

BRUCE HAYNES



The End of
Early Music

A PERIOD PERFORMER'S
HISTORY OF MUSIC

AUDIO
on the
WEB

The End of Early Music

This page intentionally left blank

The End of Early Music

*A Period Performer's History of Music
for the Twenty-First Century*

Bruce Haynes

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

2007

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press, Inc., publishes works that further
Oxford University's objective of excellence
in research, scholarship, and education.

Oxford New York
Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in
Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

Copyright © 2007 by Bruce Haynes

Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.
198 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016

www.oup.com

Oxford is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise,
without the prior permission of Oxford University Press.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Haynes, Bruce, 1942–

The end of early music: a period performer's history
of music for the 21st century /
Bruce Haynes.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-19-518987-2

1. Performance practice (Music)—History. 2. Music—Interpretation
(Phrasing, dynamics, etc.)—Philosophy and aesthetics. I. Title.

ML457.H38 2007

781.4'309—dc22 2006023594



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

This book is dedicated to
Erato, muse of lyric and love poetry,
Euterpe, muse of music, and
Joni M., Honored and Honorary Doctor of broken-hearted harmony,
whom I humbly invite to be its patronesses

We're captive on the carousel of time,
We can't return, we can only look
behind from where we came.

(Dr. Joni Mitchell, "The Circle Game," 1966)

Preface

Filling a book full of words about music, I am conscious of John Hawkins's remark in his book on music history of 1776: "Tradition only whispers, for a short time, the name and abilities of a mere Performer, however exquisite the delight which his talents afforded to those who heard him; whereas, a theory once committed to paper and established, lives, at least in libraries, as long as the language in which it was written."¹

Music moves on, while words remain behind. But even when first written, words have difficulty capturing the essence of a subject as evanescent as music. "Grant that a man read all the books of musick that ever were wrote," writes Roger North (that inexhaustible font of musical wisdom), "I shall not allow that musick is or can be understood out of them, no more than the taste of meats out of cookish receipt books."²

A subject like music beckons us on, inviting us to keep trying, though we know we will end up with more questions than answers. Hokusai, great artist that he was, caught just the right spirit of reconciling the vastness of our imaginations with the tininess of the accomplishments of our short lives.

I have been in love with painting ever since I became conscious of it at the age of six. I drew some pictures I thought fairly good when I was fifty, but really nothing I did before the age of seventy was of any value at all. At seventy-three I have at last caught every aspect of nature—birds, fish, animals, insects, trees, grasses, all. When I am eighty I shall have developed still further, and I will really master the secrets of art at ninety. When I reach a hundred

my work will be truly sublime, and my final goal will be attained around the age of one hundred and ten, when every line and dot I draw will be imbued with life. To all of you who are going to live as long as I do, I promise to keep my word.³

“*Ars longa, vita brevis.*” Hokusai only lived to the age of 89 [!], so he was unable to keep his extravagant promise. I doubt he was surprised, or even disappointed. We humans do what we can do, and if we are lucky, we take pleasure from it. As Okakura Kakuzo summed it up,

The heaven of modern humanity is indeed shattered in the Cyclopean struggle for wealth and power. The world is groping in the shadow of egotism and vulgarity. Knowledge is bought through a bad conscience, benevolence practiced for the sake of utility. The East and West, like two dragons tossed in a sea of ferment, in vain strive to regain the jewel of life. We need a Niuka again to repair the grand devastation; we await the great Avatar.

Meanwhile, let us have a sip of tea. The afternoon glow is brightening the bamboos, the fountains are bubbling with delight, the sighing of the pines is heard in our kettle. Let us dream of evanescence, and linger in the beautiful foolishness of things.⁴

The opinions written here about matters of style, performance, the communication of emotion, and other ephemera do not always rest on criteria that are provable. They are merely personal reflections on the present state of the historically inspired performance movement (known as HIP) seen from the point of view of someone who has been involved in it since the early 1960s. Roger North in 1728 speaks for me—perhaps for us all—when he remarks, “I have ever found I did not well know my owne thoughts, till I had wrote and reviewed them; and then for the most part, mists fell away, and fondness and failings appeared in a clear light.”⁵ I am delighted to share these thoughts with you. With luck they may inspire you, too, to write down your own.

Acknowledgments

Mattheson cites Sartorius as using a pair of shoes to make the point that *Voto non vivitur uno*, “It is not done with one.”¹

So many people have given me ideas, I will surely forget to name some of them.

Three years ago, the Canada Council for the Arts generously offered me the Senior Fellowship for 2003 to “write and review my own thoughts,” which constitute this book. What you cannot see, holding it in your hands, is the great pleasure I have had in devoting most of my waking hours to this project, and the tremendous learning curve it represents for me. I begin, then, by thanking the Council for its support of this and many other projects.

I promised the Canada Council this would not be a book of musicological research, and I’ve kept that promise (even if I have read a ton of books, many of them by musicologists, in preparing it). For a while I thought I might even avoid the need for citations, but my debt to many thinkers before me is much too great for that.

As always, for my abiding love of music and the part of it I understand, I have my parents to thank, who introduced me to it early on and shared its joys with me all through their lives. I also take pleasure and pride in naming five outstanding musicians who were kind enough at various times to have acted as my musical mentors: Ross Taylor, Alan Curtis, Frans Brüggen, Sigiswald Kuijken, and Gustav Leonhardt. I have also learned much and had major help in formulating ideas from my contact

with an extraordinary musician, Susie Napper (with whom I have the good fortune to share life and the parentage of three children). The ideas in this book are not necessarily theirs, though I hope they would enjoy considering some of them, or the spin I have put on them.

