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*The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on  
Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance*  
(review)

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credits Vivaldi with the use of harmonic extensions to call attention to specific texts in his sacred vocal works. That he often avoided (by a variety of different means) returning to the tonic except at the end of a movement is a point made repeatedly. (This is not surprising; it became a hallmark of later music.) Some of Vivaldi's earliest works employ crude harmonic plans incorporating preparations for one key that resolve (unexpectedly) to a different key, for example, the brief Adagio with a cadence to a dominant on E (minor except for the final *tierce de Picardie* alteration), leading to a Sarabande in C major in the Trio Sonata op. 1, no. 3. This does not necessarily refute her point, however, because the opus was published in 1705 but was probably composed prior to Vivaldi's acquaintance with Gasparini and at least three years ahead of Gasparini's treatise. Also, she finds that in his approach to the sonata, Vivaldi often establishes three tonal areas, even in binary movements, and that the order of key regions he passes through is not always predictable.

A series of individual chapters examines Vivaldi's harmonic practice in relation to specific musical devices. The lament bass, for example, is said to produce "equilibrium" between the pursuit of new (musical) goals and the "consolidation of tonal centers" (p. 156). Its use is heavily concentrated in the earlier part of Vivaldi's life (up to 1717). In the harmonic treatment of sequence, Brover-Lubovsky finds an apt application of Eric Chafe's "counter-clockwise" circle of fifths—that is, sequences that move from subdominant to subdominant instead of dominant to dominant. Here, she holds, Gasparini's influence is apparent. Heinichen's influence comes into view in the use of secondary dominant sevenths (as for example the A and G in the sequence Bb-F-A-E-G-D . . . ; p. 183). Vivaldi also at times tightens the C by moving up by fourths or down by thirds (as in the aforementioned Trio Sonata). Contrary to the dismissive view that Vivaldi's cyclical modulations are trite, she claims that they are important contributors to the "whirlpool" of dramatic effects through which he produces a sense of climax. A noteworthy sidelight is the attention she gives to Heinichen's shifting views of modulation between 1711 and 1728 (p. 227).

She views the subject of harmonic function by degree with fresh eyes, noting the occasional absence of a strong concentration on the dominant (e.g., in the *Lauda Jerusalem*, RV 609); the de-emphasis of the dominant, so that although it is present, it recedes to the background; an occasional concentration on the subdominant; an emphasis on the key of the mediant in works in a minor key (one-third of the repertory); and several other tonal plans that show little kinship to the textbook conduct of "tonal music." She holds that tonal structure is somewhat dependent on key choice (pp. 257–62). Her summary statement (p. 276) is that in Vivaldi's music she finds an "intricate quality [to] his tonal space and harmonic syntax."

Throughout, Brover-Lubovsky presents Vivaldi as someone who found his own way through the harmonic labyrinth by exploring every byway but somehow always finding his way out at the other side. She notes how frequently Vivaldi defied what is now the conventional wisdom of theories of harmony by favoring minor modes disproportionately to his contemporaries; by avoiding the tonic except in a final cadence; by employing a variety of "circles" in his modulatory schemes; by thinking outside the box of simple binary (tonic-dominant; major-relative minor) contrasts; and by adapting his practice to the needs of its message. While it is unlikely that readers will agree with every claim she makes, the book is a monument to the variegated "tonal space" that existed before the formal study of "harmony" became a staple of composers' lives.

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**The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance.** Edited by Sean Gallagher and Thomas Forrest Kelly. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008. [xi, 427 p. ISBN 0964031736. \$45.] Music examples, illustrations, index.

On 23–25 September 2005 at Harvard University, a venerable lineup of musicologists, historians, critics, and performers honored Harvard professor Christoph

Wolff with scholarly papers and performances in a conference titled *The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance*. At first glance, the coupling of Bach and Mozart to define the eighteenth century seems odd, so accustomed are we to the pairings of "Bach and Handel" and "Haydn and Mozart" as representative of the two halves of the century, a period of time seemingly cleanly divided by the convenient death of J. S. Bach in 1750. But, of course, given the honoree of the conference and dedicatee of this collection of papers from that conference, the coupling of Bach and Mozart makes good sense—most of Wolff's colossal scholarly output is devoted to the lives and works of these two monumental composers.

The twin foci of Wolff's work notwithstanding, the question of whether the eighteenth century can or should be conceptualized as a single music-historical period, delimited on either end by Bach and Mozart, will linger in the minds of readers of this volume. While the editors certainly acknowledge the problematic implications of their title, expressly stating in the introduction that among their aims are "to tie up the two halves of the century" and "to allow two representative musical names to play a major role in the discussion" (p. ix), two essays in the collection take aim at such a notion. Of course, as Harvard historian David Blackbourn notes in the opening essay, centuries and epochs are all historical constructions, "a way of dividing time that we owe in fact to the eighteenth century" (p. 4). But Blackbourn clearly values such constructions, and by exploring "dynamism" in the material conditions of life, the territorial state, and cultural and intellectual matters, he argues for a genuine break around the midpoint of the century in German-speaking lands. Just as musicologists are finally dismantling the traditional "baroque" and "classical" periods in favor of the "long eighteenth century," Blackbourn compellingly argues for "a world of difference between the 65 years of Bach and the 35 years of Mozart," revealing how differently music historians and non-music historians conceptualize the age.

