HISTORICALLY INFORMED PRACTICES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Practice in CONTEXT

Edited by Claire Holden, Eric F. Clarke, and Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey

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Author Biographies

Christina Bashford is Professor of Musicology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a social and cultural historian of music in Britain since 1800. She has authored publications on chamber music, listening practices, and concert life in Victorian London (including her book, *The Pursuit of High Culture*, 2007; Boydell & Brewer) and has recently completed a new book project, *Violin Culture in Britain, 1870–1930: Music-making, Society, and the Popularity of Stringed Instruments* (forthcoming from Cambridge University Press).

Eric F. Clarke is emeritus Professor of Music at the University of Oxford, an emeritus Professorial Fellow of Wadham College, and a Fellow of the British Academy. He is the author of books and articles broadly on the psychology of music and musical aesthetics, including *Empirical Musicology*, *Ways of Listening*, *Music and Consciousness*, *Music and Mind in Everyday Life,* and *Distributed Creativity*. His current work is concerned with music, subjectivity, and entanglement.

Trevor Herbert is Emeritus Professor of Music at the Open University and Professor of Music Research at the Royal College of Music. He was previously a professional trombone player with major London orchestras and period instrument groups. He has written extensively on the cultural history of bands and of brass musical instruments, their repertoires and performance cultures in all styles and periods. He also writes about the history of Welsh music.

Claire Holden was awarded an AHRC Fellowship in the Creative and Performing Arts in 2010 (researching early nineteenth-century violin playing) and joined the University of Oxford as Research Fellow in 2014, becoming Principal Investigator on the five-year, AHRC-funded Transforming Nineteenth-Century Historically Informed Practice in 2016. As a violinist Claire performs with many period-instrument ensembles and has been a member of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment since 2000. She gives lectures, workshops, and masterclasses in many UK and European universities and conservatoires. Claire is currently a Research Affiliate at the University of York, where she also teaches historical violin performance.

Mary Hunter is A. Leroy Greason Professor of Music emerita at Bowdoin College, in Maine. She is the author of *The Culture of Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, *Mozart's Operas: A Companion*, and many articles about eighteenth-century opera and chamber music. Her current work addresses the ideology of performance in classical music.

George Kennaway is a Scottish cellist, conductor, teacher, publisher, and musicologist. He has taught at conservatoires in the UK and abroad and has lectured at several UK universities. Publications include *Playing the Cello 1780–1930* (2014), *John Gunn: Musician Scholar in Enlightenment Britain* (2021), and articles and book chapters on aspects of nineteenth-century performance research, topic theory, ekphrasis, and octatonicism. He is also the leading UK specialist in the work of the Lithuanian composer-artist Mikalojus Čiurlionis.

David Milsom is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Huddersfield, a professional violinist/violist in both modern and historical contexts, and an instrumental teacher. At Huddersfield he runs a research group probing elements of historical music performance and is founder of 'Pennine Records' (as a vehicle for varying approaches to being 'historically informed'). Amongst his publications are two monographs on historical violin performance, most recently *Romantic Violin Performing Practices* (Boydell, 2020).

Marten Noorduin obtained his PhD from the University of Manchester in 2016 with a thesis on Beethoven's tempo indications. He was a researcher on the AHRC-funded project *Transforming Nineteenth-Century Historically Informed Practice* at the University of Oxford, following which he held a research fellowship at the State Institute for Music Research in Berlin. He is currently the primary investigator on a DFG-project on American pianists in Germany and Austria around 1900 at the Lübeck Academy of Music.

Neal Peres Da Costa is Associate Dean (Research) and Professor of Historical Performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney. He is recognized worldwide as a historical keyboard scholar. His monograph *Off the Record* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) is a 'go-to' text globally, and he has produced many influential written publications and recordings. Neal is lead chief investigator on three Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Projects. He performs and records regularly with Australia's leading historical performance partners.

Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey is an orchestral conductor and academic whose research is focused on the social-psychological and socio-political aspects of orchestral music-making. She was a post-doctoral researcher on the Transforming Nineteenth-Century Historically Informed Practice project at the University of Oxford and has held a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellowship at the University of Sheffield researching the orchestral practices of Afghanistan. She is a Fellow St Catherine's College, University of Oxford where she is Director of Performance, and is the Academic Lead for the OAcademy, an online music conservatoire which democratizes access to world-class orchestral training.

