere grad student.

Fortunately, a few months later, there was a symposium at the University of California, Irvine honoring the 80th birthday of the founding chair of their music department, H. Colin Slim, and as a fellow member of the “Harvard Mafia,” he was able to persuade Dan to attend and give a paper. The paper was about Haydn’s final years and his enjoyment...
of visitors, even French officers who had just finished bombing Vienna. Perhaps it was this topic that made me introduce myself at the sumptuous reception that evening. Dan graciously invited me to lunch in Berkeley at the Faculty Club and gave me his address and phone number on a cocktail napkin, which I still have.

Dan’s generosity to students, colleagues, and his wide circle of correspondents was legendary. Much later in our friendship, when I was serving as digital amanuensis for his final book, Artists and Musicians, he trapped me into revealing my ignorance of the whereabouts of one of the great cities of France (Bordeaux?). Saying “wait right here, young lady,” he crept down the beautiful but treacherous circular staircase in his house overlooking San Francisco Bay. I heard bumpings and thumpings, and began to worry. However, when he returned, he handed me a beautifully framed Carte nouvelle du royaume de France, printed in Amsterdam in 1792, and said sternly, “there will be a quiz next Monday.” To honor his memory, I always consult it first whenever I need a map of France.

Dan’s generosity was not limited to people he knew personally. His musicological writing is full of kindness to, and concern for, his readers. He is a great storyteller; he eschews fashionable terms in favor of le mot juste; he pays attention to the rhythm and meter of his prose, and above all, he delights in providing historical context so that his readers can appreciate the events of a vanished age. May we all continue to learn from him.

—Beverly Wilcox

Love at a Distance in a Time of Mozart

James Currie

The world is too much with us; poor wounded, noisy world. Its boom and crash are difficult to ignore. Even Mozart is often insufficient to blot out the ruckus. One seeks a brief respite, a moment of gentle, well-meaning indifference apart from all that has gone wrong. It is not so much to ask. But to get at this, one must turn the volume up so high on Mozart’s sublimities, overload the bass weight of all that beauty to such degrees, that ultimately one just creates distortion. So there’s little to be gained. It’s one form of noise or another. Perhaps it’s better to give up and let Mozart and the noisy world continue audibly to sound together. Amidst such curdled polyphony, maybe intimations might be encountered of some other, palliative sweetness as of yet unknown. Bringing things together, even Mozart and our broken world, is the prerequisite of love. From such proximities, comes harmony.

After all, being close to something allows one to touch it, and if we are empiricists then it is from these initial sen-

that makes us prone to strange imaginings, delusions, distortions, and indulgences. Similarly, if we are close enough to touch something, then, in a figurative sense, we are close enough to be touched by it, and so with proximity we assume comes sensibility and our practical training in the ethical life. And if we are close enough to “feel the pain,” and thus properly empathize, then we are probably close enough, literally and metaphorically, to lay on hands and practice healing arts. So proximity is also a potential prerequisite of the medicinal. Being or remaining “in touch” also invokes a deep ethical commitment, whereby we are told that we should never forget the horrors of the world in which we live and of the injustices of the past. We might also note more archaic associations, for when humans are close enough they can form a huddle and thereby pool resources to counteract the cold, once more, both literal and metaphorical. Proximity is thus an ancient figure of speech at the heart of the value traditionally placed on community and its attendant acknowledgment of the limits of our autonomy and the needs we all undoubtedly have of each other. Surely we should want our intellectual engagements with Mozart’s music to validate such things.

This should not be so difficult since powerful truisms about the value of proximity have given birth to an extensive array of homologies right across the terrain of the behavior of our thinking in the modern, Western academy. For example, we could take the basic fact that over the past thirty years, scholars working in the humanities in the Anglo-American academy have increasingly tended to believe that the function of their work is not only to investigate, analyze, and understand the truth of their chosen topics of study. They have also felt that it is their responsibility to make their basic investigations directly respond to and address important political and social problems of the present world in which they themselves live. So Mozart’s bust must be turned around to face a difficult world from which it cannot be allowed to remain distant. This is nothing new. It is, in fact, a very old way of thinking about intellectual activity indeed, one that stretches back at least as far as Karl Marx’s famous statement, in the eleventh of his Theses on Feuerbach (1845): that “Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world; the point is to change it.” For Marx, philosophy in its traditional sense, as theoretical speculation, keeps its distance from the real world of causality and he sees that this situation must be changed: philosophy must be brought into proximity with reality. Only then will its real transformative powers be unleashed.

