

AMS Southeast/Capital Chapters Joint Meeting
Ferguson Center for the Arts
Christopher Newport University
September 25-26, 2009

Program

FRIDAY, September 25

1:15-2:00 Coffee and registration

Session 1: Mediations (Gayle Murchison, College of William & Mary, chair)

2:00 Alicia Levin (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): "Navigating the Virtuoso Mold: Chopin's Professional Tactics in Paris"

2:30 Stephen Psynik (Duke University): "*Swing Tanzen Verboten*: Swing Dance in Nazi Germany"

3:00 Daniel Guberman (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): "Elliott Carter's Cello Sonata: Mediating Schoenberg and Stravinsky in Post-War America"

3:30 Coffee

Session 2: Composing Images (Jay Grimes, UNC-Charlotte, chair)

4:00 Yen-Ling Liu (Stanford University): "Painting and Musical Depiction in Franz Liszt's *Hunnenschlacht*"

4:30 Laura Dolp (Montclair State University): "Viennese 'Moderne' and its Spatial Planes, Sounded"

8:00 An Evening of Beethoven Music & Theatre Hall, Ferguson Center for the Arts

Fifteen Variations and a Fugue on an Original Theme (Eroica Variations) Op. 35 in Eb Major

Lelia Sadlier, pianist

An die ferne Geliebte

Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend

Wo die Berge so blau

Leichte Segler in den Höhen

Diese Wolken in den Höhen

Es kehret der Maien, es blühet die Au

Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder

David Sadlier, tenor

Drei Equali (1812)

Andante

Poco adagio

Poco sostenuto

CNU Men's Chorus
CNU Trombone Quartet
David Sadlier, conductor

SATURDAY, September 26

8:30-9:00 Registration

Session 3: The Politics of Production (Mark Evan Bonds, UNC-Chapel Hill, chair)

9:00 William Gibbons (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): “The Trials of Authenticity: *The Magic Flute* in 1909 Paris”

9:30 James M. Doering (Randolph-Macon College): “Curing Mahleritis and Other Philharmonic Ailments: Arthur Judson, Clarence Mackay, and the 1923 Fix”

10:00 Christina Taylor Gibson (The Catholic University of America): “Carlos Chávez’s *Horsepower* and U.S.-Mexican Cultural Exchange”

10:30 Coffee

Keynote Speaker

11:00 Dale Cockrell (Vanderbilt University): “Writing the Great American Family Songbook: Laura Ingalls Wilder and Her American Music.”

12:00 Lunch

1:30 Business Meeting

Session 4: The Early Twentieth Century (Ronit Seter, Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

2:00 Naomi Graber (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): “‘Es war inmitten unsres Wegs im Leben’: Stefan George’s Dante in Arnold Schoenberg’s *Die Jakobsleiter*”

2:30 Noel Verzosa (Hood College): “Debussy, Modernism, and the Concept of Purity”

Session 5: The Seventeenth Century (Kailan Rubinoff, UNC-Greensboro, chair)

3:00 Andrew H. Weaver (The Catholic University of America): “Representing the Monarch in Sound: Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III at the End of the Thirty Years’ War”

3:30 Blake Stevens (College of Charleston): “Monologue and Ruptured Dialogue in the *Tragédie en musique*”

ABSTRACTS
(in program order)

Alicia Levin (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): “Navigating the Virtuoso Path: Chopin’s Professional Tactics in Paris”

Within a year of his arrival in Paris, Fryderyk Chopin had conquered the pianistic capital of Europe and arranged what appears to have been an ideal life for himself: a steady income from teaching, time for composing, and the occasional public concert. How he achieved this was the result of extraordinary talent deployed according to a savvy tactical plan that allowed him to maximize his skills in a virtuoso-dominated arena. In this paper, I examine how Chopin navigated cultural expectations for piano virtuosos newly arrived in Paris by planning a public benefit concert, hobnobbing in elite socio-musical circles, and building a teaching studio. His mode of self-representation offers a glimpse of both the challenges and opportunities facing musicians in the “capital of the nineteenth century” and the ways in which their tactics have been codified in music history. In particular, I will address his relationship with the pianist Friedrich Kalkbrenner, then a reigning power in the Parisian musical scene. As the story goes, a comically egotistical Kalkbrenner offered to guide Chopin in a three-year course of study, a proposition that Chopin, secure in his God-given talent, politely refused. Yet Chopin greatly respected the older pianist and sought his advice during his early months in Paris. Indeed, Kalkbrenner’s career strategies foreshadow those employed by Chopin, especially his approaches to publishing and public performance, and the similarity between the two was recognized by the Parisian press. Exploring the resonance between these two figures thus reveals as much about their music and careers as it does about 1830s Paris.