Anna Scott is a Canadian pianist-researcher who specializes in nineteenth-century performance practices, with a broader interest in untangling the historical, cultural,

and political underpinnings of how we play and hear canonical repertoires. An active pianist renowned for her startling performances of nineteenth-century solo, chamber, lied, and orchestral repertoires ranging from Schubert to Debussy, Anna is Assistant Professor at Leiden University's Academy of Creative and Performing Arts and staff at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague.

Emily Worthington is Lecturer in Historical Performance Practices at the University of York, where she researches British and German performance practices and cultures 1770–1930. In 2023 she was awarded an AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship to research the nineteenth-century clarinetist Carl Baermann and the methodology of historical embodiment. Emily performs as a historical clarinetist with orchestras around the world and co-founded the period-instrument Harmonie Boxwood & Brass, specializing in Classical and Romantic wind repertoire ('dazzlingly persuasive'—*BBC Music Magazine*).

About the Companion Website

www.oup.com/us/practiceincontext

Oxford has created a website to accompany *Practice in Context: Historically Informed Practices in Nineteenth-Century Instrumental Music* in order to provide material that cannot be made available in a book, namely, audio exerpts and written musical examples, supporting study documents, and further statistical details for Chapter 11. The reader is encouraged to consult this resource in conjunction with the relevant chapters. Examples available online are indicated in the text with Oxford's symbol ▶

Introduction

The idea for a book exploring aspects of practice in context came out of themes, collaborations, and interactions that emerged during the five-year Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) UK-funded research project Transforming Nineteenth-Century Historically Informed Practice (TCHIP) (2016–2021).[1] TCHIP hosted a number of events that brought the project's researchers into contact with scholars, performers, and performer-scholars who had diverse ideas about, and experiences of, the inter-relationship between historical research and performance practices relating to the nineteenth century. These events included a conference, an archival study day, workshops at conservatoires, advisory board meetings, a chamber music course for professionals specializing in historically informed performance (HIP), and an HIP industry symposium. Many of the authors included in this volume had several touchpoints with the TCHIP project and have been in dialogue with each other and the volume editors in recent years; the different ideas that they presented clearly had synergy and themes in common, and that was the inspiration for this book.

TCHIP was conceived from the start as a multi-disciplinary project. Of the project's researchers (Claire Holden, Professor Eric Clarke, Dr Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey, and Dr Marten Noorduin), half the team have backgrounds in historical performance scholarship (Holden and Noorduin), and the other half (Clarke and Ponchione-Bailey) in empirical musicology. The project's research strands were conceived, planned, and delivered in ways that reflect these different fields, moving away from the methods commonly used in traditional HIP scholarship. The main aim of TCHIP was to open up new, historically evidenced, expressive possibilities for performers and to help them to develop an understanding of nineteenth-century historical style that could facilitate confident, and potentially more radical, expressive approaches in the performance of Romantic repertoire. Reflective of this, our aim for *Practice in Context* was to bring together contributors who have something to say about directions in (or conceptions of) HIP research; innovative research methods related to historical performance practices; and the interface between archival research and performance.

The eleven chapters in this book address a wide range of increasingly pressing topics in nineteenth-century HIP, focusing on new kinds of historical research that move away from the traditional focus on treatises. Many of the chapters draw on innovative approaches, including the use of empirical methods in the study of present-day HIP performance practices and increased contextualization through a closer relationship with cultural and social musicology. Rather than asking '*how* might nineteenth-century instrumentalists have played?' the book asks '*why* might nineteenth-century performers have made certain technical and expressive choices?'—a question that opens up a new and stimulating domain of academic discourse as well as exciting possibilities for performance.

This volume does not, of course, spring out of nowhere. A significant number of publications over the last two decades constitute an important context for this book, including the 2011 Ashgate volume *Classical and Romantic Music*, edited by David Milsom; the 2018 *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Historical Performance*, edited by Colin Lawson and Robin Stowell; and the single-authored volumes by Neal Peres da Costa (*Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing*, Oxford University Press: 2012), George Kennaway (*Playing the Cello, 1780–1930*, Ashgate: 2014), and David Milsom (*Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance*, Ashgate: 2002)—all of which focus on the central period of our own volume. And a number of other single-authored volumes provide broader historical, sociological, and conceptual perspectives to the wider HIP debate: prominent among these are Nick Wilson's *The Art of Re-enchantment* (Oxford University Press: 2014), John Butt's *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance* (Cambridge University Press: 2002), and Bruce Haynes's *The End of Early Music: A Performer's History of Music for the 21st Century* (Oxford University Press: 2007).