Even something as pro-forma and normal as the notion of historical context has been reliant in the English-speaking world upon this language and rhetoric in order to give it value and to justify its pervasive use within the academy. Perhaps this should not be surprising. After all, the etymological root of the word “context” is in the Latin contextere, which means “to weave together,” rather than in the idea of pulling things apart and creating distances. As a result, we might note how a musicologist such as Lawrence Kramer, who was a powerful force in making Anglo-American musicology address the question of context, consistently employs a language of proximity as part of his rhetorical acts of persuasion. For example, for Kramer Western art music is validated by the fact that it “enlarges the capacity of all music to attach itself, and us, more closely to whatever we care about”; “music of all kinds invokes this bonding”; “music is our premier embodiment of the drive for attachment”; music “grips and grasps us.”

Proximity, it would seem, is everywhere as a value. But increasingly in recent years, Anglo-American academic discourse has been confronted with the fact that the values it has placed on a broad practice of increased proximity in human and intellectual endeavors have become deeply contradictory. For example, Anglo-American discourse in the humanities, with its allegiance to the value of proximity, has traditionally taken place on the side of a political left that has been strongly critical of neo-liberal and other late-stage capitalisms. Now, however, the language of proximity can be articulated just as loudly by forms of neo-liberalism themselves. And so, increasingly, Anglo-American discourse is critiquing a system that appears to value its own values, and is therefore attacking itself; it has become inadvertently masochistic. In this regard, we could consider the idea of interdisciplinary study, which for many decades Anglo-American academics have presented in positive terms as a kind of academic utopia without borders where all disciplines could come into close proximity to liberate academic study from professional bureaucracies. But this idea also works exceedingly well for university administrators as they seek to make financial cuts in a system that is straining under the rampant economic insecurities that now characterize North America and Europe. Using exactly the same language, these university administrators can now use the idea of a proximity as a means of merging departments, cutting staff, and forcing academics to cover classes across disciplines. So whatever one’s political views, it is nevertheless the case that in this instance the value of proximity can be employed to do things quite different from the usual good assigned to it. For example, it can be used to make people unemployed.

Proximity is therefore not the absolute value that the contemporary academy has sometimes made of it. If Anglo-American academics believe that their work should be relevant and somehow address pressing concerns of the present, then they must align themselves not only with the traditions that valorize proximity, but also consider those discourses that have critiqued it, or placed value on some-
thing else, such as distance. This is particularly the case since we all live in a world in which—due to exponential growth in population, transportation, and communication—everything is now in increasingly close degrees of proximity to each other, and many of these proximities seem problematic rather than beneficial. The COVID-19 pandemic that continues as I finish writing this essay brings these concerns to a head in a particularly disturbing way. Sometimes, at its most overwhelming, I have come to feel that we have now entered a condition in which nothing can ever just be with itself, or dwell within its own being, or successfully remain undisturbed within its own home—for interruption, distraction, and a kind of obscenity of communication, propinquities and proximities immediately infect any attempt to successfully remove the stable features that make for a clear identification. Mozart is of import here because he was one of the first artists in the West to have been articulate enough to capture the problem, if not potential disaster, of a world of increasing proximities. And in making such a statement, I thereby seek to distinguish my position unambiguously and critically from the general ideological tenor that has continued to define modern Anglo-American Mozart scholarship. In short, where Mozart scholarship has tended to be motivated by a value system based on proximity, I assert that it is time for it to reconsider distance.

Back in the late 1980s, when the contours of our present musico-cultural values were being formed the aim had been to dispel the idea of Mozart as a transcendent genius, and thus place him back closer to the economic and musical realities of the contexts in which he was working. This was epitomized by Neal Zaslaw’s oft-cited essay “Mozart as a Working Stiff,” which paints a picture of Mozart as a composer mostly happy for the horizon of his musical activities and inspiration to be defined by the circumference constructed by the economic forces with which he engaged in order to make money.\(^4\) On the level of how we interpret and analyze Mozart’s music, the aim likewise was to dispel a distance, not only to create a proximity between Mozart’s music and the more normative musical languages and discourses of his time, but more importantly to see his music as extolling the virtues of such proximity per se. The key figure here was Wendy Allanbrook, who extended the model of topical analysis developed by her teacher, Leonard Ratner, into an argument for the primacy of the comic mode in Mozart’s music. Later, this comic musical mode came to be eloquent for her of the virtues of a certain comic world-view, which she then deemed as a worthy model for the postmodern present to emulate.