For advice and encouragement with this book I would like to warmly thank Nicholas Avery, Cecil Adkins, Tom Beghin, Alfredo Bernardini, Jay Bernfeld, Tamara Bernstein, John Black, Josep Boras, Jeanne Bovet, José Bowen, Geoffrey Burgess, John Butt, Michael Collver, Lucy van Dael, Sand Dalton, Ross Duffin, Uri Golomb, Pat Grant, Peggy Gries, Arthur Haas, Steve Hammer, Stevan Harnad, Anaïs Haynes, Keith Hill, Robert Hill, Peter Holman, Alan J. Howlett, Roland Jackson, Mary Kirkpatrick, Bart Kuijken, Angèle Laberge, Jean Lamon, Marc-Olivier Lamontagne, Brad Lehman, Matthias Maute, Washington McClain, Bill Metcalfe, Scott Metcalfe, Winfried Michel, Catherine Motuz, Kate van Orden, Richard Ostrofsky, Samantha Owens, Tim Paradise, Meg Partridge, Matthew Peaceman, Jesse Read, Joshua Rifkin, Noel Salmond, Julien Saulgrain, Skip Sempé, Steve Stubbs, Teri Noel Towe, Peter Walls, Nat Watson, Jed Wentz, Jon Wild, the students of my six very interesting graduate seminars at McGill University in 2005–2007, those who listened to my lectures at the ESMUC in Barcelona in 2003 and 2005 and at the Amsterdam Conservatory in 2005, and a number of others who I hope will forgive me for temporary loss of memory.

Finally, I would like to say a word for the quiet but important support that Oxford University Press has been offering to the historically oriented musical world. Two of the five most important books that this one leans on are published by OUP, as is the indispensable journal *Early Music*. I'm personally grateful for the support and assistance of a number of the editors of this book, including Suzanne Ryan, Norman Hirschy, Robert Milks, and Lynn Childress.

Credits

I thank the following publishers for permission to use excerpts from these sources: The Circle Game, Words and Music by JONI MITCHELL, © 1966 (Renewed), CRAZY CROW MUSIC (BMI). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission. Christopher Small, selections from pages 2, 164, 220, 267, 272, 464, 426, and 421 of *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* © 1998 by Christopher Small and reprinted with the permission of Wesleyan University Press. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, *Musik als Klangrede*, © 1982 Residenz Verlag, Salzburg. From *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice* by Brown, C. (1999). By permission of Oxford University Press. From *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* by Taruskin, R. (1996). By permission of Oxford University Press.

Contents

List of Recorded Excerpts xv

Introduction 3

Literacy ∞ The Romantic Revolution ∞ Canonism and
Classicism ∞ Progress or Adaptation ∞ Serendipity ∞ Musical
Rhetoric ∞ Authenticity as a Statement of Intent ∞
“Scare-Quotes” for Authenticity ∞ The End of Early Music ∞
Musicking ∞ Terminology and Concepts

PART I Performing Styles

Chapter 1. When You Say Something Differently, You Say Something Different 19

“Style Is That Which Becomes Unstylish” ∞ Innovation ∞ Eating
the Cookbook ∞ Chronocentrism: “Music as Tradition” ∞ The Rise
of Pluralism: Matching Style to Period

Chapter 2. Mind the Gap *Current Styles* 32

Three Abstractions: Romantic, Modern, and Period Styles ∞ Romantic
Style: An Absolute ∞ Recordings That Document the Heart of Romantic

Practice ∼ Prophets of the Revolution: Dolmetsch and Landowska ∼
 The Authenticity Revolution of the 1960s ∼ The Advent of Period
 Instruments and “Low Pitch”: “Strange and Irregular Colors” ∼
 Chain Reaction ∼ Guru Style: Rhetoric without the Name

Chapter 3. Mainstream Style “Chops, but No Soul” 48

Modernism and Modern Style ∼ The Performance Practices of
 Romantic Style and Modern Style Compared ∼ Vibrato,
 the MSG of Music ∼ Children of Modernism ∼ Period Style
 Compared to Modern Style ∼ Click-Track Baroque ∼ Strait
 Style and Modernism ∼ Strike Up the Bland: Strait Style Described

PART II How Romantic Are We?

Chapter 4. Classical Music’s Coarse Caress 67

The Musical Canon ∼ Charles Burney and the Beginnings of
 Musical History ∼ Why Did the Romantics Call Music
 “Classical”? ∼ What Conservatories Conserve ∼ Absolute
 Music (the Autonomy Principle) ∼ Pachelbel’s Canon Becomes
 Canon ∼ Originality and the Cult of Genius ∼ Attribution
 and Designer Labels ∼ Repeatability and Ritualized Performance

Chapter 5. The Transparent Performer 86

Composer-Intention (“Fidelity to the Composer”) ∼ What Is a
 Piece of Music? ∼ *Werktreue* (Work-Fidelity): The Musical
 Analogue of Religious Fundamentalism ∼ The Urtext Imperative
 and Text Fetishism ∼ Untouchability ∼ The “Transparent”
 Performer and “Perfect Compliance” ∼ The Romantic Invention
 of the Interpretive Conductor ∼ The Maestro-Rehearsal