Stephen Psynik (Duke University): “*Swing Tanzen Verboten*: Swing Dance in Nazi Germany”

The body that dances to jazz music is a site of both musical and political expression; yet, dancing bodies are often written out of jazz discourses, including those that focus on the European reception and various appropriations of jazz. This is particularly apparent in the discourse surrounding jazz and its relation to Nazi politics. Various studies (and, of course, the 1993 film *Swing Kids*) have called attention to the so-called “Swing Youth” of the Nazi regime. Assessments of the activities of this group generally dismiss the activity of swing dancing as politically resistant, and though many place the dancing within the larger frameworks of jazz and race in Nazi Germany, few attempt to contextualize dancing itself in relation to constructs of gender, sexuality, and bodily “ideals” in Germany both before and during Nazi control.

This study attempts to realize this contextualization by focusing on the body as a site of political resistance and by exploring the specific ways in which dancing to jazz music was in direct contradiction to what the Nazi regime considered to be “acceptable” uses of the body. In doing this, I aim to demonstrate ways of considering swing dancing in Nazi Germany as more than simply transgressive.

Daniel Guberman (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): “Elliott Carter’s Cello Sonata: Mediating Schoenberg and Stravinsky in Post-War America”

Scholarship on Elliott Carter has suffered from a career narrative that highlights concepts of individuality and freedom, presenting objectivity and rationality as defining aspects of his style. This narrative has led to limitations in examining both the historical context of his post-war music and his self-conscious attempt to draw on the influence of both Schoenberg and Stravinsky, figures often seen as diametrically opposed. In this paper I will present a new analysis of Carter’s Cello Sonata that examines the work’s connections with the styles of the two great composers, suggesting that it should be read in dialogue with contemporary arguments over their influence on the direction of American music.

Carter composed the sonata in 1948, during a period which saw new demand abroad for American musical leadership. While many composers debated whether this leadership should draw on the schools of Stravinsky or Schoenberg, Carter found himself caught in the middle. A childhood devotee of Schoenberg, Carter studied under Boulanger in Paris, where he trained in Stravinskian neoclassicism that defined his pre-1945 works. In the cello sonata, he sought to demonstrate that the two composers could provide mutually productive directions in composition, drawing on aspects of each, both juxtaposed and assimilated in his new style. Furthermore, he found a paradigm for connecting their styles in contemporary jazz, which juxtaposed a soloist with a band, bringing together the two composers’ styles through a uniquely American music, much as they had physically been brought together by America during the war.

Yen-Ling Liu (Stanford University): “Painting and Musical Depiction in Franz Liszt’s *Hunnenschlacht*”

Among Franz Liszt’s symphonic poems, *Hunnenschlacht* is unique in taking as its model not a literary source but a monumental fresco by Wilhelm Kaulbach. This paper considers the way in which Liszt depicted the implied narrative plot and the visual qualities of the painting through innovative instrumental and formal techniques.

Liszt referred to the graphic illustration of the fresco as his primary source, yet he also attempted to convey the colors in the fresco itself. His peculiar treatment of instrumentation—including unique combinations of instruments—and bold treatment of dynamics vibrantly depict the distinct colors and lights enveloping the principal figures in the painting. Most importantly, Liszt sought to highlight certain physical movements which the painting only implies. He thus transformed the static image, with its simultaneous and multiple actions, into a process of a battle unfolding in distinct stages.