Allanbrook’s work was no mere musicological endeavor. Rather, as I have argued elsewhere, it was a concerted effort at bringing the distance of the late eighteenth-century past into transformative proximity with the present in the name of the creation of a better world.\(^5\) Allanbrook took the basic fact of the increasingly mixed style of late eighteenth-century music and transformed it into a charter for what we might call a kind of democracy of musical styles. From there it was a short step to the idea of the democratic proclivities of comedy, which then acted as a short-cut to the assertion that comedy is a bearer of democracy itself. Mozart’s music, thus, exhibits “a democracy of thematic material not possible in the monoaffective style of the Baroque.”\(^6\) This is a musical world in which fixed hierarchies cannot be sustained, and in which, “simply by co-existing, these various topoi frame and undermine one another . . . ceding stylistic authority playfully one to the next.”\(^7\) Here, proximity becomes a substitute for relationality itself, and so “topics articulate each other’s differences in the same way as modern linguistics understand phonie units as delimiting each other: by juxtaposition and opposition, by rubbing shoulders, ‘jostling each other about.’”\(^8\) Our yearning for the distance, which for Allanbrook always means German Romanticism, creates a crack in the fortifications through which darker behaviors and their political soulmates can then start to creep.

But there are many instances where one has to perform some pretty hefty editing work to make Mozart’s music appear as such. Allanbrook wants to see Mozart as consistently offering us edifying representations of the beauties and repose found when we opt modestly not to peer beyond the parameters of our immediate life worlds. For Allanbrook, we should instead turn back to contemplate our own reflections, and Mozart’s authority is employed to validate this. But it is just as easy in Mozart to witness a world in which the particularities of local-level interactions destabilize with alarming ease, as if these particulars keep finding themselves too easily driven by forces of an incommensurable reach. Propelled into movement in this way, these interactions then act according to a kind of paradoxical logic, and instead of charging outward toward the enormity of the forces that fuel them, they move further inwards toward a kind of terrifying self-cannibalization, as if they had become too close even to themselves. The fact that, in Mozart’s Da Ponte operas we are dealing primarily with comedy, should not distract us from how disturbingly cluttered, claustrophobic, and tortuously networked, interwoven, and pervasively inter-infected is this world. Comedy, after all, can be a very serious business. And in Mozart’s case, he employs it to picture a world that is often lacking in spaces in which to pause and catch one’s breath. This is a world that is volatile and ultimately quite dangerous.

All of Mozart’s operas are gesticulated in this way, but Don Giovanni, K. 527, strikes the pose with such indecorous immediacy of force as to constitute a veritable slap to the face of the
kind of value system espoused by Allenbrook. In the famous opening scene, in less than three minutes of increasingly complex through-composition, we are robbed of our familiar world of perfectly recognizable opera buffa patter to find ourselves in exile at the scene of a tragic murder in progress. The fact that the characters so immediately seem too on top of each other—too proximate—makes their drama leap from introductions to what would usually be material for the conclusion of a last act. It is as if an entire opera has been placed in a garbage compactor and has come out concertinaed together as a single opening scene. The only means available for stopping this world seems to be death. And so as devastating dramatically as the Commendatore’s passing may be at the end of the first scene, paradoxically, in its extraordinary representation of the stunned shock that follows an unplanned killing, it offers a kind of purely sonic and temporal respite, a musical clearing, that the pursuits and melodrama and posturing and deception of the preceding few minutes of musical drama cannot. In a world in which everything has become overly proximate, human life becomes unsustainable.

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And so finally, through death, I come at last to love. It is common in American and British English to say, when a romantic relationship is no longer working, that “we have grown apart from each other.” But is it really the case that love ceases because there is no longer a sufficient quota of proximity between two people? It is certainly the case that one’s feelings during such times can often be of alienation, isolation, abandonment, and loneliness. And so as you attempt to make a clear diagnosis of your situation, it is tempting to try to match like with like in order to make things better. Since distant is how you now feel from the person whom once you loved, you tell yourself that this must be the problem, and that you should therefore try and become closer once more. But I suggest that love, in fact, disappears when two people fall into each other, not when they fall apart. This can be illustrated by basic empirical observation. After all, the usual symptom of love having gone wrong is that partners become consumed by an excessive attention to the kinds of obsessive and particular observations of inane details that can only come from too much proximity. They complain, for example, of the fact that their partner always leaves the lid off the toothpaste, or that they keep their mouth open while watching television, or that their voice is too high, or that they keep repeating certain meaningless phrases, like “you know” or “right yeah,” or “wow.” As many of us sadly know all too well, it is often but a short step from the stating of these observations to the violence of a fully fledged argument or worse. Intense proximity to the details of one’s beloved is often the last step before the relationship ends and the lovers formalize their decision to become distant for good.

