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Les Parisiennes: French Women Composers of the Long Nineteenth Century

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Special points of interest:

The 20th Anniversary Issue

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The well-known brain teaser about naming five famous Belgians can be recast as a question about French women composers: how many can you name? The reason for the query is that *les compositrices* are a surprisingly large group, but even though they composed a lot of fine music, they are still little appreciated.

Lili Boulanger (1893–1918) is probably the best known, partly for being the first woman to win the Prix de Rome in 1913, as well as for her intense but tragically short life, and because her sister **Nadia Boulanger** (1887–1979) was a brilliant teacher. In fact, there were over thirty French women composing a wide range of music throughout the period known as the long nineteenth-century (1789–1914)—possibly more than in any other country, although the English came a close second. This overview covers the salons, opera, orchestral, chamber, instrumental, piano, and vocal music, and contrasts the women who created all these works with their male colleagues and the “mostly-men in-charge” of the big musical organizations, such as the Conservatoire de Paris.

The history of France during this time is woven into this musical narrative, including the effects of the French revolution, Napoléon, the first three Republics, the Commune, and the Republican movement. The ups and downs of the economy and the changing societal circumstances brought a range of challenges for women composers; they faced them with strength and imagination.

Opera was the dominant musical genre at this time, and instrumental works by Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn were the most frequently performed. In “serious” music, works in sonata form were favoured; this century saw the rise of virtuosic writing, often as variations and fantasias on popular

operatic airs. A sense of pride and value in French culture was also emerging, along with the beginnings of a national style. The characteristics generally associated with French music are clarity, moderation, balance, and wit. The *compositrices* discussed here had their own version of these qualities: it is about individual character, not gender.

With the motto “Ars Gallica,” the Société nationale de musique was founded in 1871 by Camille Saint-Saëns. From 1870, the time of the Third Republic, nationalism and women’s issues were at the forefront of French politics. Societal expectations made it difficult for women to pursue a career in music. Many of the population were Catholics.

My website www.womenofnote.co.uk is the result of sharing my research and performing experiences with music by women of the last 250 years. It started in 1985 with giving the UK premiere of Germaine Tailleferre’s Piano Concerto (1924). In 2016, I made a CD recording called *Liberté, Egalité, Sororité*, featuring works by six French women composers (1874–1952). *BBC Music Magazine* commented that “much still needs to be done for those from earlier times who were faced with a dismissive establishment fraternity,”¹ pointing to the difficulties female musical creators experienced in being taken seriously. Thus my interest in music by French women was sparked.

Some of these women came to be composers by being born into a musical family (such as **Julie Candeille**, 1767–1834, and **Pauline Viardot-Garcia**, 1821–1910). Naturally, education played an important role; the major teachers of many of these women included Anton Reicha, Gabriel Fauré, Vincent d’Indy and César Franck. Several women composers studied at the Paris Conservatoire, and some also became

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professors there (such as **Hélène de Montgeroult**, 1764–1836, and **Louise Farrenc**, 1804–1875). Pedagogy was a good profession for women; they were appreciated as teachers, and more than a few wrote their own *Methodes* and *Études* (including **Marie Jaëll**, 1846–1925 and **Blanche Selva**, 1884–1942).

Throughout the long nineteenth century, music moved from being the servant of religion and providing entertainment for royalty and the aristocracy to wider interests—esthetic, ethical, material and political. Previously, music was often composed for specific occasions; by contrast, as it became accessible to a wider audience, there were more performances available for people of the middle class, leading to a broadening of the repertoire. The musical *feuilletons* (supplements to the newspapers) attracted interest through artist-writers such as Berlioz.

During the French Revolution (1789–1799), music was closely bound up with social, political and patriotic ideas. On 14 July 1790, a *Fête de la Fédération* was celebrated to mark the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, and the large public space of the Champs de Mars was transformed into a huge outdoor theatre, hosting an enormous public spectacle. François-Joseph Gossec wrote a massive Te Deum for the occasion, scored for 1200 singers and 300 wind instruments. France was highly centralized; major decisions were made in Paris. Anticlerical sentiments were growing; the lands and buildings of the Catholic Church were confiscated. There were new possibilities for working people.

La Marseillaise (or *Le chant de guerre pour l'armée du Rhin*) was composed in Strasbourg by the army officer Rouget de Lisle on 25 April 1792. Also known as the *Hymne des Marseillais*, it was first sung in public on 30 July 1792 by a battalion of volunteers from Marseilles as they marched into Paris. A rousing patriotic song, *La Marseillaise* was a call to arms against tyranny and the army of Austria, and it fired the imagination and inspired the troops that chose it as their marching song. It was performed at the intermission of theatre performances, and became the official anthem of the Revolution, and ultimately the French national anthem.

As society began moving towards equality, the aristocracy had less influence; the social changes included the loss of the Kapellmeister system, and there was more freedom in the creative world. The day before the storming of the Bastille (14 July 1789), Bernard Sarrette, an accountant, gathered forty-five musicians together from the Gardes Françaises to contribute their music to the revolutionary cause. They later formed the National Guard and provided music on the battlefields. By 1795 it was agreed that these musicians were central to the regeneration of the nation, so they founded a school to teach young musicians—the Conservatoire de Paris. It opened its doors in 1796, and attempted to house the many facets of music production in one organization. Hélène de Montgeroult became the first female professor at the Conservatoire in 1795, when she pub-

lished her *Trois sonates pour le forte-piano*, op. 1; soon after, in about 1795 or 1796, her *Cours complet pour l'enseignement du forte piano* also appeared in print.

Some of the most important musical names in Paris were on the staff of the Conservatoire early in its history. Over the first two centuries, men were in charge, but women participated in the life of the institution as both students and professors. (The first female Director of the Conservatoire, Émilie Delorme, was not appointed until 2019). Sometimes women, who were friends of performer-teachers (such as Georges Gillet and Paul Taffanel), contributed the pieces that were especially composed for the end-of-year *Concours*.

The actress Mademoiselle Montansier opened her own musical theatre in the Palais-Royal in 1790. Seventy-six new comic operas or vaudeville programs were staged that year, and fifty new works in each of the following years. Censorship of theatrical works was abolished in 1791, but this freedom did not last long. In 1793, the Committee of Public Safety decreed that any theatre which put on plays “contrary to the spirit of the Revolution” would be closed and its property seized. After this decree, musical works on patriotic and revolutionary themes multiplied in the Paris theatres. Meanwhile, Julie Candeille’s opéra-comique *Catherine, ou la belle fermière* was one of the ten most performed dramatic works during 1793–1795; it became the longest running operatic work by a woman in musical history.²

Given the importance of opera, the organization running France’s primary opera and ballet company was influential. From 1793 to 1806, the Opéra de Paris was located in the Salle Montansier in the Rue de Richelieu. From its beginning (1669) until the time of writing, there has been only one female Managing Director of the Opéra de Paris—the ballet dancer Brigitte Lefèvre, general administrator of Le Palais Garnier from 1992 to 1994. Earlier nineteenth-century grand opera sometimes reflected public concerns. Daniel Auber’s *La Muette de Portici* (*The Mute Girl of Portici*), composed in 1828, was thought to have precipitated political upheaval in Belgium. The operatic world was enriched by works from François-Adrien Boieldieu, André Grétry, Étienne Méhul, and **Henriette de Beaumesnil** (1748–1813), such as her *Plaire, c’est commander* (1792).

The bloodiest phase of the Revolution lasted from the autumn of 1792 to April 1793. The fall of the Monarchy (Louis XVI was guillotined on 21 January 1793) led to the formation of the First Republic (1792–1804); the National Convention was the first French government organized as a Republic, and beginning on 20 September 1792, it sat as a single chamber assembly. In September 1793, the Théâtre de la République presented Julie Candeille’s comic opera *Bathilde, ou Le duc*, with the composer herself in the title role. After the winter of 1793–1794, there was a major

food shortage, which triggered riots in the streets. The Committee of Public Safety introduced a policy of terror, with increasing use of the guillotine. The Reign of Terror was finally suppressed by late May 1795.

Napoléon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor on 2 December 1804. Music during the First French Empire (1804–1815) was used to celebrate victory and glory. The Imperial Academy and the Opéra-Comique were at the top of the hierarchy of the eight official theatres, followed by the Théâtre de l'Empereur, the new Opera buffa of the Théâtre de l'Impératrice (Theatre of the Empress), which was run by Mademoiselle Montansier. The Napoleonic Code guaranteed legal equality and civil liberties, but at different times it was both liberal and authoritarian; it reversed divorce rights for women, and although there was public education, there was neither democracy nor freedom of the press. After many European military successes, Bonaparte was finally defeated in 1815 at the Battle of Waterloo.

The title of one opera stands out for its political interest: *Mademoiselle Launay à la Bastille*. Composed in 1813 by **Sophie Gail** (1775–1819), this opéra-comique was inspired by real-life events: after being implicated in a plot against Philippe II (Duke of Orléans), Mlle Launay was imprisoned in the Bastille from 1718 to 1720, and the opera was based on her memoirs. Gail was not afraid to shock, and her *La sérénade*, presented in Paris at the Théâtre-Comique, was about deception; it was considered scandalous, and her lack of reserve offended the public's sense of decorum. In April 1818, the *Gazette de France* mocked it slightly for being by a woman, but praised the sextuor.

In the July Revolution of 1830, *Trois Glorieuses* (Three Glorious Days), 27–29 July, led to the overthrow of Charles X. Music played its part in this Revolution; the famed tenor Adolphe Nourrit (1802–1839), who had starred in the operas of Rossini, went on to the stages of Paris and sang *La Marseillaise*, which had been forbidden during the First Empire and the Restoration. As Europe was in turmoil because of revolutions and repression, many of the finest musicians in the continent sought sanctuary in Paris. The Garcia family were among them, and **Maria Malibran** (1808–1836) composed songs in French and Spanish in the late 1830s.

Berlioz wrote the programmatic *Symphonie fantastique, épisode de la vie d'un artiste*, op. 14, in 1830, and the hybrid concerto-symphony *Harold en Italie* appeared in 1834. Also highly imaginative were the romances that **Pauline Duchambge** (1778–1858) composed in the 1830s, with such titles as *Prière des laboureurs* and *Ronde des pauvres*. Songs were considered the natural musical domain for women; they composed many settings of texts by poets such as Francis Jammes, Alfred de Musset, and Maurice Maeterlinck. The Salle des concerts du Conservatoire was inaugurated in 1811; in 1838, the pianist **Thérèse Wartel** (1814–1865) became the first female soloist to play with the Orchestre de la Société

des concerts du Conservatoire. While German music predominated, symphonies by Berlioz and Louise Farrenc were performed there as well (Farrenc's three symphonies were heard there in the 1840s). Highly successful as a pianist, Farrenc composed the well-received *Air russe varié*, op. 17, in 1837. She also sustained considerable interest in chamber music, creating such notable works as her Violin Sonata, op. 38 (1848), the Cello Sonata, op. 46 (1858), two Piano Quintets (1839 and 1840), which predate the Piano Quintet by César Franck, and her pioneering Nonet (1849) and Sextet (1852). She was acknowledged by twice winning the Prix Chartier of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, in 1861 and 1869.

The Société de musique de chambre was founded in 1834, and in 1848 it became the Société Alard-Franchomme (named after the violinist and cellist who ran it); the focus of this group was the German classics, and it continued to operate until 1872. Another group, founded by Pierre Chevillard in 1850, sought to acquaint the public with the late Beethoven quartets. Students at the École Polytechnique formed a musical society called La Trompette in 1860. Most of their programs included performances of string quartets. This gave the growing number of quartets in France an opportunity to perform, and an avenue by which the public could become comfortable with the idea of contemporary chamber music. In 1863, Albert Ferrand founded the Société des quatuors français; this group's intention was to perform works by French composers. Marie Jaëll composed her String Quartet in G Minor in 1875.

The piano was developing at this time, mechanically as an instrument, and being advanced by composers and performers. Much of this activity was centred in Paris. The piano was considered a suitable instrument for women; playing was a genteel way for women to show their artistic accomplishments, and did not distort the body unduly. Parallel with the feminine element was a more masculine aspect: virtuosic presentation. Thanks to Paganini and Liszt, this technically brilliant style of music-making was much valued in the nineteenth century. Farrenc composed several sets of variations that generally have a showy nature. Marie Jaëll was also a virtuoso pianist.

Pianos were at the heart of the popular salon gatherings organized by members of the cultured middle class. As hostesses, women invited their favourite young composers to perform, and showed their guests what good taste they had. These get-togethers were a clever bridge between private and public, where the provider demonstrated her intelligence in choosing the music and the company, thus setting the scene for stimulating exchanges. By contrast with the mainly male-run world of public events, the salons were the place where women reigned supreme as presenters and hostesses; this gave them the power to invite their own guests and set the program. With this position of influence, they encouraged young composers who they wanted to support; after a salon

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performance, a new work might become a subject of interest in public musical circles.

The best of intellectual and cultural life happened at these houses. Princesse de Polignac established a salon known for avant-garde music; she was a patron of **Armande de Polignac** (1876–1962) and Nadia Boulanger. The salon of Comtesse Grefulhe was also fundamental to the history of French music. Other noted *salonnières* included Madame de Staël and Princess Mathilde Bonaparte (Napoléon's niece). Composers such as Pauline Viardot-Garcia and **Augusta Holmès** (1847–1903) showcased their own compositions at their home salons.