But a premise of this book is that a real transformation of nineteenth-century HIP is possible only if scholars and performers start to inter-relate in new ways. The contributors brought together in this volume therefore represent a wide range of backgrounds, specialisms, and research methods, including a significant number of contributions from scholar-performers. The book brings together chapters on wind, brass, piano, and string playing, tackling subjects as varied as aesthetics, concert life, rehearsal practices, and recording analysis, and presenting evidence drawn from a wide variety of sources, including the financial accounts of orchestras, instrumental parts and scores, live rehearsals, performances and studio sessions, and modern

and historical recordings. As editors, we have not sought to represent a unified view of nineteenth-century HIP but rather, deliberately, to embrace a broad church of ideas and approaches that may open up new possibilities to performers, scholars, scholar-performers, and anyone interested in the ways in which the music and practices of the past intersect and entangle with present-day attitudes to music-making. By interrogating received attitudes to a body of music (canonic Romantic repertoire) that, to many, seems familiar, hallowed, and in need of no questioning, the book suggests ways in which that music may be seen and heard through new eyes and ears, and played with new sensibilities.

The performance of nineteenth-century repertoire on period instruments is now well established. Although the Early Music Movement began primarily by focusing on the performance of music from the eighteenth century and earlier, forty years have now passed since the HIP movement began its exploration of nineteenth-century performance practices by tackling the symphonies of Beethoven. Initially, those performances of Beethoven shocked and affronted some concertgoers and critics—such as the Hanover Band's first commercial recording of Beethoven in 1982,[2] which went on to form part of their complete Beethoven Symphonies set that was so derided by Richard Taruskin in *Text and Act*.[3] But the works of Beethoven soon became standard HIP repertoire and moreover became a gateway for period performers, emboldening them to explore later Romantic repertoire, so that from the late 1980s onwards there was significant growth in the numbers of solo and chamber musicians performing post-Beethovenian repertoire.[4]

It was also during the late 1980s that period-instrument orchestras first began to tackle later Romantic repertoire. During the 1980s, conductors with backgrounds in Baroque and Classical HIP began to perform nineteenth-century repertoire with modern-instrument orchestras (for example, John Eliot Gardiner at the Opéra de Lyon between 1983 and 1988;[5] and Nicholas Harnoncourt conducting the Vienna Philharmonic for the first time in December 1984).[6] In a reversal of that approach, the period-instrument Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment recorded Mendelssohn and Schubert with the predominantly mainstream conductor Charles Mackerras in 1989.[7]

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, several early music conductors had already performed and recorded later repertoire with the choirs they established and directed (for example, Roger Norrington with the Heinrich Schütz Choir; Gardiner with the Monteverdi Choir; and Philippe Herreweghe with Collegium Vocale Gent) but without the participation of period

instrumentalists. With the CD recording boom in full swing around 1990, however, specialist orchestras were formed to perform later repertoire on period instruments. Norrington and the London Classical Players performed Berlioz in 1988 and released a recording of *Symphonie Fantastique* in 1989.[8] In 1990, Gardiner's newly formed Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique gave its first public performance,[9] and in 1991 Heereweghe formed L'Orchestre des Champs-Elysées.[10]

In the period since then, there has been a burgeoning of performances and recordings of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century repertoire on period instruments. But the advance of HIP into these repertoires has been greeted with concern and controversy by scholars, who have criticized professional period-instrument ensembles for failing to reflect the historical evidence on the performance practices of these periods. Clive Brown described a "yawning chasm" between scholars and performers, and many other scholars (including Nicholas Temperley, Michelle Dulak, John Butt, and Bruce Haynes) have written of the specific challenges that nineteenth-century historical style presents to a period-performance movement fixated upon the merits of crisp, clean, light playing in its approach to earlier repertoire.[11] Period orchestras may have been programming nineteenth-century works for four decades, but realizing many of the historically evidenced performance practices that contributed to the sound world of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century orchestras remains extremely challenging for HIP professionals.

For all their criticism of lack of historical fidelity in HIP performances of nineteenth-century repertoire, scholars did little, until quite recently, to question how the lack of impact on professional period-performance that they had identified might relate to their own research methods. An increase in the number of performer-scholars who work in professional HIP has led to new developments in this area, and a key theme of this book is innovative research methodology. One development, in recent years, has been an upsurge in historical performance research by performer-scholars who seek to produce style copies of the performance characteristics of one or more historical solo artists whose careers extended into the early recording era. Several of *Practice in Context*'s contributors work in this way (Scott, Milsom, Peres da Costa), although there are significant differences of approach among them. Equally, the historical practices of ensembles, and particularly of large ensembles, have been under-researched, and three of the chapters (Worthington, Holden, and Clarke and Ponchione-Bailey) suggest ways in

which this can be addressed. The remaining five chapters (Bashford, Hunter, Kennaway, Herbert, and Noorduin) look at how greater awareness of historical context can inform approaches to HIP.