Love is therefore not unlike the paradox of looking at an Impressionist painting. Too close, and the image dissolves into the materiality of paint, a blizzard of meaningless pigment that one cannot see beyond in one’s attempts to refocus. At a certain distance, however, it once more becomes a picture with which one can establish a relationship. So when love happens, it happens (and somewhat miraculously, since the odds are very much stacked against us) when people find that the respective distances they both need in order for each other to come into focus, are mutually compatible, and productive of an attractive kind of counterpoint. To state this is not to indulge in cynicism, or ideology, or a debased kind of Romanticism. Holding onto this point is, rather, a form of fidelity to a certain truth about love, which is that what is needed is not a vigilant attention to the content of the beloved—to the specific features of who you have decided, or are trying to work out, she or he may be. Rather, what is needed is a certain indifference to that content and instead a careful attendance to the formal relation that allows for the beloved to come into being at all in the first place. Love is a distance, not a proximity.

As we go in quest of answers as to how to get back to that distance that is love once proximity has become a problem, Mozart’s Da Ponte operas, I argue, provide us with some provocatively useful scenarios to contemplate. This is particularly the case with regard to how Mozart sets about resolving the extraordinarily convoluted proximities in which his characters easily find themselves embroiled. It is interesting to note that Mozartian drama does not necessarily act according to what I would call a normal therapeutic protocol. In other words, Mozart’s operas ultimately do not show characters finding a cure for their social and inter-subjective predicaments simply by understanding more closely what the presently existing coordinates of their broken relations are, and from there working things out by keeping this information clearly in view. When love breaks down, Mozart doesn’t always seem to diagnose the emotional distance as resulting from an epistemological distance, thereby assuming that he must set about treating that complaint by increasing the characters’ proximity to each other. Rather, he tends to shock the problematic situation by confronting it with a music that seems to issue from a completely different register—indeed, a music that seems to come from a distance, and, both musically and dramatically, to be relatively indifferent to the context that it essentially overtakes. It is rather like a distinguished but uninvited guest gate-crashing a party.

Obvious examples would include the Countess’s act of for-
giveness at the end of *Le nozze di Figaro*, K. 492; the direct assault on the nervous system when the Commendatore returns to take Don Giovanni off for his date with retribution; and the famous trio “Soave sia il vento,” from *Così fan tutte*, K. 588. When these musical moments occur in Mozart’s operas, the sonic can seemingly override the semantic realm of the language and meaning of the drama itself. It is as if we move from opera as a form of drama that is articulated by means of music, to opera that merely exploits the logic of drama as an excuse for the making of extraordinary passages of music. Important is the way in which such passages create a high degree of affective, stylistic, and thematic and motivic consistency, which is somehow able to captivate and monopolize our attentions in such a way that the relative lack of variety never leads to boredom. It is not just that these passages have a strong identity. It is that their identity is also imbued with a strong sense of presence, as if we were now dealing with the real thing as opposed to an artifice. This sense of presence is frequently produced by the extreme contrast that these passages create with the music that surrounds them, both that preceding and that following. Their onset thus tends to create a shock.

The most striking feature of these passages, however, is the way in which they manage to create such a sudden and profound sense of space. It is not unlike the effect that occurs when one unexpectedly steps out from the dense thicket of a forest and into a clearing. The music surrounding these passages is often characterized by the instability, density, and plurality of different musical styles, constantly shifting in register, that is characteristic of the mixed style of *opera buffa* in the second half of the eighteenth century. But in the midst of this, as if in a manner indifferent to what has been going on before, something else then emerges. An internal distance is produced. However exciting and enjoyable the music has been up to this point, the impression is nevertheless that a sense of constriction has been removed and that there is finally room to breathe.

Such moments are, of course, heirs to the *deus ex machina* and the sovereign’s act of clemency, which are staple means for oiling the convoluted mechanisms of the plots of Baroque *opera seria* so that they can somehow be brought conclusively to rest. As with Mozart’s Da Ponte operas, so too with Baroque *opera seria*—instead of the social problems of the drama being resolved according to the already existing coordinates, something else from somewhere else intervenes: a God descends (Apollo to Orpheus), or an emperor decides to make an exception to the law and offer forgiveness (as Tito does to Vitellia). As we see in his last opera, *La clemenza di Tito*, K. 621, Mozart retained a perfectly satisfactory working relationship with the more normative forms of such conven-
and if we hold fidelity to that fact, then we must also, if we wish to love love, retain a distance to the distance of love itself. As this rather tortuous formulation attests, it would seem that to attain proficiency in *ars amatoria*, we must also practice philosophical dialectics.\(^9\)

However, for Mozart himself the most obvious place for where he learned such paradoxical strategy was probably from the New Testament. And so in the Da Ponte operas, we can see him acting like the good Catholic boy he was and adopting a form of love (and of the love of love) that is congruent with the Gospels. Here in the New Testament, we are repeatedly presented with the paradox of small things acting as conduits for the absolute, where the kingdom of heaven is reached through unlikely subjects: a child, the poor, a leper, a prostitute, an enemy, or by trying to push a camel through the eye of a needle. The Beatitudes, which constitute that heartbreaking exordium to the Sermon on the Mount, lay such things out like bullet points in a manifesto. To sample from Matthew 5: 3–12 of the King James Bible: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” This is a logic of redemption that works through the paradox that it is only through an unexpected location that what is needed can come to us, only through things distant from what to us seems most pragmatically pressing, and thus only through something that is distant from ourselves too.