The Bourbon Restoration (1814–1830) came after the fall of Napoléon. A more Romantic mode of expression in the arts was seen in the novels by Stendhal (*Le Rouge et le noir*, 1830), Balzac (*La Comédie humaine*, 1829–1848), and Hugo (*Les Misérables*, 1862). The piano gained renewed popularity, notably at salon concerts. Operas were lavish presentations, with spectacular sets, rapid pace and extravagant emotion. The impressive romantic passion of Auber's *Le muette de Portici* (1828) helped to establish grand opera. **Louise Bertin** (1805–1877) was twenty-two in 1827 when she composed *Le loup-garou* (*The Werewolf*); it has been described as a kind of visual version of the silent horror films of the early twentieth century.³

Beginning in 1824, under Charles X, there was a turn towards more conservative ways. A financial crisis occurred in 1825, followed by the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies. The restriction of suffrage resulted in the installation of the Duke of Orléans, Louis-Philippe, as King (1830–1848). *Le mauvais œil* (*The Evil Eye*) was composed by **Loïsa Puget** (1810–1889) in 1836, and produced at the Théâtre de l'Opéra-comique the same year. In 1837, Liszt wrote in *La Revue et Gazette musicale*: "Paris is the pantheon of living musicians, the temple where one becomes a god for a century or for an hour; the burning fire which lights and then consumes all fame."⁴ The dominance of Italian opera caused Berlioz to complain in the *Journal des débats* that there were six operas by Donizetti playing in Paris in one year. He wrote: "Monsieur Donizetti has the air to treat us like a conquered country; it is a veritable war of invasion. We can no longer call them the lyric theatres of Paris, just the lyric theatres of Monsieur Donizetti."⁵ Ballet re-emerged, enfranchisement doubled, the *goguettes* (working-class singing-clubs) grew in popularity, there were wandering street musicians and a wide range of popular songs dealing with many subjects.

Victor Hugo's first and only libretto written in collaboration with a composer was with Louise Bertin: *La Esmeralda* is her setting of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and it was premiered at the Théâtre de l'Académie de Musique in 1836. Jacques Offenbach had great success with his operettas such as *Orphée aux enfers* (1837); his *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* (1867) was a rare satire on military/government nonsensicality. Eight romances and *chansonnettes* by Pauline Duchambge were published as *Album musical pour l'année 1841*. In 1860, **Clémence de Grandval's** (1828–1907) operetta *Le Sou de Lise* was per-

formed at the Théâtre des Bouffes-Parisiens, and subsequently published under the pseudonym Caroline Blangy.

King Louis-Philippe fled to England in February 1848. November of that year saw a new constitution; France became a democratic republic, and the state divided into legislative, executive and judicial powers. In December 1848, Prince Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte was elected as President of the Second Republic (with seventy-four percent of the vote). Once in power, he embarked on a protracted struggle to circumvent or eliminate the clause in the constitution which would require him to step down after fulfilling his term of office. On the night of 1–2 December 1851, the anniversary of both his uncle's coronation (1804) and the Austerlitz victory (1805), he staged a self-coup which dissolved the National Assembly, and granted himself dictatorial powers. As Napoléon III, Emperor of the French, he ruled from 1852 to 1870, between the Second and Third Empires. Highlighting technological progress, the Paris Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867 also had an important musical component. New musical instruments such as the saxophone and the Steinway piano were put on display.

The big public-works program Napoléon commissioned included Georges-Eugène Haussmann's development of Paris and connecting the national railway network; he removed the gag silencing the press, and there was universal male suffrage. In 1851, Gounod's *Sapho* was performed by Pauline Viardot at the Opéra de Paris; in 1858, Berlioz completed his *Les Troyens*; Viardot collaborated with Ivan Turgenev on *Le dernier sorcier* in 1867; and throughout this period, Clémence de Grandval had several operas produced at Paris theatres, including *Piccolino* at the Théâtre Italien in 1869.

The Franco-Prussian war between the Second French Empire and the North German Federation took place between 19 July 1870 and 28 January 1871; France wanted to maintain the dominant position in Europe. On 16 July 1870, France declared war on Prussia; Germany won six months later, and Franco-German enmity began. Founded on the tide of strong nationalist feeling, the Société nationale de musique (1871) aimed to promote French music, leaning away from opera towards chamber music. Saint-Saëns wrote in the music journal *Le Ménestrel* in March 1872 that "France needs something else; in this time when music, the youngest of the arts, enters into full possession of its virility, France needs a robust musical school, capable of standing toe-to-toe with foreign schools. . . . The music of France must be serious if it wants to count for something in the world."⁶

The success of the Société nationale increased initiative and association between composers. Chamber music occupied an important place in their programs from the beginning; Louise Farrenc was an early proponent/composer. There were good performers, many of whom were also

professors at the Conservatoire; these successes led to the emergence of other groups promoting French music. **Cécile Chaminade's** (1857–1944) Piano Trio No. 1 in G Minor appeared in 1881. Marie Jaëll's Cello Sonata was composed in the early 1880s. Grandval won the inaugural Prix Rossini with her oratorio *La fille de Jaire* in 1880. Early in the twentieth-century, **Mel Bonis** (1858–1937) composed her Flute Sonata and Cello Sonata.

In the two months between 18 March and 28 May 1871, the National Guard seized control of Paris, attempting to establish a direct democracy. It was the first example of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There were feminist, socialist, and anarchist currents in the Paris Commune. Popular songs were particularly associated with the communards, and four spectacular concerts were given at the Palais des Tuileries. Anxious to improve their reputation and legitimize their status through association with high culture, the communards even tried to control the Paris Opéra. Women played a key role in the Commune, and Louise Michel (1830–1905), nicknamed “the grande-dame of anarchy,” was an important figure. However, the Commune was eventually suppressed by the national French army. Music was adapted to the needs of a besieged city; there were lots of patriotic songs. Café singer Mlle Thérèse (1837–1913) wrote the music for the song “Les canards tyroliens” (sometimes translated as “Yodelling Ducks”).

There was a monarchist majority in the National Assembly in the 1871 election; and from 1876 the anti-monarchist direction of the republican movement had increasing support; the French Workers' Party was founded in 1880. Cécile Chaminade's symphonic poem for choir and orchestra *Les amazones*, op 26 (1884), is considered one of her masterpieces. In other art forms, the mid-nineteenth century saw the emergence of a positivist movement (Manet and Renoir), the symbolists (Baudelaire and Mallarmé) and then Impressionism, with Berthe Morisot, Monet, and Pissarro.

Marie Jaëll's aforementioned String Quartet in G Minor was written just a few years after the crushing defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War and the horrors of the Paris Commune. Conceivably, the quartet reflects what the musicologist Joël-Marie Fauquet termed the “crisis of conscience into which losing the Franco-Prussian War had thrown the French nation.”⁷ **Louise Héritte-Viardot** (1841–1918) wrote three piano quartets between 1877 and 1883, and Cécile Chaminade's popular piano pieces and her two piano trios made their appearance in the 1880s.

Jaëll was one of the first women members of the Société des compositeurs de musique. She wrote both the libretto and the music of the big symphonic poem *Ossiane*, which was given at the Salle Érard⁸ by the Orchestre Colonne in May 1879. *La montagne noire* by Augusta Holmès (set in seventeenth-century Balkans) was the first opera by a woman to be produced at the Opéra de Paris (1895).

The Third Republic, which remained in force from 4 September 1870 to 10 July 1940, was the longest lasting system of gov-

ernment since the Revolution. Adolphe Thiers described republicanism as “the form of government that divides the French least.”⁹ There was a long battle to reform public health law in the 1880s, and the repression of communards had disastrous consequences for the labour movement. Paris composers moved away from Romanticism towards Impressionism. Mel Bonis's *Scènes de la forêt* (1907) evoked a sonic image of four scenes from “Dawn” to the “Hunt” (with flute, horn and piano). The optimism and greater affluence of La Belle Époque provided a suitable backdrop for several notable events: the World Fair of 1889 had the Eiffel Tower as its centrepiece, pasteurization was invented, and Marie Curie won her first Nobel Prize (for physics) in 1903. Light entertainment of the period included the birth of the can-can at the Moulin Rouge cabaret.

Musical inspiration was drawn from a variety of sources. Augusta Holmès's opera *Héro et Léandre* (1875) was based on Greek mythology, and her *La montagne noire* was inspired by Balkan history, which was in the French news in 1895. Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon* (1904) takes a light-hearted approach to the Cinderella fairy tale. Based on classical antiquity, Chaminade's ballet *Callirhoë*, op. 37, was first performed in the Grand Théâtre de Marseilles in May 1888; it is nuanced and luxuriant music.

To celebrate the centenary of the Revolution (1889) Augusta Holmès was commissioned to write the *Ode triomphale*, a work requiring 1,200 musicians. In 1890, Vincent d'Indy became President of the Société nationale de musique; disagreements over their programming led to the inclusion of works by foreign composers. Finding it too conservative, Ravel left and set up the Société musicale indépendante in 1910. Meanwhile in 1892, **Eugénie-Emilie Juliette Folville's** (1870–1946) opera *Atala* was presented at the Grand Théâtre, Lille, and then in Rouen; it was based on Chateaubriand's romantic novella about indigenous Americans. Also from 1892, Zola's *La débâcle* was set in the background of the Dreyfus affair, which had polarized French society; the antisemitism practiced by the French army (1894–1906) came to be regarded as a symbol of injustice. In 1897, under the pseudonym Jean Renié, the first violin sonata by a woman to be given at a concert of the Société nationale de musique was by **Henriette Renié** (1875–1956).

Spanish colours occasionally played a part in French music, from the Malibran and Viardot songs, via Louise Héritte-Viardot's *Spanish* Piano Quartet in D Minor (1877, the same year as Bizet's *Carmen*), to Parisian music of the early twentieth century. Russian music also began to be popular. The important Paris Expositions universelles of 1878, 1889, and 1900 brought the greatest musicians in the world to perform in Paris, and also introduced musical genres from around the globe to Paris audiences (including Javanese, Congolese, New Caledonian, Algerian and Viet-

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name music). **Marguerite Olagnier's** (1844–1906) opera *Le Saïs, conte arabe* (1881) was set in Cairo.

Other developments of this time included a proliferation of politicized newspapers, and in 1904, the *entente-cordiale* with Great Britain. **Jane Vieu's** (1871–1955) opera *Arlette* (with a slightly *Merry Widow*-ish plot) also dates from 1904. It ran for over 200 performances in London in 1917. Nadia Boulanger's finest work was the opera *La Ville morte* (1911), composed in collaboration with her mentor Raoul Pugno;¹⁰ her greatest legacy, however, is as the teacher of numerous leading composers from Europe and America, as well as her work at the American School in Fontainebleau. For her, teaching was “a pleasure, a privilege and a duty.”¹¹ Each of the Boulanger sisters composed an important song-cycle: *Les heures claires* by Nadia (1909), again in collaboration with Pugno;¹² and *Clairières dans le ciel* by Lili (1913–1914).

Success often came from public acknowledgement in the form of prizes and awards. There were winners of the highly coveted Prix de Rome: **Hélène Fleury-Roy** won the Grand Prix in 1904; Lili Boulanger was the first female recipient of the Prix de Rome composition prize in 1913; and **Jeanne Leleu** won the Prix de Rome in 1923 with her cantata *Beatrix*. There were also prizes at the Conservatoire: **Hedwige Chrétien** (1859–1944) won prizes for harmony, counterpoint and fugue in 1881. Several pianists also received awards: Magda Tagliaferro (1893–1986) won the Conservatoire's Premier Prix (the highest examination award for performance) in 1907. After winning a first medal in Marguerite Long's preparatory class, Yvonne Lefébure (1898–1986) received first prize in Alfred Cortot's advanced class in 1912. Lucette Descaves (1906–1993) won a first prize at the Conservatoire in 1923, and subsequently became Marguerite Long's assistant. The first woman to be awarded the highest French order of merit, the Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur, was Cécile Chaminade in 1913.

Thanks to the International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP), we know which composers got their works published in their day, and which firms brought them out; women's works were issued by Pleyel, Heugel, Choudens, Eschig, and O'Kelly, among other publishers. Women who chose to do so, simply devoted themselves to composing, with or without commendation.

Considered “feminine,” the accepted musical genres for women composers were songs and short piano pieces. Women, however, composed in all the forms, including a substantial number of operas and symphonies (some mentioned above, such as those of Louise Farrenc, Augusta Holmès and Marie Grandval).

Labelling musical characteristics as masculine and feminine tends to sustain the patina of prejudice. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was not uncommon for critics to write about music in such a manner, but when listening to musical works without any prior knowledge identifying the composer, it is unlikely that audiences could discern which

of the composers were men or women. It has become something of a cliché to note that women expressing themselves noisily have been called aggressive and unfeminine. There are vociferous and assertive women in this account.

Commentators have sometimes questioned whether women should be included in the musical scene; however, everybody is enriched by seeing the complete picture. George Sand said, “There is only one sex. A man and a woman are so entirely the same thing that one can scarcely understand the subtle reasons for sex distinctions with which our minds are filled.”¹³

Unfortunately, not everyone was so open-minded. In his Preface to *Les femmes compositeurs de musique. Dictionnaire biographique*, Otto Ebel wrote: “Woman has produced much more in music than is generally known, although nature has so far not produced a woman composer whose works can be compared to those of the great masters.”¹⁴ Yet the dictionary lists composers of symphonies and orchestral music, operas (e.g., **Anaïs Perrière-Pilté**, 1809–1878; **Lucille Grétry**, 1772–1790), masses (Marie Grandval), requiems (**Louise Geneviève de La Hye**, 1810–1838: *Le Songe de la religieuse*), oratorios, cantatas, concertos, chamber music, and violin, cello, flute, and horn music.

Romanticism in France has been described as a reaction to the formality and rules of Classicism, notably seen in the music of Berlioz and Gounod. Parisian music was also enriched by several important European composers such as Chopin, Liszt, Rossini and Wagner. During the long nineteenth century, musical developments included more personal expression of feeling, the expansion of the harmonic vocabulary (such as greater use of chromaticism), the enlargement of the orchestra, and an increased emphasis on virtuosity, all of which are defining characteristics of Romanticism. Around the turn of the century, various other musical styles arrived in Paris, thanks to the Ballets Russes. Additional new stylistic influences included the cakewalk and tango, introduced to French audiences courtesy of North and South American musicians. In other words, there were many threads in the musical fabric of this period.