Chapter 6. Changing Meanings, Permanent Symbols 102

Changing Meanings, Permanent Symbols ∼ Descriptive and
 Prescriptive Notation ∼ The Incomplete Musical Score ∼ Written
 Music’s Oral Element ∼ Writing Only the Essential in Rhetorical
 Music ∼ Implicit Notation ∼ Strait Style and the Neutral
 “Run-Through” ∼ Style versus Interpretation ∼ “Saying Bach,
 Meaning Telemann”: Composer-Intention before the Romantic Period

PART III
Anachronism and Authenticity

Chapter 7. Original Ears 119

Vintage Compared with Style ∼ Seconda Pratica ∼ Past Examples
of Authenticity Movements ∼ The Difference between an
Art Fake and a Period Concert ∼ How Historical Musicology
and HIP Differ ∼ Romantic and Baroque Audiences
Compared ∼ Period Musicians in Victorian Outfits

Chapter 8. Ways of Copying the Past 138

Emulation and Replication: Two Renaissance Approaches to Imitation ∼
The Emulation Principle ∼ The Replication Principle ∼ Imitation in the
Canonic System ∼ Style-Copying and Work-Copying ∼ “Talking to
Ghosts” and Work-Copying ∼ The Kon-Tiki Observation ∼ “What
Really Happened” in History ∼ Beyond History: The Shelf Life of
Historical Evidence ∼ What’s Wrong with Anachronisms

Chapter 9. The Medium Is the Message
Period Instruments 151

The Instrument Trade-off ∼ The Influence of Instruments on
Performing Style ∼ The Violins of Autumn ∼ Period Instruments:
Hardware and Software ∼ Measuring the Makers ∼ “Faults” in
an Original ∼ The Lefébure: More Than a Style-Copy ∼ A Plea
for More “Correctly Attributed Fakes” ∼ “Don’t Fix It if It Ain’t Broke”

PART IV
What Makes Baroque Music “Baroque”?

**Chapter 10. Baroque Expression and
Romantic Expression Compared 165**

Rhetoric: Beyond Communication ∼ Once More, with Feeling:
The Affections ∼ Persuasion: Winning Over the Listeners ∼
Declamation / Expression / *Vortrag* ∼ Commitment:
The Baroque Performer “Himself in Flames” ∼ Romantic Expression:
The “Autobiography in Notes” ∼ Rhetoric Abandoned by
the Romantics: An Art “Broken to Service” ∼ Rhetoric
Overwhelmed by Beauty (= *Æsthetics*)

Chapter 11. The Rainbow and the Kaleidoscope
Romantic Phrasing Compared with Baroque 184

Figures and Gestures ∞ Examples of Melodic Figures ∞
 Gestures as the Antiphase ∞ Orders or Levels of Meaning:
 Gesture and Phrase ∞ Inflection (Individual Note-Shaping)

PART V
The End of “Early” Music

Chapter 12. Passive and Active Musicking
Stop Staring and Grow Your Own 203

The Cover Band Mentality ∞ Playing in the Wind ∞ Gracing: The
 Border between Composing and Performing ∞ Improvisation: The
 Domain of the Performer ∞ Style-Copying in Composing ∞ Roll over
 Beethoven ∞ Thoughts on the Genius Barrier ∞ Two Examples of
 Present-Day Period Composing ∞ Designer Labels ∞ Our Own Music

Chapter 13. Perpetual Revolution 215

“The Musick of Fools and Madd Men”: Limits to What Taste
 Will Accept ∞ The Illusion of an Unbroken Performing Style from
 Mozart’s Time to Ours ∞ Beethoven Lite and Manifest Destiny ∞
 “Perpetual Revolution” and Changing Taste ∞ HIP Is Anti-Classical ∞
 Default Style ∞ Historians of Necessity ∞ Trying to See over
 the Horizon of Time ∞ The Pursuit of Authenticity


Notes 229

Bibliographic Abbreviations 249

Bibliography 251

Index 267

List of Recorded Excerpts

The recorded excerpts are available on the companion website www.oup.com/us/earlymusic. Excerpts are marked in the text with the following symbol: 

1. Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Koopman, 1996. Bach: Cantata 207a/1. Erato. Track 1. 0–0:27
2. Musica Antiqua Köln, Goebel, 1996. Bach: Cantata 207/1. Archiv. Track 1. 0–0:38
3. Unnamed Orchestra, Stokowski, 1957. Bach: Geistliche lied “Komm, süsßer Tod,” BWV 478, arr. Stokowski. EMI Classics, 7243 5 66385 2 5. Track 2. 2:02–2:50
4. Sarah Brightman, 2001. Handel: “Lascia ch’io pianga.” Angel, 7243 5 33257 2 5. Track 6. 0–0:51
5. Suzie LeBlanc, 2002. Handel: “Lascia ch’io pianga.” Atma ACD 2 2260. Track 4. 0–0:52
6. Concentus Musicus, Harnoncourt, 1981/83. Bach: Brandenburg 2/2. Ultima, LC 6019. Track 1:2. 0–0:27
7. Bath Festival Orchestra, Menuhin, (? early 1960s). Bach: Brandenburg 2/2. EMI Classics, 7243 5 68516 2 7.¹ Track 6. 0–0:33
8. Philadelphia Orchestra, Stokowski, 1928. Bach: Brandenburg 2/2. Andante (orig. Victor), ISBN 0-9712764-6-3. Track 2:11. 0–0:44
9. Adelina Patti, 1905. Mozart: “Voi che sapete.” Nimbus, NI 7840/41. Track 2:1. 2:20–end

10. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam Toonkunst Choir, Mengelberg, 1939. Bach: “Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder,” St. Matthew Passion. Naxos 8.110880–82. Track 3:11. 6:55–7:50
11. Gabrieli Consort & Players, McCreesh, 2002. Bach: “Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder,” St. Matthew Passion. Archiv 474 200–2. Track 2:33. 5:00–5:31
12. Unnamed Orchestra, Stokowski, 1957. Bach: Air, Suite 3, BWV 1068 (“Air on the G string”). EMI Classics, 7243 5 66385 2 5. Track 8. 1:10–2:10
13. Akademie für Alte Musik, 1995. Bach: Air, Suite 3, BWV 1068 (“Air on the G string”). Harmonia Mundi, HMX 2908074.77. Track 2. 0:42–1:24
14. Alessandro Moreschi, 1904. Bach/Gounod: “Ave Maria.” DG, 4590652. Track 2. 0:53–1:43
15. Wanda Landowska, 1933. Bach: Goldberg Variations, theme. EMI Classics, 7243 5 67200 2 2. Track 1. 2–1:14. 0–0:31
16. Wanda Landowska, 1933. Bach: Goldberg Variations, #13. EMI Classics, 7243 5 67200 2 2. 0:38–1:23
17. Gustav Leonhardt, 1965. Bach: Goldberg Variations, #13. Teldec, LC 6019. Track 14. 0:35–1:19
18. Pierre Hantaï, 2003. Bach: Goldberg Variations, #13. Mirare, MIR 9945. Track 14. 0:34–1:19
19. Robert Hill, 2004. Bach: Goldberg Variations, #13. Private recording. Track 34. 0:32–1:11
20. Frans Brüggen and Frans Vester, ca. 1963. Telemann: Concerto, e-minor, Rec and Trv. Teldec, ASIN: B000000SII. Track 8. 0–0:46
21. Brüggen, Bijlsma, Leonhardt, 1962. Handel: HWV 365, 3d mvmt. Telefunken: 6.35359. 2. 0–0:48
22. Brüggen, Bijlsma, Leonhardt, 1973, Handel: HWV 365, 3d mvmt. ABC Classics, ABCL-67005/3. 3. 0–0:49
23. Brüggen, Bijlsma, Leonhardt, 1962. Handel: HWV 360, 3d mvmt. Telefunken: 6.35359. 4. 0–0:38
24. Brüggen, Bijlsma, Leonhardt, 1973/74. Handel: HWV 360, 3d mvmt. Track 5. 0–0:38
25. Unnamed Orchestra, Stokowski, 1957. Bach: BWV 565, arr. Stokowski. EMI Classics, 7243 5 66385 2 5. Track 11. 0–0:46
26. Los Angeles Philharmonic, Salonen, 1999. Bach: BWV 565, arr. Stokowski. Sony Classical SK89012. Track 1. 0–0:50
27. Berlin Philharmonic, Karajan, 1952. Bach: Mass in B-Minor, First Kyrie, bars 30–34. EMI-Angel 3500 C (35015–6-7); later reissues EMI Références CHS 7 63505-2, EMI Classics 5 67207 2 5. 0–0:32
28. Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Koopman, 1994. Bach: Mass in B-Minor, First Kyrie, bars 30–36. Erato 4509–98478–2. 0–0:31
29. Joseph Joachim, 1903. Bach: Adagio from g-minor solo violin sonata. Opal, CD 9851. Track 2. 0–0:40

30. Yehudi Menuhin, 1935. Bach: Adagio from g-minor solo violin sonata. EMI Classics, 7243 5 67198 2 8. Track 1:1. 0–0:49
31. Lucy van Dael, 1996. Bach: Adagio from g-minor solo violin sonata. Naxos. Track 1:1. 0–0:34
32. Vienna Philharmonic, Höffgen, Furtwängler, 1954. Bach: “Erbarme dich,” St. Matthew Passion. EMI Classics. Track 2:9. 1:16–1:53
33. H. Koch, Romantic oboe, M. Friesenhausen, H. Rilling. Bach: Cantata 187/5. Hänssler, CD 92.056. Track 22. 0–0:49
34. B. Haynes, hautboy, M. Emmermann, G. Leonhardt, 1989. Bach: Cantata 187/5. Teldec 8.35836 ZL, 244179–2. Track 2:5. 0–0:58
35. Fritz Kreisler, 1911. Kreisler: *Liebeslied*. DG, 4590652. Track 13. 0–0:56
36. Joshua Bell, 1996. Kreisler: *Liebeslied*. Decca, 44409. Track 7. 0–0:59
37. M. Petri and G. Malcolm, 1984. Marcello: Largo, Sonata, F. Philips, 412 632–2. Track 21. 0:29–1:23
38. Stevie Wonder and Take 6, 1992. “O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,” *Handel’s Messiah: A Soulful Celebration*, set by Mervyn Warren. Reprise 9 26980-2. Track 8. 0–0:55
39. Leonhardt Consort, Equiluz, Leonhardt, 1987. Bach: “Jesu, meines Todes Tod” in BWV 165. Teldec, Das Kantatenwerk, vol. 39. 0–0:31
40. Bach Collegium Japan, Sakurada, Suzuki, 1996. Bach: “Jesu, meines Todes Tod” in BWV 165. BIS, CD-801. Track 13. 0–0:26
41. Leonhardt Consort, M. Kweksilber, D. Smithers, G. Leonhardt, 1976. Bach: BWV 51/5. Teldec Kantatenwerk vol.14, Track 5. 0–0:19
42. Bach Ensemble, Baird, Holmgren, Rifkin, 1986. Bach: BWV 51/5. Florilegium 417 616 2. Track 12. 0–0:21
43. Bach Ensemble, Schopper, Rifkin, 1995–96. Bach: “Starkes Lieben,” BWV 182. Dorian DOR 93231, Track 4. 0–0:51
44. Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Mertens Koopman, 1995. Bach: “Starkes Lieben,” BWV 182/4. Erato 0630-12598-2. Track 4. 0–0:46
45. Henry’s Eight, 1997. Clemens non Papa: Ego flos campi. Etcetera, KTC 1214. Track 1. CD 16596. 0–0:48
46. Concerto Italiano, 1994. Monteverdi: Secondo Libro, “Non si levava ancor l’alba novella.” Opus 111, OPS 30–111. Track 1. CD 10376. 0–0:46
47. Complesso Barocco, Curtis, 1996. Monteverdi: Lamento della ninfa. Virgin Classics, 7243 5 45302 2 7. Track 8. CD 12778. 2:29–3:20
48. Complesso Barocco, Curtis, 1996. Monteverdi: “Or che ’l ciel.” Virgin Classics, 7243 5 45302 2 7. Track 17. CD 12778. 1:00–1:59