In Mozart’s Da Ponte operas it is often the case that relatively little has been worked out, resolved, understood, or any of the other things that we normatively invoke as prerequisites for the effective conclusion of a negotiation. There has simply been a brief time of respite, which is perhaps just enough to stop the situation from self-cannibalizing. When Mozart exposes us to these moments of extraordinary music, the question of what the problem with love had become irrelevant, too distant now to be acknowledged. There is no need for forgiveness here; when the Countess in *Figaro* exonerates her disappointing husband, she is indulging in a ruse. In the full theological sense, her music is of such undeserved grace, that to all extents and purposes we immediately forget. And maybe that is ultimately what we need: to forget. If this is a prescription still worth writing for the seemingly terminal condition constituting the poor health of our time, I would suggest that we live still in a time of Mozart.

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**NOTES**

9. There is a certain provocation in associating Mozart with philosophical dialectics, since the composer who has usually been most regularly aligned that way is Beethoven, whose musical processes have repeatedly been seen as analogous to Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel’s. For an exceedingly interesting case for Mozart as opposed to Beethoven as the truly Hegelian Viennese Classicist, see Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 188–90.
Reviews


On October 19, 1782, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart reminded his father, “You know that I am an out-and-out Englishman [ein Erzengländer]”—serving as testimony that the family’s fifteen-month visit to Britain eighteen years earlier had left a profound impact on the prodigy (October 19, 1782, LMF, p. 828). The nation that still held Mozart’s heart had introduced him to new pieces everywhere he turned. That exposure helped the eight- (and nine-) year-old to make huge strides as a composer, and he crafted his first aria in England along with his earliest symphonic works. The appeal, therefore, of Ian Page’s Mozart in London two-disc recording is that it features not only examples of Mozart’s musical output during this transformative visit, but it also presents a cross-section of pieces from other London-based composers of the time, allowing us to hear the eighteenth-century city through Mozart’s ears, as it were.

The Mozart family left England during the summer of 1765, and so Page’s 2015 recording marks the 250th anniversary of their visit. That milestone inspired the launch of Page’s innovative (and ambitious) MOZART 250 project: a series of live concerts that explore, year by year, “the music that was being composed by Mozart and his contemporaries exactly 250 years previously” (p. 9 of the recording’s booklet). This series will run until 2041 (the 250th anniversary of Mozart’s death), and six of the projected twenty-seven concert seasons have already been presented, each comprised of several events (ranging from three to seven) that have showcased the years 1766 through 1770. The performances feature the talents of The Mozartists, an ensemble “brand” introduced in 2017 to designate these concert presentations, which had begun as a spin-off of Classical Opera. The latter is Page’s well-regarded series (launched in 1997) of historically informed performances and recordings of Mozart’s operas and those of his contemporaries.

The Mozart in London double-CD set is the only album to result thus far from the MOZART 250 concert series. Recorded live, its works are drawn from four of the five concerts that comprised a “mini-festival” during the weekend of February 20–22, 2015, at Milton Court, a newish facility of the Guildhall School of Music and Dance. Each concert had a specific theme: “Mozart’s London,” “Capricious Lovers: The English Opera in Mozart’s London,” “An Exotic and Irrational Entertainment: The Italian Opera in Mozart’s London,” and “Bach, Abel and Mozart: London Concert Life in 1765.” (A fifth concert—“The Genesis of Genius: Mozart’s Chelsea Notebook”—was a lecture-recital presented by fortepianist John Irving that is not included on the CD.) Page chose twenty-two pieces from the four ensemble concerts, including six orchestral works (four symphonies, an overture, and a harpsichord concerto) and various operatic and pasticcio vocal selections. Mozart is represented by three symphonies—K. 16, K. 19, and K. 19a—as well as his first concert aria, “Va, dal furor portata,” K. 21. The album’s repertory also includes works by nine other composers with links to London: Carl Friedrich Abel, Thomas Augustine Arne, Samuel Arnold, J. C. Bach, William Bates, Egidio Duni, Davide Perez, Giovanni Battista Pescetti, and George Rush.