At the time of writing, we are well beyond the sexist attitudes that have dogged much of women's history. However, I suggest not only that the music composed by the women mentioned here is little known, but that our deeper knowledge of this area of study is still sorely lacking. Sophie Bawr wrote the first published history of women in music, contributing the volume on *L'histoire de la musique* to the *Encyclopédie des dames* in 1823. The piano was then the common household instrument, and the lady at the piano became the symbol of nineteenth-century musical culture. But symbols rarely tell the whole story. Immortalized in such a way, it is hardly surprising that women musicians of the period have often been portrayed in literature and art

simply as decent, demure and refined. This overview makes clear that they were very much more than that.

Notes:

- 1 Christopher Dingle, "Liberté, Egalité, Sonorité: 100 years of chamber music by French women," *Classical Music Online*, 12 October 2016, <https://www.classical-music.com/reviews/chamber/libert-egalit-sonorit-100-years-chamber-music-french-women/>.
- 2 Jacqueline Letzter and Robert Adelson, "The Legacy of a One-Woman Show: A Performance History of Julie Candeille's *Catherine, ou la belle fermière*," *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 33, no. 1/2 (Fall/Winter 2004–2005): 11–34.
<http://sybariticsinger.com/2017/10/18/the-were-wolf/>.
- 4 Quoted in Marie Christine Villa, *Paris musique: de l'école de Notre-Dame à la cité de la musique: huit-siècles d'histoire* (Paris: Parigramme, 2007), 136–37.
- 5 Quoted in *ibid*, 144.
- 6 Camille Saint-Saëns, "Revue musicale: à propos de Bayreuth," *Estafette*, 25 September 1876.
- 7 Joël-Marie Fauquet, *César Franck* (Paris: Fayard, 1999), 15.
- 8 The Salle Erard is a music venue in the 2ème arrondissement in Paris where many premieres took place.
- 9 Quoted in René de la Croix de Castries, *Monsieur Thiers* (Paris: Perrin 1983), 287–92.
- 10 Léonie Rosenstiel, *Nadia Boulanger: A Life in Music* (New York: Norton, 1982), 91.
- 11 Bruno Monsaingeon, *Mademoiselle: Conversations with Nadia Boulanger* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1985), 54.
- 12 Rosenstiel, 74.
- 13 <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1164326>.
- 14 Otto Ebel, *Les femmes compositeurs de musique. Dictionnaire biographique*, trans. Louis Pennequin (Paris: Paul Rosier, 1910), 12.

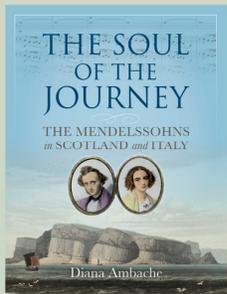
Diana Ambache is a concert pianist, musicologist, and philanthropist. In 2020, she was shortlisted for the European Women of Achievement Awards for her pioneering work in the revival of classical music by women. Half of her seventeen CD recordings are of music by such female composers as Louise Farrenc, Amy Beach, Louise Talma, Marion Bauer and Grażyna Bacewicz. Ambache's book *The Soul of the Journey: The Mendelssohns' Travels in Scotland and Italy* was published in 2021; her most recent book *Grażyna Bacewicz: The First Lady of Polish Music* will be issued by Cambridge University Press in 2022. As a pianist, Ambache has concertized in over 30 countries, and was the first woman in Britain to found and direct her own classical chamber orchestra.

French Women Composers of the Long Nineteenth Century



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THE SOUL OF THE JOURNEY

THE MENDELSSOHN IN SCOTLAND AND ITALY

DIANA AMBACHE

Brother and sister Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn enjoyed a rare bond: they were intimate companions and theirs was one of the most significant musical relationships of the 19th century. They shared and commented on each other's compositions, each highly appreciative of the other but also offering frank, critical advice.

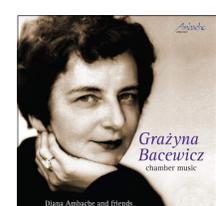
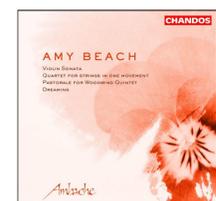
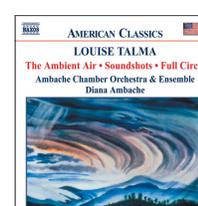
Their travels produced some great music – Felix's best loved works, the Hebrides Overture and the Scottish Symphony, were inspired by his 1829 visit to Scotland, whilst Fanny's innovative piano cycle *Das Jahr* was a musical response to the tour of Italy she made in 1839–40.

Combining letters and sketches with an accompanying narrative describing their journeys, this is a wonderful celebration of the two Mendelssohns and a portrait of Scotland and Italy of the time as seen through the eyes of two of the Romantic movement's most acclaimed composers.

'Engagingly written and handsomely illustrated'

R LARRY TODD, DUKE UNIVERSITY, AUTHOR OF
MENDELSSOHN: A LIFE IN MUSIC AND *FANNY HENSEL: THE OTHER MENDELSSOHN*

Diana Ambache has written for numerous publications, including *The Independent*, *Classical Music* magazine, *BBC Music* magazine, *Classic FM* magazine and *Musical Opinion*. As a pianist she has given concerts in more than 30 countries and has made 16 CD recordings, many featuring the music of women composers. She was shortlisted for the prestigious European Women of Achievement in 2002 for her work pioneering the revival and promotion of music by female composers (www.womenofnote.co.uk). Her book about Grażyna Bacewicz is published by Cambridge University Press (*Elements Women in Music*).



Roubalová 100, Wanklová 100, Tomášková 150? Exploring Women's Contributions to Nineteenth-Century Musical Culture in the Czech Lands

Anja Bunzel

In recent years, a number of composers' anniversaries and centenaries were recognised within the international musicological discourse. Regarding women in music, it is undoubtedly the 200th anniversaries of Clara Schumann's and Pauline Viardot's births which have attracted the most attention (2019 and 2021 respectively). Furthermore, women's impacts within their own contexts have also been discussed more subtly through the lens of their male contemporaries, perhaps most notably so with regard to Ludwig van Beethoven and the 250th anniversary of his birth (2020) and Franz Schubert ('Women's Agency in Schubert's Vienna,' 3-5 November 2022, organised by the Schubert Research Centre of the Austrian Academy of Sciences). This is not to say that musicology as a discipline received a much-needed wake-up call through these current celebrations of anniversaries and centenaries, as women have been subject to musicological enquiry since the 1970s. Nevertheless, gender-sensitive musicology and a systematic contextualisation of musical women's impacts on their own contemporaries have received relatively little attention in Czech-language musicology to date, although there are some exceptions, of course. For this reason, I decided in 2020 to neglect the idea of centenaries and started my quest for musical women in the Czech lands during the long nineteenth century without a particular occasion in mind. The one-year project *Women in Nineteenth-Century Czech Musical Culture* was funded in 2020 through the internal funding scheme of the Czech Academy of Sciences *Strategie AV21* under the cluster 'Forms and functions of communication.' It embraced a two-day international workshop, a number of public outreach activities, and a concert. Drawing on my experience in researching women's engagement in musical culture, both on Czech territory in particular and in Central Europe more generally, I will devote some thoughts in this essay to the study of women in nineteenth-century music in the Czech lands. A detailed survey study would warrant a multi-year research project and at least one major monograph; moreover, I have elaborated on individual protagonists in greater detail on other occasions and will continue to do so. Therefore, I approach the matter in this essay reflectively and more generally, and I discuss on which levels an examination of this topic can prove insightful. There are a number of routes one can take on this journey. Through short examples, I will discuss just four such routes here.

'We have Alboni dizziness, Berliners have Lind fever, it will resolve itself' – Route One: Public Media

Scrutinising contemporary Czech-based and foreign music journals and daily newspapers reveals a large number of names of performers who were active either on Czech territory

and/or who had Czech roots and performed abroad. For instance, the Prague correspondent of the Berlin-based journal *Der musikalische Salon*, wrote in July 1847, that "we have Alboni dizziness, Berliners have Lind fever, it will resolve itself."¹ Here, the correspondent referred to the enthusiastic reception of the singers Marietta Alboni's and Jenny Lind's guest performances in Prague and Berlin, respectively. By stating that the feverish worshipping of the two singers by their audiences will soon 'resolve itself,' he points to the ephemerality of the public's appreciation of such events and also to the rapid developments in the singing business. Yet, on the other hand, it is remarkable that the reviewer chose this comparison between the two singers and that he mentioned Alboni in Prague at all. It seems that her presence was considered to be of extraordinary importance at that given moment, which puts Prague into a more cosmopolitan light than is communicated in most general music textbooks today.

Sometimes contemporary print media also shed light on pedagogues, composers, patrons, librettists/poets, and musical organisers, for instance, when teachers advertise their services, or events are announced by their organisers on miscellaneous pages; when dedicatees, poets, and librettists are mentioned in reviews of compositions; or when teachers are named in reviews of their students' performances. Some nineteenth-century music journals and magazines also published longer theoretical reflections on aspects of music aesthetics and repertoire, where female protagonists could feature directly as journalists or writers. Eliška Krásnohorská's critical discussion of declamation in Czech music, published in *Hudební listy (Musical Leaves)*, is one such example; her involvement as a writer, editor, and reviewer of media formats, which I would call 'salon conversation,' i.e., short news items concerning the private lives of individual protagonists (for example, marriages, deaths, acquisition of property, relocations, or travel plans); longer biographical statements on noteworthy protagonists, usually performers or composers; and a certain amount of gossip (for example, on wages of individual singers in certain venues or on conflicts between particular prima donnas and their employers).

This first route is fruitful when trying to reconstruct public musical life of any given time period, especially when followed systematically, i.e., day by day and page by page, rather than punctually or randomly, for instance, by using the search function provided by the particular accessible databases.² Besides very large tables listing (often only) surnames of musical figures, performed repertoire, reception patterns, and very little biographical context, this approach enables conclusions regarding editorial lines of

individual media types and titles as well as socio-political contexts surrounding both musical works and performances. However, as print media are by their very nature focused on the public domain, the reviews of performances are heavily weighted towards opera and public performances in general. Thus, this route does not allow any in-depth insights into private aspects of the creative process embraced by musical works and performances; neither does it touch upon private musical practices more generally, although some intersections are possible.

‘We would be very grateful...’ – Route Two: Private Sources

Exploring such private sources as correspondences, diaries, or memoirs helps to contextualise creative processes culminating in or originating from performance, composition, and pedagogy. On 1 August 1886, Gabriela von Deym wrote to the pedagogue and music critic František Pivoda that they, that is she and her family, ‘would be very grateful’ if he could send duets, at the same time asking about her own songs and inviting him to her home in Nemyšl.³ Interestingly, von Deym treats Pivoda as both an advisor-mentor on her songs and also a friend of the family, thus clearly merging the boundaries between the professional and the private domains. We do not know how often or regularly Pivoda visited the von Deyms in Nemyšl, but even from the professional perspective of him as a pedagogue—possibly also with regard to the performance of duets either written or recommended by him—this small anecdote points to emotional, professional, inspirational and/or reputational benefits on both sides of this relationship. As an aside, Gabriela von Deym published her *Tři písně* (*Three Songs*) in 1887 with the Prague publisher Hoffmann. The collection includes two songs for one voice and one duet, all three with piano accompaniment.⁴ It shall be interesting to investigate whether there are any stylistic parallels between von Deym’s compositions and those of Pivoda, who seems to have also taught her harmony, as these would add another layer of inspiration to this relationship.⁵

Besides aspects of inspiration and exchange between individual protagonists and professional peers or mentors (for instance, through conversation about compositional aesthetics, teaching methods, performance practice, or extramusical factors), this second route of enquiry might also illuminate family backgrounds of individual figures (for instance, relationships with musical or non-musical siblings, parents, or partners). This approach opens fascinating windows into the private lives of individuals and their circles, although biographical documents always need to be considered within their own context. They may point to personal biases and self-representation strategies, both of which, however, can prove useful when trying to contextualise individual biographies socially, politically, and culturally.

While a systematic examination of the contemporary print media is possible—at least in theory, time and space

issues aside—a similar approach to private documents is not, as not all such sources are published, let alone accessible, and the range of potentially useful sources and private estates is literally endless. Nevertheless, locating such sources and women’s traces therein proves useful for our wider understanding of nineteenth-century musical practice, because women were often more present in the private and semi-private performative spheres than in public. They had an impact on musical practice on more subtle levels (for instance, as composers of small-scale, often unpublished music, as inspirations for male composers or teachers, as financial, societal and/or emotional supporters of the arts or of individual artists, or as leaders of amateur groups or lesser-public musical associations).

‘She did not respond to the questionnaire’ – Route Three: Encyclopaedias

Sometimes modern scholarship can gain from older, even outdated scholarship, although one needs to bear in mind the publication circumstances of such older works. In an endeavour to gather data in a more systematic manner than through route two and with more comprehensive results than those provided by route one, I have assessed selected nineteenth- and twentieth-century encyclopaedias with regard to mentions of musical women. Regarding the composer Jarmila Mixová, *Pazdůrkův hudební slovník naučný* (published in 1937) notes that “she did not respond to the questionnaire,” thus implying that the editor had tried in vain to find out details about Mixová directly from herself while putting together the encyclopaedia.⁶ The archive of the Czech Museum of Music holds two scores by her, one collection of songs and a *Danse grotesque*. The latter bears the publication date 1913, thus suggesting that Mixová must still belong to the group of late-nineteenth-century composers, unless she published her work at an extremely early age. Considering that Pazdůrek was certain that Mixová was still alive when he worked on the publication, one can assume that she must have been born towards the end of the nineteenth century, although she might not have responded to the questionnaire for a number of reasons, one of them being poor health due to age. The newer Czech encyclopaedias *Československý hudební slovník osob a institucí* (published in 1963–65), and the online *Český hudební slovník osob a institucí* do not include entries on Mixová. Although generally outdated, Pazdůrek’s publication is thus an important one, because it mentions protagonists that were neglected in subsequent similar publications, and also because it recognizes steps of the publication process such as unanswered questionnaires or archives holding certain scores.