These programmatic or imitative aspects are tied to the role of the apotheosis in the work. In Kaulbach’s fresco, the apotheosis of the combatants in the air symbolizes the triumph of Christianity. Liszt placed this moment in the middle of the symphonic poem and then created a second apotheosis at the end of the work to serve as its “finale.” This paper concludes by examining this double apotheosis, which raises the question of the “finale problem” traditionally associated with multi-movement works. The presence of the central apotheosis presents the compositional challenge of reaching an even more assertive and conclusive finale in this single-movement work.

Laura Dolp (Montclair State University): “Viennese ‘Moderne’ and its Spatial Planes, Sounded”

The opening of Mahler’s “Der Abschied” from *Das Lied von der Erde* demonstrates a special set of musical conditions that include spare textures, a wide disposition of instrumental forces, and the effect of temporal suspension. This transparency allows the process of individuation and exchange between musical elements to come to the fore, especially in relation to timbre. The passage highlights voices that work in synthesis with those that are juxtaposed. This paper establishes how Mahler’s music is defined spatially through this process. It also suggests new historical implications for Mahler’s construction of musical space through examining the corollaries between his music and the visual tensions in the landscape works of his artistic contemporaries, Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele. In both musical and visual context, these tensions reflect the diversity of the Viennese ‘Moderne’ through their ephemeral and laconic qualities.

Mahler’s tendency to “suspend” time and flatten the sonic plane was critical fodder for an ideological argument that involved ornamentation versus organic development, since his methods reflected ambiguously on the nineteenth-century tradition of teleologically-based symphonic forms. “Abschied” derived its relevancy neither from static surface nor motivic development but by its capacity to suggest unique spatial relationships. It also initiates a timbrally and rhythmically nuanced recitative, in the form of subtle decays and articulated renewals. Like Klimt’s superimposed visual planes, which create a synthetic relationship between figure and ground, Mahler’s music suggests incremental distances between subjects as well as the economy Schiele’s laconic subjects. In Mahler’s work, both types of experiments coexist.

William Gibbons (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): “The Trials of Authenticity: *The Magic Flute* in 1909 Paris”

“Authenticity” was a major topic in early twentieth-century French music criticism. As performances of “early” (pre-nineteenth-century) music increased, a group of critics including Gabriel Fauré, Paul Dukas, and Reynaldo Hahn demanded greater “authenticity” in operatic productions, including Mozart’s operas. In response to these heightened expectations, when director Albert Carré proposed reviving *The Magic Flute* at the Opéra-Comique in 1909—its first production since 1892—he commissioned a new, “faithful,” translation of the original libretto. This highly publicized translation was a major deviation from typical productions of *The Magic Flute* in France. Early versions of the work had almost nothing to do with Mozart and Schikaneder’s singspiel, and its situation changed only marginally over the next century. The most popular nineteenth-century version (created in 1865) was, in the words of one frustrated *fin-de-siècle* critic, “less an adaptation than a complete rewrite of the German text.”

The new 1909 libretto, designed to appease critics by appealing to burgeoning notions of textual fidelity, instead raised major questions regarding the benefits—and dangers—of “authenticity” in the opera house. The considerable differences between the new translation and the more familiar 1865 adaptation divided critics between those who found the “authentic” libretto sublime and those who found it shockingly ridiculous. This paper will examine the major trends in the reception of the 1909 Parisian production of *The Magic Flute*, and explore the ways in which this production became a nexus of critical discourse regarding the (dis)advantages of “authenticity” in music.

James M. Doering (Randolph-Macon College): “Curing Mahleritis and Other Philharmonic Ailments: Arthur Judson, Clarence Mackay, and the 1923 Fix”