Practice in Context is structured in four sections. Part I, 'Concepts and Contexts' is concerned with various aspects of nineteenth-century HIP. It opens with George Kennaway posing the question of whether a 'musicality informed' approach to performance has the potential to supplant a 'historically informed' one. Aware that he is being potentially contentious, he asks his readers to consider if HIP is too preoccupied with means rather than ends, and he questions whether performances that communicate and recreate feelings in audience members in ways that would be recognizable to nineteenth-century performers and composers are no less valid than performances that use historically evidenced techniques but fail to elicit historically plausible emotional responses from listeners. He considers how concepts of musicality emerged, what sort of performance an audience might recognize as musical, and what implications this might have for modern performers. Arguing that a hypothesized nineteenth-century criterion of musicality could be used as an overall benchmark for modern HIP, he ponders what modern HIP performances of nineteenth-century repertoire might sound like if they were to aim primarily at a 'musical' performance.

In Chapter 2 Christina Bashford advocates imaginative research collaborations between concert historians and HIP practitioners. She argues that copious recent research into nineteenth-century concert history has not yet been effectively disseminated to performers and has therefore not fully impacted performances of nineteenth-century chamber music. Detailing historical research into repertoire, programming, venues, and the conventions of audience behaviour, Bashford argues for more imaginative blending of what we know about the historical practicalities and aesthetics of nineteenth-century concert life with current initiatives in HIP. But rather than advocating recreations of concerts of the past she seeks to stimulate HIP paths and creative synergies for performers through greater in-depth awareness of historical concert experiences. As well as considering how performers can rethink the staging of chamber-music performances to reflect historical research, her chapter explores how, in the light of historical context, audiences might be encouraged to be more flexible in their expectations of aesthetic and social aspects of nineteenth-century concert experiences.

In Chapter 3, Mary Hunter argues that the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries' rhetorical basis for musical performance changed during the

nineteenth century from something legible, outward-directed, and even theatrical into something more inward and ineffable. But paradoxically, this leads up to and overlaps with the most 'outward' of sources of evidence about performance—the sounds of recorded performances themselves. Sound recordings preserve evidence of nineteenth-century performance habits, and these resources for historically informed performance make for a distinct intellectual milieu that changes the balance between familiarity and distance that has operated for decades in most historically informed performance of common-practice music. While the nineteenth-century move towards inwardness and ineffability is still part of modern performance ideology, the actual sound of these concepts playing out on old recordings can create a sense of distance between 'then' and now. This de-familiarization is arguably even starker because of the visceral responses to music that devices such as rubato, vibrato, and asynchrony engage. Historically informed performers, Hunter argues, are presented both with newly explicit choices about what historical evidence to use and what to disregard, as well as how to communicate a sense of difference from "mainstream" practice while using a familiar mindset to justify that difference.

Performances, live or recorded, do not simply drop out of the sky: they arise out of rehearsal practices, an area of historical research that has until now received scant attention. Opening Part II of the book, 'Materials and Practices', Marten Noorduin (Chapter 4) rightly observes that it is a truism that the presence or lack of rehearsals has a substantial influence on musical performances. But despite increasing interest in the performance practices of nineteenth-century chamber and orchestral music, the role that rehearsals played in the preparation of these performances has been left largely unexplored, significantly limiting an understanding of nineteenth-century music-making. Noorduin's chapter discusses new ways to explore the nature of orchestral rehearsals, with a particular focus on the rehearsal practices associated with the Philharmonic Society in London in the early to mid-nineteenth century. The archive of the Philharmonic Society is relatively well preserved and contains most of the incoming and outgoing correspondence, as well as the minutes of the organizational meetings. These sources describe the social and organizational contexts within which the rehearsals took place and reveal tensions between the divided leadership of the ensemble and the emergence of the baton-wielding conductor, as well as the requirements of the repertoire and the limited resources available for rehearsals. By the mid-nineteenth century, these tensions contributed to an

identifiable performance style that commentators contrasted with continental ensembles.