In general, the results revealed during my journey on route three have surprised me slightly: I have identified a little more than 530 women classified in encyclopaedias as

relevant for musical life on Czech territory during the long nineteenth century. The majority includes performers (mainly singers, actors, and dancers, but also pianists, harpists, and violinists, to name but some), which corresponds with my findings resulting from routes one and two. Further activities on whose account women were included in these encyclopaedias, include composing, teaching (theory and practice), organising, conducting, writing (pedagogical, musicological, biographical, poetic or dramatic texts), translating, supporting the arts and artists, publishing, instrument manufacturing, editing, music criticism, ethnography (mainly collecting, sometimes also observing and writing activities). I was surprised by this wide range of activities, as I had not come across many of them when scrutinising contemporary sources—both public and private. I was also astounded to find that more recent encyclopaedias included less information on particular women, and sometimes also fewer women altogether, than older ones. Finally, it struck me that there was relatively little overlapping between the women mentioned in the different encyclopaedias.

This aspect points to two factors often encountered when conceptualising (and using) encyclopaedias: like any other publication, they always mirror their own times, the priorities of their editors or editorial teams, and their socio-cultural circumstances; and they very often cannot afford a truly systematic, exhaustive, comprehensive and holistic perspective on history, thus resulting in the presentation of a certain selection of information. As incomplete as the data gathered through route three may be, this approach still enables a more comprehensive overview of biographical information on women considered relevant in any given (publication) time with relatively little effort, compared to routes one and two. However, when it comes to music itself, encyclopaedias usually do not provide much detail.

‘My child’s shirt, its mother’s shroud’ – Route Four: Musical Scores

As part of my research I also wanted to locate musical scores by female composers relevant to Czech musical culture. I therefore scrutinised systematically the Czech Museum of Music’s Catalogue 1 of scanned library cards. This sometimes quite tedious exercise resulted in a list of compositions by more than forty female composers currently archived at the museum. These works include songs and piano works, both genres of which correspond to the nineteenth-century performance context of these pieces, which often centred on private or semi-private settings. When

viewed in isolation, these scores do not offer any biographical or historiographical context. Yet these compositions may be of interest on account of their revelation of poet-composer relationships, of such extramusical factors as dedications, relationships with publishers and/or handwritten annotations on the scores, or of their innovative aesthetics.

Marie Madierová’s songs, for instance, reflect the compositional openness towards harmonic and motivic experimentation typical of the end of the nineteenth century. The fourth piece of her duets, ‘Len’ (Linen), to words by Josef Václav Sládek, tells the story of a mother contemplating while spinning whether the shirt that will be produced out of the thread will serve as her “child’s shirt or its mother’s shroud.”⁷ Madierová plays with augmented and diminished intervals throughout the concluding section of the duet, using their characteristic potential of evoking a sense of restlessness and incompleteness. She ends the vocal parts on a diminished seventh chord on the raised subdominant, thus portraying the open question voiced by the lyrical protagonist. Harmonically, this question remains unanswered for another measure, followed by a brief pause, and the resolution via the dominant to the initial tonic, d minor, in the piano accompaniment:

The image shows a musical score for Marie Madierová's song 'Len'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system (bars 21-26) shows a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'mé - mu dě - cku na ko - ši - le, mé - mu dě - cku, je - ho mat - ce'. The second system (bars 27-33) shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment continuing. The lyrics are: 'na ru - bás, je - ho mat - ce na ru - bás. J. Sládek'. The score includes markings for 'ritento' and 'ritard.'.

Example 1: Marie Madierová, “Len,” bars 21–33⁸

Little is known about Madierová’s biography, but for context we know at least that she was a younger contemporary of Josefina Brdliková, as their compositional oeuvres were mentioned in *Ženské listy* alongside each other. Although entirely different in style, both women were reviewed positively as examples of how emerging women composers testified to the potential of women’s creativity.⁹

Even without much biographical background, close examinations of musical scores can offer enlightening perspectives on the history of ideas and on conventional or non-conventional compositional aesthetics of certain time periods (even when they did not receive public attention by reviewers). The primary goal here is not to single out the most embellished melodic lines, the most

complicated harmonic progressions, or, indeed, to find the composition featuring the most contrapuntal errors using as a yardstick the standards and/or schools of thought established in retrospect by some theorists or musicologists. Rather, the scrutiny of works by female composers, when analysed in context, may shed light on innovative compositional approaches by amateur composers and illuminates unique relationships between music, text, and performance; between composer, poet, accompanist, singer, and audience—sometimes unified in one person and sometimes personified in the form of artistic networks, family, and/or other interpersonal relationships. They may also express things which are not easily said elsewhere or through other modes, and which would have been heard less frequently without music. After all, it is Sládek's words *together with* Madierová's music that lent a public voice to the mother in the poem, possibly speaking for many women of that time (and, metaphorically, of all times). Finally, route four, unlike routes one to three, enables modern performances (and possibly recordings) of lesser-known music, an outcome of applied research which is often more effective with regard to public engagement and acknowledgement than scientific papers or reflective essays.¹⁰

Hana Urbancová posits in her preface to *Žena v tradičnej hudobnej kultúre* that the importance of the chapters gathered in this volume “lies most of all in the cultivation of a deeper and inwardly differentiated picture of music and music culture in terms of the part played by women.”¹¹ It is this bigger picture of women's participation in nineteenth-century musical culture of the Czech lands which I hope to continue to illuminate in the coming years. Using centenary and anniversary celebrations as opportunities in order to write women into history is a questionable approach, as this method might suggest that women's achievements in music do not deserve attention without remarkable dates in the calendar, among other reasons. Furthermore, centenary events usually encourage a focus on one rather than a whole generation of neglected figures, presupposing that the seeds of scholarly enquiry would have already been sown. On the other hand, centenary events may prove useful from an administrative perspective: they offer opportunities to think about certain figures without room for postponement and excuses; and, more importantly, they have an impact on memory cultures and the way in which we remember both the people recognised in those events and the events themselves. Finally, celebrating a 200th rather than a 199th or 204th anniversary may seem more appropriate to funders, venues, and presses, thus making an event or publication more accessible and attractive to the wider public.

However, inventory taking precedes focused examination in most disciplines and research fields, which is

why I, too, attempted to get an overview first. I have demonstrated in this essay that different routes of musicological enquiry can and, indeed, *will* lead to different perspectives, perhaps even different conclusions. Although far from exhaustive, the four windows I have opened suggest that women did have an impact on musical culture as active protagonists in different fields—for instance as instrumentalists, composers, supporters of the arts and organisers, librettists/poets, pedagogues and writers (routes one to four); as ethnographers, instrument makers, editors, and publishers (route three); as inspiration, moral support and peer critics (route two), and as creative thinkers and aestheticians in practice (route four). Thus, exploring women's impact on the musical culture of their own time enables insights into socio-cultural history at biographical, historical, compositional-aesthetic, and performative levels.

I am not suggesting that any one of the four routes discussed here should be prioritised over another, or that one will be methodologically better, more effective, or more fruitful. Within the wider non-gender-sensitive discourse of musicology, I often hear that these research routes may seem like ‘old hats’ and that their results seem to offer little that is new. I view them as reminders that, first, women in music deserve the same awareness and similar methodological attention as their male contemporaries; and, second, that perhaps then university curricula and concert programming do not need ‘something very new’ but a change of perspective in order to achieve a more gender-balanced agenda. Thus, I suggest that—when approached with an open mind and without a preset focus on already canonical protagonists—a combination of these and other routes will introduce to us a whole range of thus far lesser-known musical protagonists (both male and female), music-practical activities, unusual performance venues and contexts, and review patterns. All this helps to draw one's attention to the multifaceted layers of music as cultural practice, of a musical life that transcended the realms of a small number of well-documented musical venues and great composers who produced unusually progressive works. It is not my place to say that this approach will result in a superior, better and/or ‘more right’ understanding of nineteenth-century musical life. However, it surely is my pleasure to invite you to come with me on this journey and explore an alternative music history which embraces the full palette of musical activity during the nineteenth century. In the light of this, I advocate for a history of Czech music that considers equally and within their own context women alongside men, private alongside public music-making, creative alongside reproductive and administrative activities, and Czech protagonists in the Czech lands and abroad alongside foreign protagonists in the Czech lands. After all, perhaps it would not be the worst idea to commemorate in 2022 the 100th death anniversaries of singer Gabriela Roubalová (1843–1922), and ethnographer Madlenka Wanklová (1865–1922), or the 150th birthday of

piano teacher Olga Tomášková (1872–1892) (on behalf of all the other hundreds of thus far neglected musical women, of course).

Notes:

- ¹ “Wir haben Alberti-Schwindel, Berliner haben Lind-Fieber, das hebt sich auf,” *Der musikalische Salon* 2, no.7 (July 1847).
- ² I am currently undertaking one such study with regard to selected Berlin, Viennese, and Prague papers as part of the internal funding scheme of the Czech Academy of Sciences (MSM). The examples mentioned here stem from this research, and further findings are planned to be published at a later stage.
- ³ ‘Nous vous serions très reconnaissant.’ Gabriela von Deym to František Pivoda, 1 August 1886, signature 2016/101. There are two further letters mentioning duets. I am grateful to Kateřina Viktorová for sending me scans of the relevant catalogue sheets. The letters are archived at the Národní muzeum–České muzeum hudby, Muzeum Bedřicha Smetany.
- ⁴ The duet, “Tvá láska” (Your Love), was recorded as part of the concert exploring women’s contributions to Czech musical culture. It is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IImBtK4eZw4> (at 28:58).
- ⁵ Von Deym mentions the harmony classes in an undated letter to Pivoda, signature 2016/115.
- ⁶ *Pazdírkův hudební slovník naučný*, ed. Oldřich Pazdírek (Brno: Pazdírek, 1937), 159.
- ⁷ “Mému děcku na košile, jeho matce na rubáš.” For the full lyrics of this and other duets of Madierová see https://womenin.czechmusic.files.wordpress.com/2021/03/female-artists_programme-booklet-1.pdf.
- ⁸ The music example has been typeset in Sibelius following the original published score: Marie Madierová, *Pět dvojzpěvů pro ženské hlasy s průvodem klavíru na slova Jos. Sládka* (Praha: Knapp, [no date]). I thank Patrick Devine for drawing my attention to two unusual notes in the score. I agree that these notes create unusual dissonances; however, I have retained them here, because I have no access to Madierová’s manuscript and thus cannot verify whether or not these are typesetting errors: g’ in bar 21, upper vocal line, third note (more likely this could be a’ in order to follow the piano part); and e in bar 28, piano left hand, third note (which creates a striking dissonance with C# and F in the piano right hand).
- ⁹ *Ženské listy* 24, no. 1 (January 1896): 8.
- ¹⁰ Madierová’s duets were performed as part of the aforementioned concert (see note 4).

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Philippa Duke Schuyler's Seven Pillars of Wisdom is the first studio album from pianist Sarah Masterson, Associate Professor of Piano and Music Theory at Newberry College, South Carolina. The recording represents an admirable effort to introduce Schuyler’s piano literature to the recording catalogue and to also introduce Schuyler to twenty-first century listeners through one of her most ambitious works: a seven-part musical narrative for solo piano, framed with a prologue and epilogue, titled *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (inspired by T. E. Lawrence’s memoir of the same name). With a running time of 1 hour 10 minutes, Masterson immerses us in Schuyler’s creative world.

Born on 2 August 1931 at the height of the Harlem Renaissance to an African American father and white Texan mother, Schuyler’s was a life of challenge, complexity, triumph, and tragedy. Having been raised in Harlem, one would think that Schuyler might have enjoyed the dynamic cultural climate that generated an era of exciting Black artistry, from the poetry of Langston Hughes to the symphonies of William Grant Still. After all, Schuyler demonstrated a proclivity for the arts in early life. However, Schuyler’s parents raised her as a social experiment, believing her mixed racial identity made her ethnically superior; she was supposed to embody the best of both (i.e., Black and white) worlds. She grew up in a controlling environment (which extended to an enforced diet of raw foods, meat included) and a sheltered upbringing

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Alone, Together: the Dis/embodied Soprano Voice in Oxbridge Chapel Choirs

Jessica Edgar

Prelude: Echoes and Spectres

According to mythology, Echo was a nymph who had an admirable ability with language but after she played a trick on Juno, she was condemned to repeat others' words for eternity. When Echo met Narcissus, she fell madly in love, but Narcissus was repulsed by her echoes of his sentences. In her analysis of this myth, Adriana Cavarero points out that these echoes took on a new, sensuous meaning.¹ Narcissus's rejection caused Echo's body to wither away and turn to stones. It is this disembodied voice you hear on a mountaintop or an empty corridor, a "pure voice of resonance."²

Echo repeats the sounds of words rather than their meaning. Her voice is a subtraction, removing her agency, or unique timbre, from the act and leaving the interpretation of her words up to the listener. Thus, as her voice is a reflection, it forms a narcissistic "acoustic mirror" for the listener but returns a voice unrecognizable to Echo herself.³ Echo's situation is exacerbated by the disintegration of her body following Narcissus's rejection; thus, this acoustic mirror is made more poignant through the loss of embodiment.

Cavarero's rendering of Echo exists through the female soprano voice in the chapel choirs of Oxford and Cambridge (Oxbridge). A female soprano experiences this environment with the constant presence of the idealized boy treble sound, reflecting that pure voice as an "acoustic mirror." The voice of an echo is not unique, but transparent and clear, carrying only relational meaning. If that boy treble presence is a *spectre*, haunting the intention behind the voice of mixed Oxbridge chapel choirs, then the female soprano voice is an echo, carrying the relational meaning of the genre-defining boy treble sound in an acoustic 'echo' chamber of timelessness.