To assemble this series of concerts, Page undertook a sizable amount of research in the British Library. Thanks to various chronicles of London’s operatic activities, it is feasible to pinpoint the productions that were mounted during the specific months of Mozart’s stay. Although complete scores have survived for very few of these, a great many “Favourite Airs” collections were issued, much as piano/vocal songbooks are published for Broadway musicals today. In a blog for the British Library, Page reports that he found some 250 relevant solos and duets, with almost half of the pieces being “worthy of resurrection.” With the help of Roy Mowatt and Steven Devine, Page orchestrated a number of these “Favourite Airs” (which were comprised of only the vocal melody and a keyboard reduction), and thus some thirteen works are enjoying their premiere recording on this album, including Rush’s overture to The Capricious Lovers (1764).

For listeners, there is much to enjoy in these carefully prepared discs. The tempos are consistently plausible, and intonation is usually quite good (the ensemble, playing period instruments, is tuned to A=430). There are occasional stumbles in the horns and other winds, which are to be expected in recordings of live performances, and several of the singers reveal brief difficulties with control in higher registers, at the ends of long phrases, or with some of the most taxing coloratura passages. A certain number of ensemble attacks—and some releases—are mushy. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of expressivity in the slower orchestral movements and arias (although a couple of bold dynamic swells seem out of place in Mozart’s first symphony). The orchestra often overbalances the harpsichord in the first movement of J. C. Bach’s Concerto in D major, Op. 1, No. 6, but the problem is mostly resolved in the second and third movements (the latter of which is a charming set of variations on “God Save the King”).

For historians, the sudden availability of several recordings of little-known
repertory from the eighteenth-century stage, as well as some fine new performances of early Mozart works, is a great boon. But it is possible to quibble with the album's selections. It is understandable that a project that grew out of Classical Opera would be heavily interlaced with vocal music, and indeed, literally hundreds of London performances in the 1760s were advertised as “Concerts of Vocal and Instrumental Music.” Still, the typical balance of those eighteenth-century concert programs almost always tilted toward instrumental pieces. Moreover, that repertory emphasized concertos much more than “overtures” (the usual English designation for symphonies), and programs usually included chamber works as well. Mozart's own final London concert, presented on May 13, 1765, advertised four concertos as well as a violoncello solo for Giovanni Battista Cirri, while employing only Clementina Cremonini for the “vocal part.” Although Mozart's simple keyboard pieces that comprise the Chelsea Notebook (and which were the focus of Irving's lecture-recital) are perhaps not fully concert-worthy, excerpts from the K. 10–15 keyboard sonatas that Mozart dedicated to Queen Charlotte in January 1765 certainly might have figured among the MOZART 250 performances. Or, since Page does a particularly nice job of drawing parallels between his non-Mozartean selections and subsequent pieces by the budding young composer, he might have delved again into the British Library for samples of chamber music by others who were active in London, thereby increasing modern listeners' awareness of the diverse eighteenth-century programming in the metropolis.

One other question comes to mind about choices made in these 2015 performances. Among Classical Opera's current artists are five countertenors, but none are showcased in any of the numbers originally written for castrato; all of those arias are performed by female sopranos. It might have been interesting to give listeners an aural glimpse of a masculine timbre in some of the castrato works. In any event, the dilemma of which modern voice type to employ underscores the challenge of trying to replicate a “true” eighteenth-century sound. Still, not everything was worth reproducing: Page quotes Charles Burney's observation that despite an “elegant figure [and] a beautiful face,” Signora Teresa Scotti had a “feeble voice”—a criticism that, happily, cannot be leveled at any of this album's vocalists. In general, Mozart in London, in its generous two-plus hours, offers us a very enjoyable excursion through segments of the capital's musical milieu. We must hope that, by means of similar recordings, Page and The Mozartists will be able to share additional seasons of MOZART 250 with those of us not fortunate enough to experience them in person.

—Alyson McLamore


Marshall seeks to get into the minds of composers to understand both their compositional processes and what motivated them to create. His characteristically clear writing extends to a refreshingly unpretentious framing of large questions: Why did Bach and Mozart bother to compose at all? What did the effort and the resulting work mean to them? What were their fundamental objectives as artists?" (p. 186); and "What, in a word, were the deeper forces driving the creativity of Bach and Mozart?" (p. 189).

He portrays both Bach and Mozart in non-heroic terms to break away from nineteenth-century hagiography, going beyond the mythologies (old and new) that surround them. In “Young Man Bach: Toward a Twenty-First-Century Bach Biography,” Marshall looks for the origins of a character he finds profane, belligerent, and prone to difficulties with authority, hoping ultimately that "the figure atop of the pedestal be formed out of something less like marble and more like flesh and blood" (p. 29). In “Bach and Mozart: Styles of Musical Genius” and in “Mozart and Ama- deus,” the Mozart sketched is the scatological author of the “Bäsle” letters, a man with a strong sexual drive, and a mild manic-depressive (Marshall prefers “moody”).