49. Joshua Bell, 1996. Kreisler: La Précieuse (alleged to be by Louis Couperin). *Decca*, 44409. Track 5. 0–0:52
50. Gabrieli Consort & Players, McCreesh, 2002. Bach: “O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß,” *St. Matthew Passion*. Archiv 474 200–2. Track 1:29. 5:18–6:00
51. Balbastre: *Romance* (1779), from LP produced to accompany a reprint of Fuller 1979. Musical Box Society. 0–0:58
52. Eddie South, Stéphane Grappelly (!), Django Reinhardt, Paul Cor-donnier, Paris, 1937. Bach: Double Violin Concerto (swing ver-sion). The Chronological Eddie South, Classics Records, 737, ASIN: B000001NOI. Track 2. 0:50–1:48
53. Skip Sempé, 2004. Louis Couperin: Pavanne in f#. Alpha 066. Track 8. 0–1:05
54. Glenn Gould (harpsichord). Handel: HWV 426. Sony Classical, SMK 52 590. Track 1. 0–0:48
55. Glenn Gould (harpsichord). Handel: HWV 428. Sony Classical, SMK 52 590. Track 9. 0–0:57
56. Gustav Leonhardt, 1991. Forqueray: La Morangis. Sony Vivarte, SK 48 080. Track 5. Uses Skowroneck signed “Nicholas Lefébure, Rouen, 1755.” 0–0:51
57. Rev C. L. Franklin. Legendary sermon, [early 1950s]. Universal Music Special, MCAD-21145. Tracks 1–2. 6:49–7:48
58. Il Giardino Armonico, Cecilia Bartoli, 1999. Vivaldi: “Qual favel-lar?” *Decca*, 289 466 569-2. Track 4. 1:02–1:52
59. Les Arts Florissants, Corréas, Christie, 1992. Rameau: *Castor et Pollux*: Act II, Scenes 1 and 2. Pollux’s aire “Nature, Amour.” Track 2:1. 0:21–1:20
60. Concentus Musicus, Souzay, Harnoncourt, 1972. Rameau: *Castor et Pollux*: Act II, Scene 1: Pollux’s aire “Nature, Amour.” Teldec, 8.35048. 0:20–1:16
61. Concentus Musicus, Souzay, Harnoncourt, 1972. Rameau: *Castor et Pollux*: Act II, Scene 2: Pollux’s recit. Teldec, 8.35048. 0–0:29
62. Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Mertens, Koopman, 2001., Bach: Cantata 13/5. *Antoine Marchand*. 2:36–3:22
63. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Durigo, Mengelberg, 1939. Bach: “Erbarme dich,” *St. Matthew Passion* Naxos 8.110880–82. Track 2:14. 0–1:11
64. Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Prégardien, Koopman, 1995. Bach: Cantata 172/4. A. Marchand. Track 23. 0–0:23
65. Leonhardt Consort, v.Altena, Leonhardt, 1987. Bach: Cantata 172/4. Teldec. Track 11. 0–0:56
66. Haynes, Napper, Haas, 1998. F. Couperin, Septième Concert, 1st movement. Atma, ACD 2 2168. Track 2. Complete
67. Haynes, Taylor, Napper, Poirier, 1998. Bach: Cantata 116/2. Atma, ACD 2 2158. Track 5. 0–1:01

68. Susie Napper, 2005. Corrette: 3d movement from the Sonata in d minor from *Les délices de la solitude*. Atma ACD 2 2307. Complete
69. Nadina Mackie Jackson, 2005. Corrette: 3d movement from the Sonata in d minor from *Les délices de la solitude*. MSR Classics MS 1171. Complete
70. C. Huntgeburth and W. Michel, 1982–85. Simonetti: Adagio ma non tanto, Sonata II/3. Mieroprint, EM 5000. Track 13. 0:47–1:35
71. Ludger Rémy, 1992. Tomesini: Andante in D, 2d Clavierstück. Mieroprint EM 5005. Track 2. 0:51–1:52
72. Ensemble Caprice, Rebel, 2001. Maute: 3d movement, Concerto detta la Sammartini. Atma, ACD2 2273. Track 10. 0–1:06

This page intentionally left blank

The End of Early Music

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

In matters of Antiquity, there are two extreames, 1. a total neglect, and 2. perpetuall guessing . . .