Exploring a rather different but no less important practice, Trevor Herbert in Chapter 5 examines the place of military, brass, and showbands in nineteenth-century music culture and their relationship to the classical-music mainstream. Concluding that each of these domains was related to, but separate from, art-music culture, its institutions, repertoires, and practices, he argues that bands were subcultures, the identities of which were internally formed and shared through structural networks. A number of obvious structural similarities defined each type of band, including their instrumentations, the way performers were recruited, and their functions in the musical life of the period. But there were also significant distinctions between these various band cultures, which created value systems that served to define their performance idioms. As Herbert demonstrates, there was mobility from these subcultures to the classical-music mainstream, with important musical consequences. For example, almost all brass and wind players were trained and gained their formidable musical experience in military bands. In the first part of the period this included players who had never enrolled in the military but were hired as freelancers by regiments as needs arose. It followed that the performance practices of bands, including brass bands that in many respects were replications of military models, caused performance conventions to be transferred to aspects of art music. And turning from 'practices' towards 'materials', Herbert also touches on a number of organological issues that were shared between bands and orchestras, in a period when almost all wind instruments were the subject of major design developments that led to both gradual and acute reforms to their music idioms.

Concluding the trio of chapters that make up Part II, Chapter 6, by David Milsom, leads from the social and organological to the embodied and the sonorous, probing what comprised the likely fundamental sonorities of late Romantic violin performance, bridging the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. After a working definition of terms, Milsom makes reference to a range of aesthetic preferences indicated by relevant historical literature, alongside a consideration of a number of aspects of posture, deportment, and organology in nineteenth-century violin playing, discussing a number of unanalyzed assumptions about violin sound at the end of the nineteenth century. With these critical reappraisals in mind, Milsom provides important insights stemming from two recent engagements with practice-as-research.

The first of these arises from his participation in the Accordes! string orchestra project (treated in depth in Part IV of the book), involving the use of thick, unwound gut strings, similar to those advocated by a number of historical writers, and which powerfully brought home their consequences for expressive performance. The second was his experience of making acoustic recordings using early twentieth-century methods and technologies. As Milsom makes clear, this second context is particularly significant because of the influence of historical recordings on our contemporary understanding of string sonority—an understanding that is itself mediated by the possibilities, limitations, and circumstances of early acoustical recording technologies. Bringing together historical and firsthand practice-based evidence, Milsom concludes—contrary to a widely disseminated 'default' HIP assumption—that a strong and projected sonority was both aesthetically advocated and practically necessary. While acknowledging the difficulties that beset any attempt to recapture the actual sound of nineteenth-century string playing, there is no avoiding the fundamental importance of imaginative attempts in that direction for performers wanting to experiment with nineteenth-century performing practices.

If David Milsom's chapter already enters the territory of practice-led or performed research, then Part III of the book, 'Perspectives from Practice/Performing Research', seizes that theme with both hands. The first chapter in this section is by Anna Scott who presents sensational and theatrical contemporary accounts of nineteenth-century pianists where language associated with the worlds of the magical, super-natural, or spiritual is used to describe their performances. She contrasts this with the more positivistic, constraining milieu inhabited by historically informed performers today. One of the main questions posed in the chapter is at what point, and to what extent, does historical evidence start to suppress imagination and individuality in artistic decision-making? Scott describes inhabiting a 'paradoxical yet transformative space between fidelity and sacrilege'. She explores this further in a case study designed to question whether recordings-informed performances can be at least as free from textual fidelity and modern performance convention as their historical models, and might move away from the validation processes relating to historical proofs and provenance that historically informed performers so often rely upon. To that end, Scott imitated five early recordings by pupils of Brahms and Schumann before putting them together in a pluralist, post-historical version of Brahms's Intermezzo in A Major, op.118, no. 2, with the aim of pulling the performance farther

away from the score and away from modern 'norms'. She suggests that the effectiveness of recordings-informed performance relies on handling source materials, and history itself, with 'fidelity *and* defiance'. Scott concludes that it is difficult to assess just how transformative recordings-informed performance really is and warns that it will fail to fully live up to its potential as a research method unless its adherents embrace new relationships towards textual fidelity, established performance norms, and attitudes to the function of historical evidence.

With no less force, and in the context of wind-ensemble performance, Emily Worthington (Chapter 8) argues that practice itself should be acknowledged as a primary research method in both historically informed performance and historical musicology, rather than being located 'downstream' of documentary study. Utilizing theatre-practitioner Ben Spatz's theory of 'technique as embodied knowledge' and drawing on personal reflections and insights from semi-structured interviews with members of the period-instrument *Harmoniemusik* ensemble Boxwood & Brass, she demonstrates the capacity for practice to offer insights into that practice that would never be gleaned simply from written sources. She offers a revision of received Harmonie historiography in that far from being 'mere' functional music for social occasions, Harmoniemusik arrangements were at times valued more than original works as a site for wind players to express their artistry and develop their own embodied artistic practice.