Marshall is obviously intrigued by genius, which he calls “inherently mystifying and provocative” (p. 11). For
him, insights are to be found in upbringing; he can confidently assert that “we all know that character formation is the work of childhood” (p. 15). For him, youth informs both character and artistry: “Childhood, after all, is the crucible of personality; and in the case of an artist, the seedbed of creativity” (p. 190). This prompts him to explore the lives of the young Bach and Mozart, looking for clues to their characters and their musical lives.

And what he finds, most of all, are father complexes—relationships between parents and sons crop up everywhere, from Bach’s loss of both parents when he was ten, to Leopold’s crushing expectations (“With the exception perhaps of Franz Kafka, no great artist has ever had to cope with such a formidable father” [p. 190]). The issue surfaces in the examination of the Bach sons, each of whom dealt, in the view presented here, primarily with the burden of his great father. It is symbolic too: Luther as a father figure to Bach, Haydn to Mozart, and so on. Marshall is an unabashed Freudian, with some Erikson and a little Kübler-Ross thrown in.

Marshall is not the first biographer to take this approach to a musician—far from it, as he points out himself—but this way of understanding a composer sits side by side with close analytical readings of musical works and of the autograph scores that document their creation. “Mozart’s Unfinished: Some Lessons of the Fragments” deals with four fragmentary concerto movements, concerned not only with Mozart’s musical decisions but also with how he thought musically. Similarly, “Bach at Mid-Life: The Christmas Oratorio and the Search for New Paths” is about compositional aspects of the oratorio and other works but ultimately portrays the 1730s as “a time of artistic crisis for Johann Sebastian Bach” (p. 145).

For all his devotion to documentary sources, especially letters and autograph composing materials, Marshall is willing to speculate boldly when evidence runs out. This is represented particularly in “Had Mozart Lived Longer: Some Cautious (and Incautious) Speculations.” The idea of a completed Requiem and the realization of a planned trip to London for Salomon are plausible, but by the time we get to a Faust opera in collaboration with Goethe or a move to the New World we are on less certain ground. Still, I would rather hear someone as well informed as Marshall speculate about these things than almost anyone else, and he does make us think about the directions music in Vienna did not take. It is less clear what we gain from “Johann Christian Bach and Eros,” a kind of free fantasy of inference about the youngest Bach son’s sexuality. There are undoubtedly things to explore and explain here, but we probably want to find grounds other than the “plain looks” of Christian’s wife, Cecilia Grassi.

The essays in this collection offer a refreshing boldness in the way Marshall presents his ideas and his ability to champion Bach and Mozart even as he urges a more human view of them and their flaws. His devotion to the topic comes through clearly in the superlatives with which the book is laced. J. S. Bach is “one of the supreme figures of Western musical history” (p. 65), “arguably the greatest composer for [keyboard instruments] in history” (p. 111), and speaks through the “unchallenged, almost incomprehensible magnitude of his achievement” (p. 29). The play and film Amadeus represent an “effort to account for one of the most formidable creators in human history” (p. 211) “whose early death was probably the most tragic single event in the history of music” (p. 252).

This adds up to a new way of thinking about “genius”—not the Genie of the eighteenth century, or an idealized Romantic image of the heroic artist, but an enigma to be appreciated and puzzled over by succeeding generations.

—Daniel R. Melamed


Anton Stadler is an intriguing figure in Mozart’s circle—a colleague of the composer’s later years who was entrusted with personal tasks (not always successfully carried out) and was the recipient of both sublime music and silly nicknames. Stadler was also associated with the instrument maker Theodor Lotz, who made clarinets for Anton and his brother Johann (p. 28) and developed the Bäs-Klarinet (basset clarinet), for which Mozart wrote his Clarinet Quintet, K. 581, and Clarinet Concerto, K. 622—a fruitful collaboration of instrument maker, musician, and composer that testifies to the importance of such relationships.

Poulin’s short book begins with a chronology of Stadler’s life and career, and subsequent chapters expand on this, with supplementary material on the basset clarinet and on sources for Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto, as well as a translation of Stadler’s plan for a music school (1800), an appendix of references to Anton and his brother Johann in court account books, and a list of published compositions by Stadler.

The book, I must say straightaway, is not very useful to the scholar, except perhaps in raising awareness of Stadler’s career and musical relationships. The biggest problem is that it seems not to have undergone any proofreading or checking. On the first page alone, there is a mix-up concerning the name of Stadler’s mother, and we are informed that Stadler’s parents lived on “Laimgube” (Laimgrube) and that the
Pfarre St. Michael is “today Habsbrugergasse [sic] 12.” Such errors continue throughout, although they seem to be more prevalent in the early part of the book.