(Roger North, 1728)

Literacy

In music, we give the highest status to our “art” musicians in formal dress who perform the kind of music to which we give the name “Classical.” But because our society is exceedingly literate, these Classical musicians have evolved in a curious way: they’re so good now at reading music that their natural ability to improvise has atrophied. Most of them have no choice but to perform from written pages (in the memory or on the stand).

Literacy has created a preoccupation with the “repertoire” or Canon of great works, and a text-fetishism that does not allow performers to change any detail of the “masterpieces” of the past. There are many researchers who devote their lives to finding out the “intentions” of composers. So it’s not surprising that Classical musicians don’t improvise much. In fact, few of us can improvise at all. We even write out our graces and cadenzas (which were originally developed as fenced-off areas reserved for improvisation).

Please don’t misunderstand me: as musicians, we are as good today as the musicians of the past. But our training has become overspecialized, directed as it is toward playing written music. Derek Bailey puts our current situation in a nutshell:

One reason why the standard Western instrumental training produces non-improvisors (and it doesn’t just produce violinists, pianists, cellists,

etcetera; it produces specifically non-improvisors, musicians rendered incapable of attempting improvisation) is that not only does it teach how to play an instrument, it teaches that the creation of music is a separate activity from playing that instrument. Learning how to create music is a separate study totally divorced from playing an instrument.¹

This separation between composing and performing hasn't always existed. Before the rise of Romanticism, improvisation and composition were normal activities for any musician. In a time when new pieces were in constant demand, being a composer was nothing special, just part of the process of producing music. But even if a musician didn't always write their improvisations down, they had to know how to make up music on the spot. Without that ability, they couldn't play the music of the time.

Baroque notation is like shorthand, a quality known in the trade as "thin" writing. Baroque composers rarely included marks to indicate phrasing gestures, for instance, or dynamics, note-shaping, flexibility of tempo, and subtlety of rhythm. Variables of that kind are implied in the playing style, however, so performers supplied them as a matter of course. Thin writing was not thin because "thick" writing hadn't been invented yet; it was deliberate. It accommodated spontaneous input from the performers. To play or sing only what was written would not have been sufficient or have pleased the listeners—least of all the composer. It would have been like a jazz saxophonist playing only the tune, and straight at that! In the Baroque period, a musician needed less written information, because they were like a combination of an improvising jazzman and a reading Classical player. In any case, neither the essential graces (the *agréments*) or the more elaborate *passaggi* could be accurately notated, and when they were improvised it left room for some aspects of a piece to be different each time it was performed. This created an ad hoc environment that was reinforced by other elements: rehearsal was minimal, the leader played in the group, and the media (such as playing styles and instruments) were constantly changing.

The Romantic Revolution

What hangs like a veil between the musicians of today and those of pre-Romantic times are the changes in ideals and mentality, the paradigm shifts that are symbolized by the Industrial Revolution that took place between about 1760 and 1840, and more specifically the French Revolution that began in 1789.

To make the story of nineteenth-century culture start in the year of the French Revolution is at once convenient and accurate, even though nothing in history "starts" at a precise moment. For although the revolution itself had

its beginnings in ideas and conditions preceding that date, it is clear that the events of 1789 brought together and crystallized a multitude of hopes, fears, and desires into something visible, potent, and irreversible. . . . There are so many evidences of a new direction in thought and culture.²

The musical revolution does not seem to have been gradual. It was truly a break in history. The major change in the designs and techniques of every kind of musical instrument at the beginning of the Romantic period, for instance, was no slow evolution; it was a rupture with the past that took place in less than two generations. But new kinds of instruments were symptomatic of something bigger. Everything, it seems, was changing.

Canonism and Classicism

For centuries the ideals and standards of quality of literature, architecture, and the graphic arts had been set by examples that originated in Classical antiquity. Artists and writers had done their utmost to emulate these “Classic” models. But in music, no such examples had survived; very little evidence of the nature of ancient Greek and Roman music has ever been found. The Romantics decided to create their own Classical models, using the exquisite conceit that music was an “autonomous,” “absolute” medium. Music could at last move up from craft to art; could become “Classical.” Composers became the heroes, promoted to the status of geniuses. Musical pantheons were erected, and plaster factories geared up to create busts of composers, like so many ancient Roman emperors, the resemblances to the actual composers a matter of chance.

A Canon of Classical works began to be built up, with Beethoven’s symphonies as its base. This way of thinking, called *Canonism*, was the cornerstone of the Romantic movement from its beginnings, and represented a fundamental shift in Western musical culture. An expression of the present-day Canonic attitude is the survival of many musical institutions founded in the nineteenth century: publishing houses, journals, orchestras, opera houses, and conservatories. Canonism is symbolized by nineteenth-century concert halls with the names of “great” composers immortalized in friezes around the walls.

The Classical Canon is the repertoire we all know from the nineteenth century, undeniably beautiful music to which most musicians of the present day still dedicate their talents. In such a context, a composer’s works came to be seen almost as scripture. The “paradigm of music as consisting in works written by the great of the past, transmitted in writing and accepted by the current generation through its enactment, supported by written programs, by basically non-innovatory performers”³ pretty well describes the Classical music scene of today. And Canonism is selective;

admission to the god-like domain of great composers has been virtually impossible since about the time of the First World War.