Bringing Part III of the book to a close, Neal Peres Da Costa (Chapter 9) takes us through the evidence for the persistence of a rhetorical style of piano playing through the late nineteenth century and musters the arguments that early twentieth-century recordings provide the listener with a credible window into the artistic priorities of the preceding century. Noting the distance between this evidence and contemporary HIP approaches to late nineteenth-century repertoire, Peres Da Costa advocates the usefulness of 'emulation' of historic recordings as the steppingstone to 'artistically independent' but historically anchored interpretations, giving examples of such projects by scholar-practitioners over the last decade. The chapter finishes with an example of Peres Da Costa's own work in this area, incorporating data from audience experiences of an experimental recital in the UK as part of the TCHIP conference in 2018.

Part IV, the final part of the book, constitutes a multi-perspective in-depth discussion of a unique research project on the performance of later nineteenth-century string orchestra music. Bringing together the aesthetic,

historical, embodied, practice-led, and empirical strands that run through the whole volume, this culminating section gives a detailed account of the Accordes! string orchestra project, which was one of the research strands explored by TCHIP. Chapter 10, by the director of the Accordes! orchestra, Claire Holden, combines historical research into an unexplored aspect of nineteenth-century performance practices—expressive asynchrony—with experimental practice-led research exploring possibilities for practical application of that historical research. Holden considers why the sound of both modern- and period-instrument orchestral string sections differ greatly from how we might expect that nineteenth-century string sections sounded. She examines historical approaches to timing and agency within orchestras and in particular draws attention to historical differences in the vertical temporal alignment of individuals within nineteenth-century string sections when compared to late twentieth- and twenty-first-century ensembles. Holden rejects the notion that this discrepancy was due entirely to 'improving' standards of orchestral playing as over-simplistic and demonstrates that it was related to changing tastes and aesthetics; she claims that the change to a more modern rhythmically aligned orchestral style met with some resistance from performers and critics who preferred the tonal and expressive qualities of asynchronous string sections. Asking why asynchrony should not be as commonly adopted in period performances of Romantic orchestral repertoire as dislocation and arpeggiation are by historically informed pianists, Holden describes her experience of the Accordes! project experiments into expressive asynchrony with a string orchestra of twenty-two professional HIP specialists. She concludes that the results were such that further research with established and conducted ensembles is surely merited.

Chapter 11, by Eric Clarke and Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey, provides a complementary account, reporting on the empirical methods employed, and some of the findings that emerged from this multi-disciplinary project. Triangulating practitioner and audience perspectives with performance data, they demonstrate the effectiveness of empirical methods in offering operationalizable insights for practitioners of historically informed performance. Using note onset collection methods developed specifically for string orchestras over the course of the larger TCHIP research project, Clarke and Ponchione-Bailey provide quantitative performance data detailing the degree of expressive asynchrony present in specific recorded excerpts from

the Accordes! rehearsals, concert, and recording sessions and relate these to practitioner and listener responses to the same excerpts, offering insights into the consequences of expressive asynchrony for performer and listener experiences. Using stimulated recall and interview methods, the chapter analyzes the experiences of the players themselves as they experiment with different innovative historical methods in rehearsal and performance, drawing out those factors that seem to invigorate performance and those that seem to disrupt it. The analysis demonstrates divergent experiences among the players—some quickly feel comfortable with the approach, while others remain uncertain about its rationale and implementation, and the need to understand ensemble synchrony/asynchrony as the consequence of a shared musical conception rather than as an end in itself.

Complementing these accounts are the evaluative judgements of two categories of listeners: those at a public concert given by the orchestra; and two separate groups specifically recruited to listen to recordings of the orchestra made in rehearsal, concert, and recording situations. Finally, the chapter triangulates the experiences of players and listeners with a quantitative analysis of three components of ensemble timing data under the different conditions of rehearsal, concert performance, and recording: overall ensemble asynchrony, leader-follower behaviour, and individual rhythmic flexibility. Taken together, these data are used to examine in detail what actually happens and what the consequences might be for listeners and players when specific nineteenth-century pre-performance and performance practices are employed by expert HIP string players.

Practice in Context is not intended to be a final word on the current state of nineteenth-century performance research, but we hope that it might stimulate new academic discourse and demonstrate that innovative approaches to historical research can open up exciting possibilities for performers. For too long nineteenth-century performance styles have been regarded as uniquely problematic for HIP, and period performances of nineteenth-century music have been criticized by scholars for failing to reflect aspects of historical style. The work of the contributors in this book charts a more optimistic path, where performers can be empowered and motivated by new developments in social and cultural, empirical, and performance-led research, leading to the creation of performances that wear their relationship with historical evidence confidently, independently, and perhaps eventually even instinctively and effortlessly.