Although now among America’s finest ensembles, the New York Philharmonic did not always hold that status. Prior to the 1920s, it frequently lagged behind the Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, and New York Symphony in terms of quality. In 1921, however, the Philharmonic acquired a new Board chair, mining magnate Clarence Mackay, who injected wealth and vision into the organization. Mackay instituted several initiatives to raise the ensemble’s quality and relevance. He also hired Arthur Judson as the orchestra’s manager. Judson brought a new organizational efficiency to the Philharmonic, as well as musical expertise; he was a former violinist, conservatory dean, and music journalist. Judson was also then manager of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Mackay leaned heavily on Judson’s insights during the 1920s. This paper examines the intriguing 1923-24 season when both men became directly involved in dictating musical policy to the Philharmonic conductors, Mengelberg and Van Hoogstraten. The catalyst was the difficult previous season, which had suffered from poor reviews and numerous subscriber complaints about programming. Mengelberg’s predilection for Mahler was a particular concern, and when Mengelberg again suggested Mahler for the 1923-24 season, Judson and Mackay decided to intervene. With Mackay’s blessings, Judson and Lawrence Gilman, *Herald-Tribune* critic and Philharmonic program annotator, constructed all of the Philharmonic programs for the 1923-24 season. The subsequent correspondence between Judson, Mackay, and Mengelberg, which survives in the Philharmonic archives, forms the basis for this paper. It reveals the complexities of orchestral programming and the complicated relationship that often exists in American concert music between art, taste, and commerce.

Christina Taylor Gibson (The Catholic University of America): “Carlos Chávez’s *Horsepower* and U.S.-Mexican Cultural Exchange”

On March 31, 1932, a large audience arrived at the Philadelphia Academy of Music to see the premiere of Carlos Chávez’s ballet, *Horsepower* (*Caballos de Vapor*), performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra and Opera under the direction of Leopold Stokowski. It was the first time the composer’s work was presented by a major U.S. symphony orchestra and received attention in the U.S. national press. The *Horsepower* premiere became the first in a series of performances to establish Chávez’s significance in the U.S. In the years that followed, his prominent roles in both Mexican and U.S. musical life allowed him to serve as an informal musical ambassador, encouraging performances of U.S. music in Mexico and Mexican music in the U.S.

This paper is based on material at the Carlos Chávez archive at the Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico City) which contains a large collection of reviews, correspondence, and other documentation relating to the *Horsepower* premiere, some of which have not yet been investigated by scholars. Study and analysis of this material, alongside examination of the score and other reports of the performance, allow a re-evaluation of the premiere’s place in Chávez’s career and its role in U.S.-Mexican cultural exchange.

Naomi Graber (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill): “‘Es war inmitten unsres Wegs im Leben’: Stefan George’s Dante in Arnold Schoenberg’s *Die Jakobsleiter*”

The libretto of Arnold Schoenberg's unfinished oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*, written between 1915-1917, presents the composer's musical and philosophical vision of the path to heaven. Scholars such as Jean Christensen, Jennifer Shaw, and David P. Schroeder and have found the sources of Schoenberg's thought on this topic in the nineteenth century works of Honoré de Balzac, Emanuel Swedenborg and August Strindberg. Crucially, I will argue that Schoenberg drew on another, earlier narrative: Dante Alighieri's *Divina Commedia*, as translated by the German poet and Dante aficionado Stefan George.

Excerpts from the *Commedia* in George's translation were collected and published just before Schoenberg began work on *Die Jakobsleiter*. Schoenberg's own copy of the text survives in his library. A close examination of these annotated excerpts reveals many narrative and philosophical parallels between Dante's and Schoenberg's depictions of heaven. For example, many of Schoenberg's characters have counterparts in the *Commedia* (eg., the angelic guides Gabriel/Virgil and shades die Seele/Stations). Moreover, Schoenberg's ghostly spirits climbing the rungs of Jacob's Ladder resemble Dante's shades advancing through levels of the mountain of Purgatory. Finally, Schoenberg's musical depiction of the mass of spirits in his afterlife literally realizes Dante's description of the sounds of hell: “Unfamiliar tongues, horrendous accents/words of suffering, cries of rage, voices/Loud and faint, the sound of slapping hands/all these made a tumult, always whirling....” Thus, in linking a modernist text to a medieval masterpiece, my paper addresses the important, unexplored relationship of Schoenberg to Dante.