Despite Canonism's continuing widespread authority, most musicians nowadays are scarcely conscious of it as a concept. Yet it is so pervasive and familiar that not only does it form the core of the repertoire for symphony auditions, but any good young instrumentalist knows how each piece is expected to be played, right down to bowings, dynamic marks, and places to breathe.

The Canonic ideology leads to a number of corollaries that form the basic assumptions of Classically oriented musicians. They include:

- great respect for composers, represented by the cults of genius and originality,
- the almost scriptural awe of musical "works,"
- an obsession with the original intentions of the composer,
- the practice of listening to music as ritual,
- the custom of repeated hearings of a limited number of works.

Canonism is strictly a "Classical" thing. Jazz doesn't worry about the "intentions" of a composer, rock doesn't give much weight to who "composed" a piece, pop music doesn't get hung up on a prescribed and immovable repertoire. Nor were they an issue for our ancestors before about 1800 either. Baroque composers weren't artists, after all. They were clever craftsmen, rather like building contractors or horse-race jockeys today, more interested in competence than greatness. Nor did the scores in which their compositions were written (or more commonly, the un-scored parts) have any importance beyond facilitating their real work, which was performing concerts. In any case, the pages of notes they handed out were incomplete and quite useless without the musicians who knew how to convert them into music.

Modern HIP musicians are under the Canonic spell too. Usually Classically trained, they sometimes find themselves confusing fidelity to a style with fidelity to particular hero-composers. Against their own logic, they sometimes treat scores as untouchable (that is, unchangeable). They tend to ignore 90% of the historical repertoires of their instruments, gathering dust on library shelves, while listening and playing over again and again the same works (like Messiahs and Christmas oratorios) much more often than they were ever meant to be heard. Without thinking, they also tend to lump Period performance with "Classical" music (as witnessed by their adoption of the Victorian dress suit and frock, the uniforms—Period, actually—of both the Romantic and Modernist symphony musician), and they perform in anachronistic environments (purpose-built concert halls filled with silently respectful audiences). These are all creations of Canonism; none of them had been considered necessary before the "modern age."

Progress or Adaptation

One of the basic messages of HIP is the rejection of the idea of progress that still holds many of us—unconsciously—in thrall. The history of music, HIP is saying, is not a story of gradual improvement; or, as Collingwood put it, “Bach was not trying to write like Beethoven and failing; Athens was not a relatively unsuccessful attempt to produce Rome.”⁴ The history of art can be seen as a kind of Darwinian evolution only if we remember one essential condition: evolution depends on the principle of appropriate adaptation to environment. The goals of a Vivaldi concerto are quite different from those of Mozart, Beethoven, or Paganini; and to compare them is rewarding only in the context of their differing artistic aims. Most important of all, the evolutionary theory breaks down when it is associated with value judgments. A common assumption among musicians is that art evolves in a continuous line to the perfection of the present. This implies that the world of art today must be the best of all possible worlds—a conclusion most people would find difficult to agree with.⁵

Serendipity

To appreciate the full implications of the fundamental differences between Romantic and pre-Romantic music takes time. One could even say the work of modern HIP musicians consists of the slow realization of how different a pre-Romantic piece can sound from anything they have heard before. And this realization often comes along with an effect known as “Serendipity.” Serendipity is the joyful phenomenon of making happy and agreeable discoveries unintentionally.⁶ Like Columbus setting out to find a route to the Indies and accidentally discovering America instead.

The Serendipity effect is directly tied to the pursuit of Authenticity. It addresses the question—not an unreasonable one—whether it really matters if we perform details as they were done in their own period. My experience has been pretty consistent: the reason for incomprehensible practices does not often become evident until we actually do it that way ourselves, sometimes for a long time. Stated as a principle of musicking, we could say that if you attempt to be historically consistent, persistence will eventually show a logic that was not immediately obvious. Although it doesn’t guarantee them, Serendipity promises rewards for experiment.

Taruskin himself finds that the effect of the historically oriented frame of mind may open performers’

minds and ears to new experiences, and enable them to transcend their habitual, and therefore unconsidered, ways of hearing and thinking about the music. . . . The object is not to duplicate the sounds of the past, for if that were our aim we should never know whether we had succeeded. What we are

aiming at, rather, is the startling shock of newness, of immediacy, the sense of rightness that occurs when after countless frustrating experiments we feel as though we have achieved the identification of performance style with the demands of the music.⁷

Musical Rhetoric

Prior to the Romantic Revolution, music and the arts in general were based on values and practices that seem fundamentally different from those we call “modern.” The magnitude of the gap is difficult to appreciate and often difficult to see. These differences are discussed more thoroughly in the chapters that follow, but I want to give here some idea of what they are, in order to suggest that, seen dimly through the veils of Romanticism that hang between them and us, there was an alternate system, another ethos. It was an ethos that once worked, and while we do not need all of it, any more than we need the economies and governments of the period, we can learn from it and draw on it for inspiration for our own present time. At the very least, a knowledge of an alternate value system will help us better understand our own.

To quote Walter Ong, “until the modern technological age, which effectively began with the Industrial Revolution and Romanticism, Western culture in its intellectual and academic manifestations can be meaningfully described as rhetorical culture.”⁸ Rhetoric, a system of public communication and persuasion invented by the ancient Greeks, developed by the Romans, and enthusiastically revived in the Renaissance, was mentioned or discussed by virtually everyone who wrote about music until about 1800.