The Hauntological Effect

I theorize that female sopranos commonly use two different vocal techniques in Oxbridge chapel choir settings: *embodied* voices which employ full body support and *disembodied* voices which are pure and disconnected from the lower support system, reflecting the boy treble sound.⁴ I am by no means arguing that a soprano would sing solely in an *embodied* manner or a *disembodied* manner, but the presence of this dichotomy raises both physical and symbolic tension relating to notions of cultivated timbre and gendered sonic material. I build upon the nature of these dis/embodied voices as sonic objects to reveal their performative and multifarious nature.⁵

These dis/embodied female soprano voices reflect a tension relating to the boy treble idealized voice within the English choral genre, which is lauded as an "immeasurably precious cultural artifact."⁶ In theory, this voice reflects the "timeless" way boys have sung since the Oxbridge chapel choir tradition began around the fourteenth century, only to be disrupted recently in the 1970s by the addition of women to the top line.⁷ I argue that the idealized treble voice is understood to carry *disembodied* qualities as it contrasts with the female voice, reflected in historical associations of feminine emotionality and masculine reason. Both the recent incorporation of female sopranos into this static tradition and these gendered associations with voice produce a third voice outside of the gendered dichotomy—the female disembodied voice. This voice is affected by the

"historical" treble voice in the present, creating what is known as a hauntological effect. Adam Harper describes this effect as follows: "Hauntological art . . . can be thought of as having two stages, or layers. The first layer seems to present something that's in some way idealized—this is often but not always an image involving the past."⁸ The boy treble voice would seemingly be the first idealized layer which involves the past. However,

[t]he second, 'hauntological' layer problematises, compromises and obfuscates the first layer, undermining or damaging it in some way and introducing irony into the work, and represents the opinionated viewpoint of the present. While the first layer might express hope and confidence, the hauntological layer contradicts and undoes this by expressing a satirical doubt and disillusionment.⁹

In this way, the *disembodied* soprano voice exemplifies a hauntological effect as it sonically reflects the "historical artifact" of the boy's voice, acting as the "opinionated viewpoint of the present." It disillusiones both the purity of the timeless tradition and the vocal timbre itself, echoing the treble but remaining attached to its female body and identity. While the treble sound may not be actively present in the chapels with mixed choirs, "its spectres remain, reappearing to haunt."¹⁰ The positionality of women in these choirs leads to a highly-nuanced situation in which dis/embodied voices reflect not only physical tension in vocal technique, but also a symbolic tension between the concepts of female bodies in the church, institutionalization, timelessness, sound and voice.

The Third Voice

If I were to shout (or sing) on a mountaintop, Echo's voice would be returned to me, reflected off ravines, ridges and cliffs. Rather than informing me of my solitude, she provides an awareness of the open space I inhabit. Thus, Echo provides comradery with a sense of place, a solitary being grounded in history, whether that space is a mountaintop or the choirstalls of an Oxbridge chapel. In these chapels—open spaces which allow Echo the room to provide that sense of place and history—gendered dichotomies of voice, traditions and vocal pedagogies, disembodied in their subliminal effects, exist in the ethereal sphere over the female soprano voice, both grounding it in history and giving it an otherworldly effect.

The disembodied female soprano voice, while achieving a similar purity to the boy treble voice, compromises the ethereal effect of disembodiment through physical and symbolic tension because it is seen as unnatural to the body creating it. The irony here, and the hauntological effect, is that this labor is brought to the forefront because the sound the sopranos are trying to create is uncomfortable for many of them (as made clear through a questionnaire study), highlighting not only the "medium of the art," and expressing "satirical doubt and

Alone, Together:

disillusionment,” but bringing attention to the ideals of the genre itself.¹¹ The disembodied sound perpetuates the historical significance of timelessness but simultaneously creates a tension between this timelessness and a presence of body in the physiological tension felt by its creators, creating a “disjuncture of temporalities.”¹² It is not that this female disembodied voice is necessarily difficult or wrong to listen to, but is for the singer herself creating a voice which is unrecognizable as her own for the effect of assimilation, both to blend with her section and with the tradition. As recently demonstrated by Elizabeth Blackmore, this introduces irony and breaks the illusion, drawing attention to the social context of the present, just as the presence of an adult female voice singing this repertoire immediately brings an awareness to the narrative of absence.¹³

Timothy Day theorizes that the vocal technique used to create the treble’s voice, which is seen as a historical artifact, was only cultivated in the early twentieth century.¹⁴ If this is taken as true, then this idealized, antiquated, and static tradition is made more complex because it presents itself as remaining unchanged. Its timelessness draws attention to temporality through the presence of female sopranos. Therefore, the female soprano sound acts as a contrast to the treble sound “referring to what is no longer present from the past.”¹⁵ In that even the disembodied voice is trapped in its embodied and emotional associations, the female soprano remains in the present but presents a contrast to the historical and timeless sound it replaces, sparking the idea of a lost future.¹⁶ As the boy treble sound was timeless and historical simultaneously, it signified a future which would reflect the past.

The female soprano sound deconstructs this virtual future, interrupting its changelessness. “Hauntology is all about memory’s power (to linger, pop up unbidden, prey on your mind) and memory’s fragility (destined to become distorted, to fade, then finally disappear).”¹⁷ The fragility of the boy’s voice is imperative to the idea of timelessness, as it must be preserved as a historical artifact lest it be lost. Its purity is preserved in cultural memory, which is continued as the boys become men and dominate leadership in the tradition. Thus, it haunts the minds of the female sopranos as they create their internal vocal “choreography.”¹⁸ This also reflects the “temporal disjuncture” with memory’s power in the moment as influencing how one perceives the past, what they want for the future and how that is achieved in the present. The vocal production of female sopranos in Oxbridge chapel choirs is an amalgamation of this temporal disjuncture as it relates to the process of development that these sopranos are experiencing, as this changelessness comes into tension with the concept of self.

The female’s voice in Oxbridge chapel choirs is haunted by this *spectre*, and the echo of the *spectre* they perform is haunted by the female’s “natural” or embodied voice, creating the hauntological, or obfuscating effect. “The female voice is often shown to coexist with the female body at the price of its own impoverishment and entrapment.”¹⁹ In that femininity was “set against a masculine norm,” this embodied voice is a cultural construct created through the gender duality.²⁰ The embodied ideal itself restrains the female voice into one norm of freedom, resonance and fullness, influenced by and influencing listeners in a circular relationship.²¹ Even though the female disembodied voice is haunted by its “natural” self, its presence as a “restrained” voice frees the female identity of its restraining vocal standard.

Linda Austern mirrors these issues of constricting gender dichotomies in her analysis of boy actors playing female roles in seventeenth century England.²² Both boys and women at this time were perceived as being “morally and spiritually undeveloped,” and “required adult male control and gentle guidance toward properly restrained behavior.”²³ Contemporaneous playwrights constructed “feminine frames” around the characters by “dressing their voices as well as their bodies for the necessary context.”²⁴ In the same way that male authors of the period described dangerous, unrestrained mythological female voices, the disembodied male authority in this situation controlled the dangers of femininity.²⁵ Feminine aspects were emphasized or de-emphasized by the boys playing women in comparison to other male characters in the scene. Similarly, female soprano voices (if interpreted as naturally embodied) “dress” their voices or have naturally “dressed” voices to fit in a “masculine frame,” gently controlled by the disembodied male authority.²⁶ Just as the boys playing women demonstrated a “third sex,”²⁷ the disembodied female voice demonstrates a ‘third voice,’ stemming from the duality I have presented here.

In this essay, I am entrapping (to demonstrate that it is trapped) and attempting to free the female voice of these dis/embodied dichotomies. Kaja Silverman discusses feminist cinematic techniques which play on the idea of the female voice as trapped in its body by freeing it from its *emotional* and *free* “claustral confinement” to show its “enormous conceptual and discursive range.”²⁸ I bring light to these “sedimented,” confining dualities to provide a vehicle for the tradition, and those who determine the sound produced by it, to look back on itself and reflect on its purpose.²⁹ Dis/embodied female voices in Oxbridge chapel choirs draw attention not only to the culturally-ingrained treble sound, but also to its positionality in the present. Is the “timeless” English chapel choir tradition, with its perpetuation of gender divisions through the fascination with the disembodied boy treble voice, obsolete?

Female sopranos in chapel choirs are seen by some as a “lost future,”³⁰ representing the “opinionated viewpoint of the present”³¹ and depicting an immediacy and groundedness which opposes unstable beauty of the boys’ voice—the instability being indicative of timelessness. Rather than simply arguing that the embodied female voice adds something new to chapel choir singing, I acknowledge the diversity of female voices, arguing that female sopranos influence and are influenced by a multitude of voices, embodied, disembodied, and hauntological, creating tension of the past, present and future in Oxbridge chapel choirs.

Postlude

Voice is a “residue,” a reflection of the essence from which it comes.³² Just as Echo’s voice is a residue of her disintegrated self, the female disembodied soprano voice is a residue of the presence which exists through its lack. Without body ‘in’ the voice, the female soprano in a chapel choir is “repeating the timbre of the other’s voice [as] mere acoustic resonance, a voice that returns, foreign to the one who emit-

ted it.”³³ Mladen Dolar argued that hearing oneself is a form of narcissism, an “acoustic mirror.”³⁴ For the female soprano, singing in an Oxbridge chapel choir is to become a reflection of others, both in her immediate and historical surroundings. As with Echo, the voice which returns to her is foreign, meaning it is not an “acoustic mirror” for the soprano herself, but instead is both a passageway to see the multitude of voices which influence her, and a reflective surface to see the voice she performed—an ‘acoustic window’ perhaps.

Echo is “pure voice, restricted to repeating the words of others,” providing “a sonorous substance to a semantic that is not organized according to her intentions.”³⁵ While the female voice does indeed echo the *spectre*, intention makes the voice an echo, not Echo herself. Disembodied singing is not a dissolution of the body as with Echo, but an active reflection of an ideal influenced by a collective existing in the present, past, and imagined future. The tension it creates only confirms the presence of the body emitting it and multitudes influencing it. While Echo may be found in solitary corridors or empty valleys, Echo’s multifarious and companioned twin, the disembodied female soprano voice, exists within the walls of chapels in Oxbridge, looking through towards a future which acknowledges and augments the past.

Notes

- 1 For Cavarero’s analysis of Ovid’s take on Echo, see Adriana Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, trans. Paul A. Kottman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 166–67.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 166.
- 3 *Ibid.*
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- 5 Nina Eidsheim, *Sensing Sound: Singing and Listening as Vibrational Practice* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).
- 6 Alan Mould, *The English Chorister: A History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007), 2.
- 7 Timothy Day, *I Saw Eternity the Other Night: King’s College Choir, the Nine Lessons and Carols, and an English Singing Style* (London: Allen Lane, 2018), 229.
- 8 Adam Harper, “Hauntology: The Past Inside the Present,” *Rouge’s Foam: Excessive Aesthetics* (2009), <http://rougesfoam.blogspot.com/2009/10/hauntology-past-inside-present.html>.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 Lisa Perrott, “Time is out of joint: the transmedial hauntology of David Bowie,” *Celebrity Studies* 10, no.1 (2019): 122.
- 11 Harper, <http://rougesfoam.blogspot.com/2009/10/hauntology-past-inside-present.html>.
- 12 Perrott, 120.
- 13 Elizabeth N. Blackmore, *The ‘Angelic Quire’: Rethinking Female Voices in Anglican Sacred Music, c.1889*, Master’s thesis, Durham University, 2016.
- 14 Day, 229.
- 15 Perrott, 122.
- 16 Richard Elliott, *The Late Voice: Time, Age and Experience in Popular Music* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2015).
- 17 Simon Reynolds. *Retromania: Pop Culture’s Addiction to its own Past* (London: Faber, 2012), 335.
- 18 Eidsheim, 141.
- 19 Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 141.
- 20 Linda P. Austern. “No Women are Indeed: The Boy Actor as Vocal Seductress in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century English Drama,” in *Embodied Voices: Representing Female Vocality in Western Culture*, ed. Leslie C. Dunn and Nancy A. Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 87.
- 21 Nina Eidsheim, “Synthesizing Race: Towards an Analysis of the Performativity of Vocal Timbre,” *Transcultural Music Review* 13 (2009), <https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/57/synthesizing-race-towards-an-analysis-of-the-performativity-of-vocal-timbre>.
- 22 Austern, 83–102.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 87.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 102.
- 25 Dunn and Jones, 3.
- 26 Austern, 102.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 87.
- 28 Silverman, 186.
- 29 Judy Lochhead, “The Sublime, the Ineffable, and Other Dangerous Aesthetics,” *Women & Music* 12, (2009): 72; Bonnie Gordon, *Monteverdi’s Unruly Women: The Power of Song in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- 30 Richard Elliott, *The Late Voice: Time, Age and Experience in Popular Music* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2015); Ysenda Maxtone-Graham. “The Lost Boys,” *The Spectator*, 2 June 2018, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-lost-boys>; Peter Phillips, “The Golden Age Regained 2,” *Early Music* 8, no. 2 (April 1980): 180–98.
- 31 Harper, <http://rougesfoam.blogspot.com/2009/10/hauntology-past-inside-present.html>.
- 32 Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 46.
- 33 Cavarero, 167.
- 34 Dolar, 48.
- 35 Cavarero, 167.

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The ADORE Project: Broadening orchestral repertoire

theadoreproject.org was created in 2020 by three collegiate orchestra conductors: Patrick Reynolds of the University of Dayton, David Tedford of Bloomsburg University, and Chaowen Ting of Georgia Institute of Technology. Their aim was to diversify and enrich orchestral programming by including works by under-represented composers. We have posed a few questions to one of the project founders, Patrick Reynolds, to learn more about this unique initiative.