Notes

1. TCHIP was hosted by the University of Oxford, Faculty of Music. AHRC Grant Reference Number: AH/N004663/1
2. The Hanover Band, Monica Huggett, director; Mary Verney, piano. Beethoven, Symphony No1 Op.21 and Piano Concerto No.1 op. 15 (Nimbus 2150).
3. Taruskin, R., 1995: *Text and Act*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 202-230
4. For example, the chamber ensemble, Hausmusik London was founded in 1986 to perform late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century chamber music and claimed to be the 'first British chamber ensemble to perform Romantic music on period instruments'. https://signumrecords.com/product-category/artists/hausmusik/
5. https://www.intermusica.com/artist/Sir-John-Eliot-Gardiner. Date of access 01 November 2023
6. https://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at/en/konzert-archiv. Date of access 01 November 2023
7. OAE, Mackerras, 1988: Mendelssohn, Symphony No.4 Op.90, Overture and Incidental Music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Op.21 and Op.61 (VC 7 90725-2) and OAE, Mackerras, 1988: Schubert Symphony No.9 D.944 (VC 7 90708-1)
8. London Classical Players, Roger Norrington, 1989: Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique (EMI CDC 7495412)
9. https://monteverdi.co.uk/a-brief-history. Date of access 01 November 2023
10. https://orchestredeschampselysees.com/fr/nous-connaitre. Date of access 01 November 2023
11. Temperley, N., 1984: 'The Movement Puts a Stronger Premium on Novelty than on Accuracy, and Fosters Misrepresentation' *Early Music* 12/1 p. 18; Dulak, M., 1993: 'The Quiet Metamorphosis of "Early Music"' *Repercussions* 2/2c. p. 45; Butt, J., 2002: *Playing with History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 183; Haynes,B., 2007: *The End of Early Music: A Period Performer's History of Music for the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 219

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Nineteenth-Century Musicalities in the Twenty-First Century

George Kennaway

The overwhelming emphasis in historical performance research has been on practicalities. Much of this work starts from what one might call the 'sharp end'. It is easier to concentrate on topics like vibrato, piano arpeggiation, or *rubato* than to explore the high-flown romantic rhetoric found in many treatises. Compared with this, vaguer evocations of musical effects tending towards the aesthetic or the spiritual appear either as clichés or too remote from the demands of performance. But examining these less specific, more general, elements of nineteenth-century sources can suggest a different approach to performance and to 'musicality'.

One example is the distinction between a 'correct' and a 'fine' style, explained by Spohr amongst many others. The 'correct' style is largely a matter of playing things as written; the 'fine' style goes beyond that. Spohr does indeed distinguish the 'correct performance' from the 'beautiful, or fine, performance' and makes it clear that he sets out the essentials of correct performance 'so that the student can judge whether he has made it completely his own and thus acquired the ability to strive for what is beautiful'.[1] But Spohr also goes on to say that the 'fine' style is only available to performers when refined taste governs use of expressive devices (thus far, a conventional view), and then that 'all of these means of expression will lead to a beautiful performance only if good taste monitors their application and the soul of the player guides the bow and enlivens the fingers'.[2] These latter two points cannot be taught. Clive Brown sees Spohr's fine style in terms of practical issues such as appoggiaturas, dotted rhythms, keyboard arpeggiation, articulation, and 'a whole series of consequences arising from metre and musical genres'.[3] Spohr does go into considerable detail about many expressive techniques, but these are all, in the end, subordinated to a higher artistic end.

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This cannot be taught—and yet such qualities are seen as essential for the highest artistic standards.

I think we might look askance at a player who made these lofty statements about musical performance their *starting point* rather than beginning with more immediately practical matters. But would we be right to raise an eyebrow? If music expresses passionate feelings, and my performance communicates and recreates those feelings in the audience, have I not served music's prime directive? Could a passionate but entirely historically *un*informed performance that communed with the composer's soul move the audience in a way that Spohr would recognize—even if the expressive means employed were alien to him? Are we too preoccupied with means rather than ends?

In examining some of the implications of looking at music from this perspective I will sidestep technical or stylistic considerations, and instead explore what nineteenth-century audiences and critics might have understood by the term 'musical' or 'musicality'.