Noel Verzosa (Hood College): “Debussy, Modernism, and the Concept of Purity”

In her *Lectures on Modern Music*, Nadia Boulanger wrote that Debussy's music, rich with pictorial titles, evoked both the external world and the inner life of the soul. Meanwhile, in *The Dehumanization of Art*, José Ortega y Gasset wrote that external imagery and inner psychology were precisely the things Debussy excised from his music. Amazingly, Boulanger and Ortega y Gasset claimed precedent for these conflicting views in the same source: the concept of “purity” as promulgated by, and which Debussy purportedly learned from, Symbolist poetry. That both interpretations were made in the same year (1925), moreover, indicates how contested the concept of purity as an aesthetic ideal had become by the twentieth century and how much this contest permeated different spheres of art. While both critics characterized modern art as a progression toward the “purity” of aesthetic material, one measured purity by its richness of content while the other measured it by its absence of content.

In this paper I trace the ways in which these competing conceptions of purity have informed Debussy reception, then and now. I will show how different interpretations of Debussy's “purity” belied critics' allegiances to different aesthetic ideologies. The dichotomy between Boulanger and Ortega y Gasset, I argue, represents a fundamental split in the aesthetics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, one that was foundational to what we now know as “modernism.” Consequently, the story of Debussy's relationship to Symbolism is, in miniature, the story of modernist criticism in music.

Andrew H. Weaver (The Catholic University of America): “Representing the Monarch in Sound: Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III at the End of the Thirty Years’ War”

Although music (especially opera) is almost always mentioned in studies of monarchical representation, its role in presenting the image of early modern monarchs has yet to be fully explored. This paper adds a new dimension to our understanding of the subject by discussing the role of sacred music in representing Ferdinand III of Habsburg in the mid-seventeenth century. Ferdinand III (r. 1637-57) offers a fascinating case study, for within five years of his ascension, a shift in the Habsburgs’ military fortunes forced an almost immediate halt to the patronage of the traditional visual and theatrical means of representation. The war also necessitated that Ferdinand revise the image cultivated at the beginning of his reign, that of a victorious warrior.

After explaining how music served as representation, this paper focuses on one motet that encapsulates many ways in which music served Ferdinand’s needs: Giovanni Felice Sances’s *Audi Domine*. Published in 1642, as the tide of the war turned against the Habsburgs, this work beseeches God for protection from enemies. Setting a liturgical text derived from an Old-Testament prayer by King Solomon, Sances’s motet dramatizes the text by separating a bass soloist from the other singers. The bass soloist becomes an “actor,” who can be interpreted as Ferdinand III, presenting an image of the emperor modeled upon King Solomon. Musical analysis, especially an unexpected harmonic and stylistic shift toward the end, also demonstrates that the motet served as communication between Ferdinand and his subjects, presenting messages crucial for maintaining the emperor’s authority.

Blake Stevens (College of Charleston): “Monologue and Ruptured Dialogue in the *Tragédie en musique*”

This paper develops a model of “monologic utterance” extending beyond the soliloquy, or monologue scene, in the *tragédies en musique* of Jean-Baptiste Lully and his successors. It first examines seventeenth-century views of the monologue by the Abbé d’Aubignac and Pierre Corneille. Both theorist and playwright addressed the difficulties of presenting extended solitary speech in the theater, arguing that the expository or confessional function of the monologue could be integrated into scenes with a confidant or trusted counselor. The form’s dramaturgical complications could therefore be cancelled out through dialogue.

Readings of selected scenes from works of Lully, Montéclair, and Rameau will illustrate the presence of monologues embedded within operatic dialogue, reflecting practices in French classical tragedy. These examples include closed forms such as the *rondeau air* as well as passing inflections of simple recitative. Such discourse may be integrated into dialogue, yet it may also turn away from direct communication. The everyday notion of monologue as “monopolizing speech” captures the form’s power in rupturing the discursive equilibrium of dialogue. Although theorists argued that monologues could be replaced by interaction with a confidant, certain operatic scenes challenge this model. Characters who engage with confidants may evade immediate communication by replacing the flexible interchange of dialogue with expressions of rage and reverie, or with imaginary dialogues directed away from the stage. In the *tragédie en musique*, these emphatic and one-sided expressions may be articulated through striking shifts in texture, instrumentation, harmony, vocal idiom, and gesture.