KSJ: What prompted this project and what are its main objectives and activities?

PR: The origin of the ADORE Project is somewhat a result of other projects being postponed or cancelled due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. My conductor colleagues, David Tedford of Bloomsburg University, Chaowen Ting of Georgia Institute of Technology, and myself, had worked together in the past, gathering works for a database of orchestral works by underrepresented, primarily women, composers. In 2019 we had presented as part of a panel at the national conference of the College Orchestra Directors Association held at the Boston Conservatory. Each of us had a continuing and expanding interest in the topic – diversifying the orchestral repertoire is, or should be, a primary concern for all conductors. Because I develop and conduct many concerts in the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra’s education program, my goal was to revise these programs to be more inclusive and representative of our audiences. I had applied for and received a sabbatical leave from the University of Dayton precisely for this purpose, but unfortunately, all of my educational concerts were cancelled due to the pandemic. Fortunately, just about this time, Choawen Ting raised the idea of an online blog or website devoted to under-represented composers and was looking for collaborators. David Tedford and I jumped at the opportunity.

Regarding our objectives, these are found on the main page of the website: *theadoreproject.org*. Specifically, we are “dedicated to broadening and bringing greater diversity to the repertoire of smaller university orchestra programs. Beyond the rich traditions of what one would call the “standard” orchestral composers and repertoire, there is a treasure of lesser-known and seldom performed works, particularly those composed by women, composers of color and composers of diverse ethnicity. It is these distinguished composers and their works we hope to highlight and bring to a wider audience.”

KSJ: What does the acronym ADORE stand for?

PR: In truth, finding repertoire for the project has been the easy part. Coming up with a name for the project was a challenge! After several days of email conversations, we settled on ADORE:

ACCESSIBLE = performable by smaller university orchestra programs.
DIVERSE = promoting programming that reflects our diverse society.
ORCHESTRAL = string orchestra, chamber orchestra or full orchestra.
REPERTOIRE = devoted to broadening the orchestral repertoire.
EQUITY = highlighting under-represented composers.

KSJ: Why did you get involved in this initiative?

PR: As I mentioned above, a primary concern for all conductors today should be to diversify the orchestral repertoire. The challenge—certainly an understandable one—is that there’s just so much important and wonderful music written by European and

European-trained white male composers. It is no wonder we program it so much. However, this creates a central problem: our repertoire comes less and less from our more diverse society – the diverse audience we must attract to survive. In short, demographic trends have been moving one direction, but orchestral programming has not moved alongside accordingly. So, a desire for diversifying orchestral repertoire was our shared passion, with particular attention given toward works performable by the orchestras of smaller colleges and universities – programs, for example, with a higher percentage of students not majoring in music. As is the case with my two collaborators, my University of Dayton Orchestra comprises mostly non-music majors. In fact, the largest percentage of members come from our School of Engineering. My colleagues and I knew of works by women and composers of diverse ethnicity, but often those works were tremendously difficult or required instrumentation we simply could not fulfill.

KSJ: What has the project accomplished so far? Where do you want to take it from here?

PR: We are very pleased that our resource has become a popular reference for college and university conductors. The ADORE project is becoming a go-to resource, and our social media pages (Facebook and Instagram) have close to a thousand followers all together. It is also delightful when we hear from a composer of a performance made possible by a discovery in the ADORE Project. This is perhaps the most gratifying aspect of the project: that in less than one year, our project has brought so many new or lesser-known works and composers to the public. I am personally pleased with the inclusion of works by composers affiliated with the Young Women Composers Camp at Temple University in Philadelphia, and look forward to including more composers from their program.

For the future, the ADORE Project continues to grow. Composers and conductors regularly send suggestions for additions and our resource becomes more widely utilized. Of course, David Tedford, Chaowen Ting and I continue to add works as we discover them.

It’s quite interesting, though not surprising, that the most common response from a conductor when they discover a work through the ADORE Project is, “I simply cannot believe I’ve never heard of this work (or composer) before.” I’ve found myself saying this time and time again, accompanied by a certain degree of guilt. A focus on diversifying programming is something to which I’ve come late in my career, so perhaps, over time, the ADORE Project will help a younger generation of conductors discover this wonderful repertoire from the start of their careers. If this can happen, we will know we’ve made a difference in how orchestral conductors and musicians view their repertoire and their world.

In Search of Female Voices. Interview with Kyra Steckeweh

Kyra Steckeweh (b.1984) studied piano with Tomoko Ogasawara at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg and under Prof. George Kern at the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg. As a pianist, she performs not only standard repertoire but also music by women composers, working from manuscripts whenever necessary. Making the works of women composers perceivable as part of our cultural heritage is an important motivation for her performances. Kyra's latest projects include a CD with music by Dora Pejačević, Sophie Westenholz, and Ethel Smyth, released by Kaleidos in 2021, and a published collection of piano music by Agnes Tyrrell (1846–1883), which she edited from autographs for Ries & Erler (2021). She is currently working on a documentary about Dora Pejačević with Tim van Beveren.

When did you first discover women composers? And who was the first woman whose music you researched and performed?

The first woman composer I ever heard of was Clara Schumann. I was 12 years old then, and read a book about her. I was fascinated by this book, but I didn't play her music at that time. I played Beethoven, Bach, and Chopin like everyone else . . . My professional focus on women composers started much later, shortly after I had finished

my studies, and the first two women composers I researched and performed were Mel Bonis and Lili Boulanger.

How did you discover Tyrrell? Was it difficult to "sell" her music to an established publisher such as Ries & Erler?

I stumbled over Agnes Tyrrell coincidentally. On YouTube, her overture *Die Könige in Israel* was proposed to me while I was listening to something else. I then heard this wonderful performance of the overture by the orchestra *L'anima giusta* conducted by Jessica Horsley and started to look for piano works by Agnes Tyrrell afterwards. Soon I found out that many of her works hadn't been published yet. After some research, I learned that her estate is kept at the Moravian Museum in Brno. I got really curious, so in the summer of 2019 I went to Brno together with my good friend Tim van Beveren, with whom I had already realized the documentary *Women Composers*. He helped me digitize the manuscripts. I was fascinated by Agnes Tyrrell's music, and decided to publish at least some of her piano works. Then in 2020, the publisher Ries & Erler reached out to me and asked if I'd be interested in collaborating with them in the future. By then, Ries & Erler had already many works by female composers in their catalogue, and wanted to expand this repertoire. That was again a total coincidence and, of course, perfect timing! I presented my plans with respect to Agnes Tyrrell's piano works, and Ries & Erler's CEO, Andreas Meurer, agreed immediately. I was very happy about that lucky development.

I understand that you also want to record her music. Will you record all her published works, or just selected pieces?

I will record some of the works, not all of them. I'm very much looking forward to that and I will also play those pieces in my concerts. I have no evidence that Agnes Tyrrell also played them in public herself. So my concerts will probably be a world premiere of her works.



Grand Sonata

op. 66

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Agnes Tyrrell
(1846–1883)

Allegro moderato

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p

Chen Yi, by Leta E. Miller and J. Michele Edwards. University of Illinois Press, 2020

Chen Yi by Leta Miller and Michele Edwards is the newest addition to the Women Composers Series by University of Illinois Press that has so far included volumes on Kaija Saariaho, Marga Richter, and Hildegard of Bingen. Based on one of the most prominent composers today and a Chinese émigré in the United States, *Chen Yi* contributes to the scope and perspectives of the series. Both Miller and Edwards are seasoned biographers and professors emeriti of music. The book is written in the first person and the authors are forthright about their personal relationship with the composer and her works.

The book is composed of seven chapters, organized into three parts: the introduction and the composer's biography; the analysis of her works, which makes up the bulk of the book; and the last chapter that examines pertinent issues surrounding her works. Through extensive interviews and research, the authors provide the most comprehensive and authoritative account of Chen's life to date.

For those unfamiliar with Chen Yi, it is perhaps most fitting to view her as part of the cohort of Chinese composers that came of age during China's Cultural Revolution and later studied and lived in the United States. Among them are Tan Dun (winner of 2001 Oscar for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*), Zhou Long (Chen's husband and winner of 2011 Pulitzer Prize for *Madame White Snake*), and Bright Sheng (2001 MacArthur Fellow). Chen (winner of 2000 Charles Ives Living Award) stood out as a woman composer among her male colleagues and saw no shortage of honors, awards, and commissions herself, which Miller and Edwards have documented in detail.

Chapter 1 summarizes Chen's compositional identity succinctly: "Chinese language is her native language—both linguistically and musically. At the same time, she notes that her move to the United States in 1986 intensified her appreciation of her heritage. Only through rigorous study of Western music," she says, "did she truly come to appreciate the richness of Chinese music."¹ Chapter 2 details Chen's life in stages, beginning with her privileged background as a daughter of two medical doctors and Western music enthusiasts.

The authors contextualize Chen's family history in the great upheavals throughout twentieth-century China. Initiated by Mao Zedong and his wife Jiang Qing in 1966, the Cultural Revolution turned into a ten-year persecution of intellectuals. Chen's family became an easy target for political retribution. As a teenager Chen spent years doing hard labor in the countryside, including carrying 90 pounds of cement up a hill for a military watchtower.²

Ironically, Chen's prior training in Western music, deemed bourgeois during the Cultural Revolution, saved her from physical labor. From 1970 to 1978, she was assigned to the Guangzhou Beijing Opera Troupe to perform government-sanctioned "model operas." Furthermore, since party officials sought to develop new repertory suitable for the masses, the Cultural Revolution offered aspiring composers grounds for experimentation—Chen's dramatic life experience simultaneously exposed her to diverse musical practices.

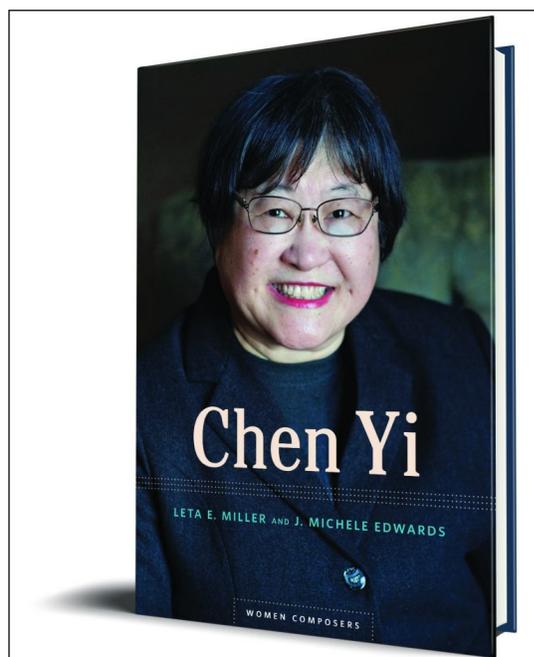
When the Cultural Revolution finally ended after Mao's death, the country's institutions of higher learning reopened. Less than two percent of the 17,000 applicants were accepted to the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM) in Beijing.³ Among the class of 1978 were Tan Dun and Zhou Long who, along with Chen, all became prominent Chinese émigré composers in the United States, following their studies at Columbia University. Chapter 2 contains troves of biographical detail, including Chen's numerous fellowships and awards, during her stay in New York City, San Francisco, and after she was appointed Distinguished Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1998.

After the biographical chapter, Chapters 3 to 6 address Chen's compositional process with analysis of select works. The authors arrange her works ac-

ording to genres: chamber music, works for large instrumental ensembles, and choral/vocal compositions. Chen has established a distinct compositional voice by returning to select organizational techniques, such as the use of variation form, ostinato, and the melody *baban* that embodies the golden section. Her sonic imagination is further enriched through engagement with Beijing opera styles and Chinese folk and minority cultures. The authors explain complex techniques in clear, accessible manner through fully annotated examples and tables. For instance, the *baban* melody is explained via the Piano Concerto, while Symphony No. 2 illustrates the use of folk melodic style.

Chen has written over 150 works, from which the authors have selected for analysis "pieces in a variety of genres, focusing on those we find most compelling and most illustrative of Chen's musical language at different times in her life."⁴ For each work they provide comprehensive background, including its place in Chen's compositional career, the description of individual sections/movements, and explanation of the Chinese instruments used, as in the case of *Three Bagatelles from China West*.

The discussion of the choral work *Chinese Myth Cantata* exemplifies the authors' theoretical contextualization and structural analysis. Referencing the feminist thought of Luce Irigaray, they suggest that Chen's construction of the



goddess *Nü Wa* and the Chinese creation myth illustrate the conceptualization of the self through the looking glass and the eventual formation of autonomous feminist subjectivities.⁵ The table of the second movement shows the golden section and each instrument's role, where the *zhuihu* (a special type of Chinese fiddle *erhu*) personifies the shapeshifting goddess.

The last chapter, "Issues," provides further examination of Chen's life and works in areas of transnationalism, syncretism, and gender. The authors suggest understanding Chen's brand of musical hybridity through Homi Bhabha's "third space," which in her case makes audible the liminal space between contrasting cultures and personal history.⁶ A comparison is made in terms of engagement with political subjects between Chen and other Chinese émigré composers. While collecting and utilizing of folk styles are in and of itself a political act, the authors point out that Chen's overall positive outlook on life contributes to her tendency to steer away from politically sensitive subjects. Both Tan Dun and Bright Sheng, for instance, have been censored by the Chinese government at one point or another. Chen has written her own share of compositions in response to political events, however. *Ning* for violin, pipa, and cello commemorates the Nanjing Massacre (1937), while *Burning* for string quartet was her response to the tragedies of 9/11. While the works convey the rage and trauma resulting from war and terror, Chen's music further emphasizes peace, reconciliation, and transformation.