The numerous illustrations of concert programs would be a welcome feature, except that these are mostly small and very hard to read, making them more frustrating than useful. Original-language versions of the documents are not provided, but some of the more straightforward ones that I am able to access, such as newspaper reports, seem to be satisfactorily transcribed and translated. However, some translations do not inspire confidence—for example, references to the “Standing Wind Musicians of the Emperor,” apparently derived from “die in wirklichen Diensten Sr Majestät des Kaisers stehenden Tonkünstler.” A more accurate translation would read: “the wind musicians currently in the service of His Majesty the Emperor”; Poulin translates only the word “stehenden” from the phrase “in wirklichen Diensten … stehenden” (Fig. 4.1 on p. 25: this statement is very difficult to read on the poster). Nor is confidence inspired by the comment preceding Appendix 1, “The Stadler Brothers’ Mentions in Receipts and Disbursements. Semi-Annual Account Books …,” that “underlining [sic; ‘underlining?’] blanks are employed when the script is indecipherable” (p. 123). Other scholars have transcribed many of these entries and would have been able to help Poulin here, and some of the entries with blanks have been published elsewhere. The documents concerning Lotz, for example, are transcribed by Roger Hellyer (“Some Documents Relating to Viennese Wind-Instrument Purchases, 1779–1837,” Galpin Society Journal 28 [1975]: 50–59).

Chapter 4, “Stadler’s Middle Career: 1781–1791,” includes a section on Theodor Lotz, the maker of Stadler’s Baß-Klarinet. Much of the new information here comes from Melanie Pidcocke’s “Theodor Lotz: A Biographical and Organological Study” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2012). This material about the maker of Stadler’s instruments is welcome but is not always transferred to its new context with understanding. I note one simple example: Poulin writes that Lotz performed a concerto at a concert held at “the Schauspielhaus [sic] next to the Kärntnertor Theater” (p. 27: the “Schauspielhaus” is the Theater). Chapter 5, on Stadler’s tour of northern Europe, 1791–1796, reviews and updates Poulin’s important discoveries on Stadler’s concert tour and the nature of his Baß-Klarinet. Chapter 6, “Stadler and Beethoven,” is almost entirely speculative concerning the relationship of clarinetist and composer.

Chapter 10 presents an English translation of Stadler’s “Musick Plan” of 1800. Written in answer to a request from Count Georg Festetics, the “Plan” outlines Stadler’s detailed vision for a school of music. Stadler’s views were then, as they are now, worth hearing, as he was a musician at the top of his profession. But some assertions in Poulin’s introduction are questionable. She writes that “a poor system of musical training prevailed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Germany and Austria” (p. 97). But her few examples derive from the early eighteenth century, and she focuses on guilds, which had lost their influence by the late eighteenth century. While there was no general organized system in Austria, there were certainly successful methods of musical training, including training within families, which Poulin mentions on page 96. Late eighteenth-century teaching practices are well documented in the letters of the Mozart family, as Leopold and Nannerl trained musicians in their own home and also went to the homes of aristocratic patrons to give lessons. In a letter of May 28, 1778, for example, Leopold asks Wolfgang to send good pieces for the clavier from Paris for their pupils in Salzburg. Leopold’s letter of June 11, 1778, mentions a variety of pupils and teaching situations and provides a list of treatises. The letters concerning Heinrich and Gretl Marchand and their cousin Hanchen Brochard are particularly informative.


The timing of the book’s publication was perhaps a little unfortunate, in that another book on Stadler appeared not long before, and the preparation of the two books probably overlapped. Harald Strebel’s voluminous (1,392 pp.) Anton Stadler: Wirken und Lebensumfeld des “Mozart Klarinettisten”: Fakten, Daten und Hypothesen zu seiner Biographie (Vienna: Hollitzer Wissenschaftsverlag, 2016) clearly contains a great deal of material and may offer new details and perspectives (I have not had a chance to examine the book myself). Michael Lorenz’s review of Strebel’s book (“Unknown Stadler Documents (Part I),” https://michaellorenz.blogspot.com/2020/05/unknown-stadler-documents-part-1.html) offers corrections and new information, including facsimiles and transcriptions. An article that Poulin could have consulted more carefully is Lorenz’s “Mozarts Patenkind,” (Acta Mozartiana 58, no. 1 [June 2011]: 57–70), which provides information on Stadler’s family. She cites this article in note 4 on page 15, but the information mentioned there does not actually appear in Lorenz’s article.

Although this book is disappointing, Anton Stadler is certainly deserving of attention. A well-prepared, concise treatment of his life and career in English would be very happily received.

—Janet K. Page