Rhetorical music had as its main aim to evoke and provoke emotions—the Affections, or Passions—that were shared by everyone, audience and performers alike. Canonic music, by contrast, was usually autobiographical in some sense, often describing an extreme experience of the artist-composer: cathartic or enlightening, but above all solitary and individual. Another difference is that in a performance, the Baroque composer was better off alive, because in that way, they could help make their music work well by playing along. The Romantic artist-composer, on the other hand, was best dead, because that seemed to make it easier to appreciate their genius. Another difference was that while Rhetorical music was temporary, like today’s films—appreciated, then forgotten—Canonic music was eternal and enduring. Rhetorical music was transient, disposable, its repertoire constantly changing. Canonic music was by definition stable, repeatable, and orthodox.

With the rise of Canonism, Rhetoric found itself marginalized and eventually demoted to little more than a negative vibe; “Rhetoric” now-

adays usually means something like “bombast.” The compelling force of the idea of musical Canon makes it hard for us now to imagine how basic the principles of Rhetoric once were to musicians.

Authenticity as a Statement of Intent

We don’t think about it much, but in fact those old pieces were not written for us. Nobody back then knew what we would be like, what kinds of instruments we would be playing, or what we would expect from our music. In fact, they didn’t even know we would be playing their pieces. So, a little adaptation is called for to fit their music to us.

Here’s where we get onto the subject of Authenticity because there’s a choice of approaches. One way is like “Chinese-Canadian” restaurants, where the inspiration is from China (and perhaps the cook as well), but the end result does not surprise the palette of a Canadian who “knows what they like.” This is how a symphony orchestra plays Vivaldi’s *Seasons*, for instance, using the inspiration of a culture nearly 300 years removed from us and adapting it to the familiar sounds of the symphony orchestra. (I won’t say “modern orchestra” because the instruments being played aren’t modern in any sense; we’ll get to that later.)

There is another approach to eating Chinese food outside of China. Some people look for food not adapted to some other taste; what we might call “authentic” Chinese. Menus are written in Chinese only. Some of the tastes may take time to learn to appreciate, but the experience is “expanding,” perhaps in more ways than one (!).

For modern symphony musicians, “music of the past belongs to the present as music, not as documentary evidence,”⁹ as Dahlhaus put it. James Parakilas called this “music as tradition”:

Classical performers present music as tradition by making the past continuous with the present. . . . Listeners hearing music as tradition hear it as something belonging to them. . . . Classical composers, however warmly personified, speak a timeless, universal message. They speak to modern listeners because they have spoken to generations of listeners.¹⁰

Time, in this chronocentric paradigm, stands still. The symphonies of a German born in 1770 become contemporary. And because his symphonies have never stopped being played, we assume that we are dealing with an unchanged performing style. And yet, even a casual exposure to early twentieth-century recordings indicates that preserving a performing style is like trying to hold water in your hand. It is a lovely illusion to think of modern symphony concerts as part of an unbroken tradition, but historically speaking there isn’t much difference between symphony orchestras

and “Early music” concerts. Both are working with lost traditions, the difference being how they think of them.

At first glance, a movement like HIP (the Historically Inspired Performance movement), which actively tries to join historical awareness to historical music, seems like the perfect example of Canonism: honoring dead composers. But it is the paradox of HIP that it uses the past as inspiration but does not, like Canonism, pretend to be a continuation of it. HIP starts in the present and ends in the present. As Collingwood put it, “The revolutionary can only regard his revolution as a progress in so far as he is also an historian, genuinely re-enacting in his own historical thought the life he nevertheless rejects.”¹¹ HIP highlights the historical dimension; it draws attention to the profound differences of music before and after 1800 in ideology, values, and performing practices. And as HIP gradually succeeds in embracing pre-Canonic, Rhetorical practices, it is conscious of taking distance from the values and customs of Canonism. The symphony musician playing Brahms and the Early musician playing Bach are both playing in styles whose oral traditions have been lost, but the difference between them is “between a blink and a wink,” their own perception of what they are doing in relation to history.

More than anything else, Authenticity seems to be a statement of intent. Totally accurate historical performance is probably impossible to achieve. To know it has been achieved is certainly impossible. But that isn’t the goal. What produces interesting results is the *attempt* to be historically accurate, that is, authentic.

There was a time when “AUTHENTIC” sold records like “ORGANIC” sells tomatoes. Musicians didn’t usually make up the liner notes that went with their recordings, and if they were described as “authentic” when they were really “an *attempt* to be authentic,” it seemed like quibbling.

Before the 1980s, HIP was not well enough established to attract much attention or sympathetic criticism. But in that decade, Richard Taruskin began publishing his critical articles and reviews. Taruskin brilliantly articulated the nature of Modernism and its threat to HIP, and in doing so did a great service to music.¹² Eloquently and wittily, Taruskin also stuck a good many holes in HIP’s balloon in his articles, questioning the ultimate reliability of historical information in general and the motives of performers. His writings, unfortunately, had the effect of embedding Authenticity in “scare-quotes,” which is the way it usually appears these days. “Authenticity” has even been called “the movement’s ominous theory” and an “arrogant claim.” Authenticity became a hexed word and served for a while as a kind of lightning rod for anybody who was dissatisfied with some aspect of the Movement.

Despite this, the idea that the word represents refuses to go away. The reason is clear: Authenticity is simple, it’s logical, and (as we have seen) it’s central and essential to the concept called HIP.