As the subject of the Women Composers Series, Chen admits that she was not sensitive about gender divide until she arrived in the United States, although she was the first woman to earn a master's degree from CCOM. Gender difference came to her attention when she served as composer-in-residence of San Francisco's Women's Philharmonic and befriended conductor JoAnn Falletta. The authors explain Chen's attitude toward gender against the backdrop of the statistical reality of low representation of women composers in higher education and the programming by performing institutions.

Extensive Internet resources can be found in the footnotes, such as performances of folk tunes and Chen's own demonstrations. A full list of Chen's works cross-referenced with versions in different instrumentation is available in the appendix. The authors have so successfully whetted the reader's appetite that one wonders if it would be possible to also include Chen's discography as part of the List of Works. Overall, Miller and Edwards paint an intimate picture of Chen's life and music. The incredible details, nuanced discussion, and dynamic analyses have made *Chen Yi* an invaluable resource for scholars, students, and enthusiasts of contemporary music.

Serena Wang

Notes:

1. Leta Miller and Michele Edwards, *Chen Yi* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2020), 2-3.
2. *Ibid.*, 16.
3. *Ibid.*, 22.
4. *Ibid.*, 4.
5. *Ibid.*, 140.
6. *Ibid.*, 161.

continued from p. 12

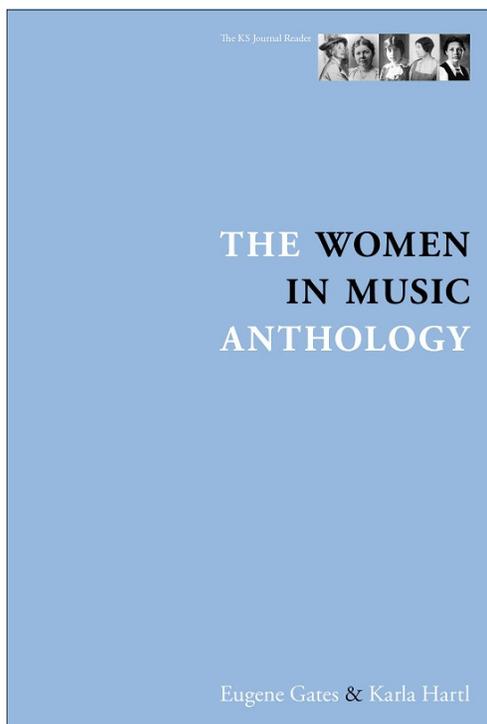
where she never truly connected with her African American heritage and, in the context of Jim Crow America, was certainly not accepted by white society. Reflecting in 1961, Schuyler stated: "I'm half-colored—so I'm not accepted anywhere. I'm always destined to be an outsider, never, never *part* of anything."

Being an outsider was no doubt a part of the media intrigue around Schuyler's life. Aside for mastering Mozart during toddlerhood and revealing an IQ higher than most adults soon after, she had already started to compose, building an impressive catalogue by her teens. She toured extensively thereafter, performing a mix of her own works and familiar repertoire and dazzling audiences across five continents. Along the way, Schuyler set out to live beyond the control of her parents. Additionally, as with most child prodigies, the novelty of the biracial sensation wore off. However, Schuyler had begun to find her own sense of purpose in international affairs, drawing upon her abilities as a polyglot to assist where she could. Sadly, this turn led to her premature death in May 1967 when her helicopter crashed during a mission in Vietnam to evacuate high school students.

Schuyler's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, completed in 1965, only two years before her death, entwines the composer's interests in international affairs and her love of literature and languages. She inhabits a Middle Eastern sound world—one that she studied and absorbed to the best of her ability. We hear syncopations that imitate Arabic drumming patterns, drones and ostinati on open fourths and fifths, and highly ornate arabesque passages. Masterson's trills and runs flow with crystal clear precision. A more percussive tone for the rhythms in the lower registers would have helped draw greater attention to the timbral variety in Schuyler's vast sonic landscape. Nonetheless, Masterson's sensitively phrased melodies carry the musical narrative along effectively.

Masterson reassembled Schuyler's score for performance. As a result, this recording reflects an intimate knowledge of Schuyler's musical intention. Masterson convincingly guides us through each section, from the highly atmospheric prologue, through the expressive seven parts, to the impassioned epilogue. As the album draws to a close, we are left with an invaluable resource—a window into the world of a composer who defied the odds of her social environment, lived beyond the limitations imposed by her parents, and, in her short lifetime, found her voice as a unique musical storyteller and conjuror of vivid soundscapes.

Samantha Ege



Gates, Eugene and Karla Hartl, eds. *The Women in Music Anthology*. Toronto: The Kapralova Society, 2021. 378 pp., 16 illus. ISBN 978-0-9940425-9-0 (softcover) / ISBN 978-1-7777795-0-4 (e-book).

In 1998 musicologist Karla Hartl founded The Kapralova Society, a Canadian non-profit music society based in Toronto, whose mission “is to promote the music of Czech composer Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915–1940) and to build awareness of women’s contributions to musical life.” This website provides access to current and past issues of the Society’s journal, which has been in production since 2003. Over the years, numerous exceptional and well-documented articles by leading scholars have appeared in its biannual releases. The purpose of *The Women in Music Anthology*, published in 2021 by The Kapralova Society, is to bring together under one roof the best of these contributions to ensure their availability for the long term.

The volume is divided into two parts. The first emphasizes women composers and musicians, opening with two

essays by Eugene Gates in which he establishes a backdrop for understanding from philosophical, psychological, and historical perspectives the gender-related challenges faced by women composers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The remaining essays in this section are devoted to individuals who experienced such challenges but were, nevertheless, remarkably successful in their careers, namely Fanny Mendelssohn; Clara Schuman; Norwegian pianist, composer, and teacher Agathe Backer Grøndahl (1847–1907); English composers Maude Valérie White (1855–1937) and Dame Ethel Smyth (1858–1944); American pianist and composer Amy (Mrs. H.H.A.) Beach (1867–1944) and teacher and composer Florence Price (1887–1953); and English singer and entertainer Dame Vera Lynn (1917–2020) as well as a chapter on early women orchestras and their maestras. Eight of the thirteen chapters were invitingly written by Eugene Gates.

The second portion of the book focuses entirely on Kaprálová, with essay topics ranging from the Society’s role in disseminating her work and the role of muse shared between Kaprálová and Bohuslav Martinů to directed studies of her compositions: the song *Smutný večer* and the instrumental Trio for Oboe, Clarinet, and Bassoon as well as her Two Dances for Piano, op. 23. The book closes with the complete transcript of the interview on Kaprálová granted by Karla Hartl to BBC Radio 3 as part of their October 12–16, 2015 *Composer of the Week* series.

Not only is this volume valuable for its information on Kaprálová, which can be expected from a collection published by the Society, but as a means to fulfill the mission of the organization—through the insights its authors provide on other women composers, including women of color, who are both well-known and only now being rediscovered.

During the nineteenth century, with philosophical and historical writings emphasizing the beliefs that women lacked the creative ability and abstract reasoning to compose musical works other than those intended for the parlor and the salon, women such as Fanny Mendelssohn and Clara Schumann worked as best they could within these societal and cultural limitations. Schumann, for instance, experienced and expressed self-doubts about her abilities as a composer while confident in her status as a pianist. Gender roles of the time emphasized a woman’s duties as a wife and mother, which Schumann performed admirably, including when Robert experienced bouts of extreme depression after a period of intense creative effort. Fanny Mendelssohn expressed similar gender-enforced doubts coupled with her social position as an upper middle-class woman. She refrained from publishing her music for some time after receiving stern criticism from both her father and brother, the former of whom wrote of his displeasure at the prospect, admonishing her to “prepare earnestly and eagerly for your real calling, the only calling of a young woman—I mean that of a housewife.”¹ Even when she decided to publish some of her best works, she was not entirely convinced of her abilities. As Gates quotes from Rudolf Elvers, “Bote & Bock [*Berlin publisher*] have made offers to me [*date: 1846*] the likes of which have perhaps never before been given to a dilettante composer of my sex, whereupon Schlesinger [*another Berlin publisher*] even outdid them. I do not in the least imagine that this will continue but am pleased at the moment.”² It is an abundance of quotations such as these that provide primary source documentation for the topics addressed in these essays and further their already exceptional value.

The lesser-known composers addressed in the pages of this collection receive no less rigorous attention, and arguments regarding their standings historically, along with the associated implications of whether they should be studied presently, are convincingly made. For example, in the case of Agathe Backer Grøndahl, the author confirms that as a pianist she was compared favorably to the likes of Anton Rubinstein and Hans von Bülow; but for Swedish composer and critic Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, she was “too blonde and friendly,” not to mention that her own compositions were “tiring” and could be likened to “needle work and baking.” On the other hand, George Bernard Shaw felt her works exceeded those of Grieg. And at her death, she was described as “the man” among numerous “lady pianists.” Should she be better known today? After reading this essay, the answer must be “Yes, and that there is more work to be done here.”

Advocacy through simply stating the facts in the remainder of the essays is equally compelling. Some composers, such as Dame Ethel Smyth and Florence Price, are already enjoying increased attention from performers and scholars today, even though not solely because of these articles. Nevertheless, the information presented in *The Women in Music Anthology* on these and other female artists only emphasizes that such attention is the only judicious decision to be made.

There is very little missing from this collection. A minor point, and it is truly minor, is that it would be useful to have the author of each essay presented with the essay itself instead of only in the table of contents. In the end, it must be said, however, that this book contains solid, efficient, and effective introductions to the contributions of lesser-known women composers and performers at the same time that it solidifies and amplifies what we know about the “wives and sisters” of master composers in the Western canon (Clara and Fanny). Kudos to the authors and editors for bringing this scholarship together in a single volume.

—Judith Mabary

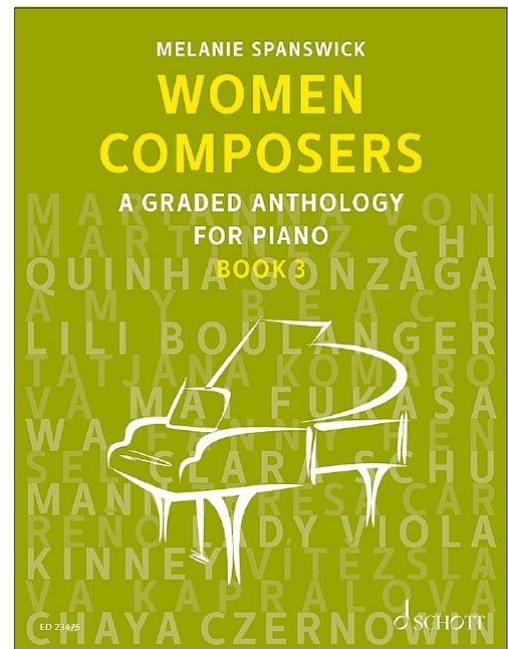
Notes:

¹ Quoted in Eugene Gates, “Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel: A Life of Music Within Domestic Limits,” *The Women in Music Anthology*, eds. Eugene Gates and Karla Hartl (Toronto: The Kapralova Society, 2021), 53.

² *Ibid.*, 65.

“La Vita – Leonie Karatas plays Vítězslava Kaprálová” is being released in June 2022 by EuroArts Music. The recording includes the composer’s Three Piano Pieces, op. 9, *April Preludes*, op. 13, *Little Song*, Five Piano Compositions, *Dance for Piano*, op. 23, *Variations sur le Carillon de l’Église Saint-Étienne-du-Mont*, op. 16, *Sonata Appassionata*, op. 6, and *Two Bouquets of Flower*. “La Vita” is the prelude to a series of further CD recordings which will be dedicated to the work of individual female composers.

“Unbelievable musicality!,” expressed Daniel Barenboim after hearing Leonie Karatas, née Rettig, when she was only fourteen. Karatas studied piano at the College of Music, Drama and Media in Hanover with the late Vladimir Krainev who was one of the last pupils of the legendary pianist and pedagogue Heinrich Neuhaus. Her repertoire is extensive, ranging from the sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti to those of Henry Dutilleux and Vita Kaprálová.



This three-volume series of piano music by women composers is a progressive compendium of educational literature with a broad repertoire from the 17th century to the present day. For each piece, the editor has written short instructions with rehearsal tips as well as biographical notes on the women composers. The collection covers all levels of difficulty from easy (volume 1) to medium (volume 2) to difficult (volume 3) and is an indispensable addition to lessons and concerts. Volume 3 composers: Marianna von Martinez, Chiquinha Gonzaga, Amy Beach, Lili Boulanger, Tatiana Komarova, Mai Fukasawa, Fanny Hensel, Clara Schumann, Teresa Carreño, Viola Kinney, **Vítězslava Kaprálová**, Chaya Czernowin. Publisher: Schott ED23475, ISMN 9790001213691.



PORTRAITS DE FRANCE. Une autre histoire de France. Musée de l'homme, Paris. 1.12 2021—14.2.2022.
Sous le haut patronage de Monsieur Emmanuel MACRON, Président de la République



Fig. 1: Portraits de France. Press photo courtesy Musée de l'homme, 2021.

Le constat s'impose : les personnalités issues de l'immigration et des Outre-mer sont sous-représentées dans notre espace public. À la veille de l'entrée au Panthéon de Joséphine Baker, le Musée de l'Homme s'empare avec l'exposition «Portraits de France» de ce sujet de société en mettant en lumière les parcours de vie exceptionnels de 29 femmes et 29 hommes qui, venus d'ailleurs, méconnus, célèbres ou oubliés, ont été des acteurs décisifs du grand récit national. Ces 58 personnalités ont été retenues parmi les 318 noms proposés par le recueil «Portraits de France».