When we ask 'what is musicality?' and receive bewildered tautologies as replies, we are in the grip of a discourse. To avoid answers like 'being musical', 'having musical instincts', or 'responding to music', we have to stand outside that discourse—and this is very difficult. But if we could perform Brahms in a way that aligned with what contemporary Viennese audiences or critics perceived as 'musical', would we not have achieved the height of historically informed performance? I should say that I am not concerned here with musicality as a measurable psychological attribute but rather as a trope, a label that stands for a shifting group of values that change over time—and just as there is a plurality of performance practices, so there are musicalities. The word itself is of surprisingly recent origin. The earliest English reference in the Oxford English Dictionary is from 1847, but originates in 1837: 'Vitality signifies, not life, but livability . . . as musicality (if I may be allowed to coin another word) would denote, not music, but the aptitude or fitness to give rise to musical sounds.' But the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) also refers to a French usage from Berlioz in 1835 with an implication of triviality:

> We begin to understand that there is a *style* in music, as in poetry; that there is therefore a low-level musicality, like waiting-room literature; operas by grisettes and soldiers, like novels by cooks and grooms.[4]

There are several different 'musicalities', which I can only sketch here. One musicality can simply be the existence of established musical practices and institutions—musical *activity*. This is a very widespread use of the word throughout the nineteenth century. On this basis a writer in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* described the musicality of Bavaria:

> The Bavarian nation was also exceptionally musical; its princes and electors had limitless respect for music. Maximilian Emanuel, Maximilian Joseph, Maria Antonia from Bavaria . . . had great enthusiasm for the art of music. The theatre, the concert hall, were, so to speak, an Odeon, where the masterpieces of all the arts were characterised.[5]

This concentration on musical activity itself as an index of musicality is strikingly present a century later in England. In 1910, William Galloway, sometime MP for Manchester South-East and a wealthy businessman, wrote a short book entitled *Musical England* (connected to his long and unsuccessful campaign for a nationally funded opera company). He presents a picture of a nation that is musical on an almost industrial scale, in terms of examinations, competitive festivals, music in schools, colleges, and universities, municipally supported music, military music, music societies, concerts, and opera.

> The scheme of the book in its ultimate form, then, is to show . . . what is being done all over the country in the cause of music; to point out . . . possible fields for improvement and extension; to indicate . . . the progress of the last five-and-twenty years; and above all to show how readily the great majority of the people respond to the opportunities provided.[6]

Galloway takes it for granted that England is musical because there is a lot happening. The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* is describing musical activity in the context of patronage, while Galloway's survey takes in a more democratized, socially inclusive, musical life. A great deal of writing about music consists of this sort of documentation. The minutiae of concert life, the details of who is to perform, the repertoire that is announced for the forthcoming *abonnement*-series—these things are not just news. They serve as proofs that the town, or the nation, is indeed musical. In this sense, the 'musicality' of a large oratorio performance, whether combining local choirs with the local orchestra in the local town hall, or given by visiting performers,

consists in its very existence—what is 'performed' is, in a sense, the community itself that can boast such forces. Therefore, the technical musical standard of the performance is not necessarily the most appropriate criterion of its success. This underlies the indefatigable J. Sutcliffe Smith's idiosyncratic publications on music, chronicling musical life in Birmingham, Yorkshire cities and smaller Yorkshire towns, or his biography of William Jackson of Masham.[7] His uncritical enthusiasm was not universally shared—one reviewer criticized his 'lack of judgement in glorifying a collection of local nonentities'.[8] But Smith was not just elevating the obscure—he was recreating a sense of musical community. In this context, 'musicality' can be said to be a socially constructed performative concept. 'We' are musical when 'we' have concerts.

Some eulogized musical activity for nationalistic reasons. Brown and Stratton were quite clear:

> In undertaking this work, the authors have been animated by the desire to present the true position of the British Empire in the world of music. A country is musical only by the music it produces for itself, not by what it takes from others. In this work, therefore, only what has been done by Britain's own sons and daughters is placed on record.[9]

They were motivated by 'a patriotic desire to record the achievements of British workers'. Shortly after the first World War, a lecturer addressing the Incorporated Society of Musicians stressed that one had to 'take the long view' as whether a nation was musical, neatly skirting around what he saw as lapses in the periods 1300–1550 and 1625–1875:

> If we had been potentially unmusical as well as actually unmusical during those stretches of time, we should not have risen to the magnificent musicianship of the period 1575–1625, or to the position we have held in music since about 1899. The English mind, out of its complexity and depth, develops very slowly. . . . Music . . . appears only in such times and in such places as contain the human soul in a condition of maturity. . . . the English mind is once again approaching to the condition when it has the capacity to represent itself in perfect music.[10]

So, a nation can still be musical even when there is little music taking place—it reappears when conditions are right for the national soul. Here, musical activity is an index of musicality, in turn an index of imperial power.