The Kapralova Society 2021 Year in Review

Despite the worldwide pandemic that continued to affect the musical world in 2021, a good number of notable performances and broadcasts of Kaprálová's music took place during the year. Much was happening also on the recording front, resulting in four new CD releases of or with music by Kaprálová, including her orchestral portrait *Waving Farewell*, released in June by Naxos. At around the same time in Prague, Klic Books published *Kauza Kaprálová (The Kaprálová Case)*, a collection of correspondence and archivalia that document Kaprálová's postmortal repatriation and shed some light on the cause of her death, which has long been misdiagnosed as tuberculosis. In November, the Society published a collection of essays entitled *The Women in Music Anthology* to promote the legacies of nine women musicians, among them Kaprálová; and the year ended in style with a Musée de l'homme exhibition in Paris, entitled *Portraits de France*, [Fig. 1] which celebrated 58 refugees and immigrants—29 men and 29 women who lived and died in France—selected from the original 318 nominees for their contribution to the “national narrative of the Republic of France.” Kaprálová made the final cut.

Performances

The year 2021 saw a number of notable live performances which also included two Wigmore Hall performances—by BBC New Generation Artist Ema Nikolovska, a Canadian who gave the UK premiere of Kaprálová's song cycle *Sung into the Distance*, and by American Kirill Gerstein who performed the composer's *April Preludes*. Another UK premiere was given of *Sonata Appassionata* at the Barbican in London, performed by Samantha Ege. *April Preludes* also received its Hungarian premiere by British pianist Sam Haywood at the Solti Hall in Budapest (he also gave a rare performance of the work at Prague's Rudolfinum) and its Spanish premiere by Antonio Oyarzabal at the Pirineos Classics Festival. Country premieres were also given of *Elegy*, performed by Liza Ferschtman and Juho Pohjonen at the Jarna Festival in Sweden, *Waving Farewell*, performed by Odile Heimburger and Laurianne Corneille at the *Un temps pour Elles* Festival in France, and *Five Piano Pieces*, performed by Kathrin Schmidlin in Switzerland. Finally, Kaprálová's reed trio, performed by Robin Williams, William Stafford, and Alison Green, received its UK premiere at the Perth Concert Hall in Edinburgh. There were also two orchestral concerts, both in Prague: of *Partita*, performed by Ilaybuke Algür and the NeoKlasik Orchestra conducted by Vaclav Dlask (this concert was financially assisted by our Society) and of *Military Sinfonietta*, performed by the Prague State Opera Orchestra conducted by Richard Hein.

Broadcasts

There were 20 radio broadcasts of Kaprálová's music in 2021. Participating broadcasters were from Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and included six national broadcasters: the BBC, the CBC, Deutschlandfunk, ORF, RTBF (Belgium), and Czech Radio. Just to mention a few of the most substantial programs – CBC Music produced a 68-minute documentary dedicated to Kaprálová's life and music, broadcast as part of their *In Concert Revival Hour* series; America Radio produced and broadcast a musical portrait of the composer, *Musiche di Vítězslava Kaprálová*; Czech Radio 3 dedicated one of its 90-minute *Lunch Concerts* to four orchestral works by Kaprálová: *Partita*, *Concertino*, *Sinfonietta*, and *Piano Concerto*; and Deutschlandfunk Kultur recorded and broadcast a piano recital of Steffen Schleiermacher, *Die Tschechische Avantgarde in Paris*, which included five works by our composer.

Publications

There were two books that came out in 2021. In June, Prague publisher Klic Books published *Kauza Kaprálová v dobové korespondenci a dokumentech (The Kaprálová Case in Period Correspondence and Documents)* with an introduction by Karla Hartl who collected the documents for the book from various public and private archives and transcribed and annotated them. The correspondence and archivalia narrate the story of Kaprálová's postmortal repatriation and shed some light on the cause of the composer's death. In October, the Society released a free digital version of *The Women in Music Anthology*; the printed version followed in November. The book begins with two major essays on the “Woman Composer Question” that explain why, even today, we rarely see women included in music history textbooks, or hear their music performed by symphony orchestras or in major concert halls. The book then continues with chapters that explore, in some depth, the lives and legacies of nine women musicians who made a major impact in their respective fields and communities: Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, Clara Wieck Schumann, Ethel Smyth, Amy Beach, Agatha Backer Grøndahl, Maude Valérie White, Florence Price, Vera Lynn and Vítězslava Kaprálová. During the year, the Kapralova Society also published two scores by Agnes Tyrrell (see further).

CD Releases

There were four recording projects realized in 2021, all with outstanding results. Listed in chronological order, the Swiss label Claves Records released a CD entitled *Frauenstimmen (Women's Voices)* that presented chamber music by several women composers, including Kaprálová's *Ritournelle pour violoncelle et piano*, in a stunning performance by Anna Fortova and Kathrin Schmidlin. The next came *La Muse Oubliée*, a release of the Spanish label LBS Classical, featuring pianist Antonio Oyarzabal whose interesting program, dedicated to historical women composers, also featured Kaprálová. He gave her *April Preludes* a stellar performance. The third release, entitled *Charmes* and produced by Orchid Classics, followed with songs by Pauline Viardot, Alma Mahler, Clara Schumann, and Kaprálová, sung by the brilliant soprano Olena Tokar, a Leipzig Opera singer and a former BBC Young Generation Artist who was accompanied by her pianist husband Igor Gryshyn. The last and most eagerly awaited CD, named after Kaprálová's greatest song, *Waving Farewell*, was produced by Naxos. Released in June, this orchestral portrait of Kaprálová surpassed all previous releases of her orchestral music with remarkably fresh and energetic performances by the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kenneth Kiesler. All works on the disc but one (*Prélude de Noël*) were composed early in Kaprálová's career: *Suite en miniature*, Piano Concerto in D Minor, Sinfonietta, and two orchestral songs, of which *Sad Evening* was recorded in a world premiere. Presto Music shortlisted the disc for their Recording of the Year but all four discs received highly favourable reviews, attesting to the growing reputation of Kaprálová as a major composer of her generation.

Reviews

As mentioned above, the four CD releases received an impressive number of reviews. *Frauenstimmen* was reviewed for Fono Forum (Dorothee Riemer), *Scenes* magazine (Cecilia Viola), *24heures.ch* (Matthieu Chenal), *Classica* (Jacques Bonnaure), *Le Courrier* (Gianluigi Bocelli), and *das Orchester* (Gerhard Anders). Reviews of *Muse Oubliée* appeared in *Gramophone* (Robert Cowan), MusicWeb International (Nick Barnard), *Guardian*, *BBC Music Magazine*, *Melómano* (Fran Balsera), *Scherzo* (Ana Garcia Urcola), *Revista La Segarra* (Santi Riu), *Pianist* (Thea Derks) and *Fanfare* (James Harrington). *Charmes* was reviewed by *BBC Music Magazine*, for *planethugill.com* (Robert Hugill) and Art Music Lounge (Lynn Rene Bayley); it was also Presto Music's editor's choice; and *Waving Farewell* received reviews in BBC Radio Record Review (Nigel Simeone), *Gramophone's* Listening Room (James Joly),

Ludwig van Daily (Norman Lebrecht), Presto Music (Katherine Cooper - Editor's Choice and the Recording of the Year shortlist), *Stretto Magazine* (Michel Dutrieue), *Classical Explorer* (Colin Clarke), MusicWeb International (Stephen Greenbank), *Critica Classica* (Marco del Vaglio), *deVolkskrant* (Jenny Camilleri), *Charlottesville Classical* (Ralph Graves), Art Music Lounge (Lynn Rene Bayley), David's Review Corner (David Denton), Kulturabdruck, and *larkreviews.co.uk*.

Moreover, Stephen Greenbank reviewed *The Kaprálová Companion* (Lexington Books, 2011) for MusicWeb International, and Jindra Bártová reviewed Karla Hartl's book *Vítězslava Kaprálová: Tematický katalog skladeb a korespondence s nakladateli* (Vítězslava Kaprálová: Thematic Catalogue of the Works and Correspondence with Publishers), published by Czech Radio in 2020, for *Klasika Plus*. Samantha Ege's premiere performance of Kaprálová's Sonata Appassionata was reviewed by Colin Clarke for the *Seen and Heard International*, while Daniel Pinc reviewed Prague Philharmonia's readers theatre piece *Z listů Vítězslavy Kaprálové* (ed. Karla Hartl) for *OperaPlus*.

Women in Music

The Journal

In 2021, the Society published the nineteenth volume of its *Kapralova Society Journal*. The winter issue featured "J.L. Zaimont's musical storytelling in Virgie Rainey," an article written by Kheng K. Koay; "Where has this music been all my life? On women composers in the 20th century. Featuring the life and music of Amy Beach, Vítězslava Kaprálová, and Grace Williams," an essay by George Henderson; and the latest addition to our journal series *Women of the 19th Century Salon*—Tom Moore's article on the life and music of Leonie Collongues. The issue was rounded off with the usual *In Review* section. The summer issue included a feature by Erin Hackel and Karin Hauger, "Bokken Lasson: Norwegian Feminist, Artist, Entrepreneur," and an interview with Elisabeth Blair about her trailblazing podcast *Listening to Ladies*. The *In Review* section included three book reviews of recently published monographs on Mabel Daniels, Madeleine Dring, and Johanna Kinkel.

The Women in Music Anthology

The purpose of this anthology, published by the Kapralova Society at the end of the year, was to guarantee a prolonged life to a group of 'best of' articles, published in the *Kapralova Society Journal* over the course of sixteen years. The various essays were revised, some

substantially, and updated for inclusion in the book. The publication is divided into two sections. The first is dedicated to historical women composers and musicians, and begins with two introductory essays on the “Woman Composer Question.” The book then continues with chapters that celebrate the lives and legacies of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, Clara Schumann, Ethel Smyth, Amy Beach, Agatha Backer Grøndahl, Maude Valérie White, Florence Price, and Vera Lynn. One chapter also focuses on the history of all-female orchestras. The second section is dedicated to the latest research on Kaprálová. Only essays with a broader appeal have been selected for this section of the anthology, providing a historical context to the times in which Kaprálová lived and died, and to the Czech musical culture of the period. Several chapters pertain to the intriguing task of reconstructing music from sketches and autograph fragments, with three examples of possible approaches to tackle such a task successfully.

The Agnes Tyrrell Edition

Since 2021, a small section of our website has been dedicated to the music of Agnes Tyrrell (1846–1883). A pianist and composer of Czech and English descent who lived her whole life in Brno, Kaprálová’s birthplace, Tyrrell was one of the few women to compose a symphony prior to 1900. In 2018 her *Overture in C Minor* received its world premiere by the orchestra *L’anima giusta*, conducted by Jessica Horsley at the *frauenkomponiert* Festival in Bern, and was recorded for Swiss Radio. It has so far been the only known recording of Tyrrell’s music. The *L’anima giusta* performance brought the composer to the attention of our Society that now also promotes her life and work. Many of Tyrrell’s autographs are held in the Moravian Museum of Brno, and last year we published two of them: *Theme and Variations*, op. 8, and *Grand Sonata*, op. 66. The scores are available on request to those professional pianists who want to study this music for performance.

Online Resources

In the past twenty-three years, the Kapralova Society website has become an important platform for promoting women’s achievements in classical music. The site now offers not only an open access journal on women in music but also several free e-publications and digital sheet music. Its reputation has grown over the years, and in 2021 the site was selected by the Library of Congress for their web archives project.

Karla Hartl



Kauza Kaprálová v dobové korespondenci a dokumentech (ed. Karla Hartl) je příběh posmrtné repatriace Vítězslavy Kaprálové, jak jej zaznamenala dobová korespondence a dokumenty. Příběh lze sledovat od prvních kroků podniknutých v r. 1945 několika krajany v Montpellier a československým zastupitelstvím v Paříži k záchraně jejích tělesných ostatků až po smuteční slavnost uložení urny se skladatelčím popelem v r. 1949 v Brně. Korespondence a archiválie poprvé publikované v této knize jsou nejen zajímavou reflexí doby, v níž se příběh udál, ale i zdrojem nových informací o dosud neobjasněné příčině úmrtí této nejvýznamnější české skladatelky. Osobnost a dramatický osud Vítězslavy Kaprálové se v uplynulých třech desetiletích stal středem zájmu nejrůznějších popularizačních snah, které dlouhodobě (de)formují dnešní skladatelčin portrét a začínají se prosazovat i v samotné historiografii Kaprálové. Na jejich úskalí upozorňuje úvodní stať Karly Hartl.

Toronto-Praha: Kapralova Society & Nakl. Klíč (2021). 104 stran, 7 ilustrací. ISBN 978-80-907421-3-0. Knihu lze zakoupit v e-shopu <https://www.klic-knihy.cz/kauza-kapralova> či v prodejnách Kosmas.

VÍTĚZSLAVA KAPRÁLOVÁ



TEMATICKÝ KATALOG

Vítězslava Kaprálová: Tematický katalog skladeb a korespondence s nakladateli. (Thematic Catalogue of the Works and Correspondence with Publishers.) Prague: Czech Radio, 2020. 1st edition—R317. ISBN 978-0-9940425-5-2. 384 pages, 163 incipits. Available from <https://www.radioteka.cz/detail/cronoty-633047-vitezslava-kapralova-tematicky-katalog-skladeb>

The publication is divided into four main sections: *The Introduction* focuses on Kaprálová's legacy in the context of Czech music, the status of her autographs, the first lists of works, both published and unpublished, and her publishers. *Thematic Catalogue of the Works* is preceded by a brief introduction to the structure of the catalogue and a list of abbreviations used. The catalogue proper is further divided into five subsections: Main Catalogue; Compositions from Childhood and Juvenilia; Torsos; Lost and Unrealized Compositions; and Dubious Works. The catalogue is annotated and the section concludes with endnotes. *The Correspondence with Publishers* section presents the composer's correspondence with HMUB, Melantrich and Universal Edition (London). The last section of the book includes the editor's notes, bibliography, lists of published scores, recordings and other lists, and two indexes. While the publication is in Czech, the numerous incipits and scoring use Italian musical terms, thus making it relevant also to non-Czech readers.

The Kapralova Society Journal

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