Taking issue not so much with the traditional division as the volume's "composely" definition of the eighteenth cen-

tury, James Webster reflects on the historiographical implications of the book's title in an essay provocatively titled (given the context) "The Century of Handel and Haydn." He argues two general and interrelated points: Handel and Haydn, not Bach and Mozart, on account of their fame and the aesthetic ideals of their music, best represent the eighteenth century, at least among canonical Germanic composers; and the notion of "the century of Bach and Mozart" could only have arisen in the second half of the twentieth century. Despite the wonderful prickliness that characterizes so much of Webster's writing, his contribution reads in many ways as the most personal in the volume. In his conclusion he observes that "the reception first of Bach, then of Mozart, as consummate composers during the past century is uncannily congruent with the career of Christoph Wolff himself." Webster, however, obviously prefers "our current frightening and hopeful postmodern condition" (pp. 313–14) in which we have rejected heroic modernism and embraced in its place the many contingencies of reception.

Taken as a whole, this collection of essays contains a striking variety of topics, ideas, and analytical methodologies, especially given its relatively narrow focus on music at the heart of the eighteenth-century canon. Appropriately, several authors offer detailed studies of specific works of J. S. Bach and respond directly to Wolff's work. Daniel Melamed, for example, builds on Wolff's illumination of the history of Bach's well known cantata *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, BWV 80, to explore the puzzling musical and textual evolution of the cantata's fifth movement, the SATB chorale "Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär." John Butt shows how Bach, in the St. John and St. Matthew Passions, reflects the different temporal concepts implied by the respective gospels, thereby suggesting that Bach's music articulates both an eternal, circular time and a linear, eventful, even teleologic time. Such a dualistic conception of time stands in contrast to the primarily linear time Wolff seems to hear in Bach's music. In his examination of Bach's sketches and drafts to reveal aspects of the composer's creative process, Peter Wollny interprets these documents within the context of eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, Bach's

position within which being a central concern of Wolff's essay on individuality in Bach's music (Christoph Wolff, *Bach: Essays on His Life and Music* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991], 146–65). Eric Chafe's analytical essay on the tonal designs, the theme of hypocrisy, and the mass parodies of Cantatas 136 and 179 displays the rich detail and rewarding conclusions we admire in Wolff's own analytical studies. And Thomas Christensen's linking of Bach's compositional practice to the improvisations of Conrad Paumann relies on Wolff's own work on the manuscripts of the Nuremberg organist's *Fundamentum organistendi* (Christoph Wolff, "Conrad Paumann's *Fundamentum organistendi* und seine verschiedenen Fassungen," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 25 [1968]: 196–222).

Neal Zaslaw, on the other hand, responds to Wolff's Mozart scholarship. Indeed, he engages in direct dialogue with Wolff's work on the cadenzas of Mozart's piano concertos. Whereas Wolff has claimed that Mozart "jealously guard[ed] his personal performance materials" (Christoph Wolff, "Cadenzas and Styles of Improvisation in Mozart's Piano Concertos," *Perspectives on Mozart Performance*, ed. R. Larry Todd and Peter Williams [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991], 230), Zaslaw suggests that Mozart taught his cadenzas to talented students, gave them away, or perhaps even sold them along with the concertos themselves. Zaslaw's case also argues for an important aesthetic point—that cadenzas are supposed to be exciting, surprising, witty, and even risky. "If the same cadenzas are used over and over, [this] important aesthetic feature is devalued" (p. 249).

Among the other contributions, two in particular stand out. Elaine Sisman demonstrates compellingly how each work in a multi-work opus may have an individual as well as a communal life. This "opus concept" is dependent on what she calls "tertiary rhetoric," a mode of communication in which "works within opuses communicate with each other and with their audiences as individuals and as aggregates" (p. 89), thereby enabling "a larger set of meanings to emerge" (p. 82). And Reinhard Strohm, dissatisfied by recent trends in hermeneutics, distinguishes between "metaphor as an aspect of creation in art and metaphorical readings as strategies of

interpretation" (p. 279). The upshot is that the composer him- or herself is granted the possibility of a metaphorical action that may transcend the musical work.

The closing essays in this volume take up issues of interpretation and pedagogy, often challenging time-honored tenets in both musicology and performance. First, Christopher Hogwood proposes that we jettison the "style-free" early grounding" (p. 369) performers today generally receive in favor of a period-specific pedagogy. For the performer of eighteenth-century music, this would mean adopting the teaching strategies used by instrumental tutors of the time. Largely ignoring the "landscape view," the performer would thus focus more on local details and smaller units—phrase inflection, articulation, graded tempo changes, and the like. Robert Levin then challenges one of the fundamental goals of historical musicology—that a primary objective of the scholar is to "establish a text that reflects the composer's ultimate, final version, the so-called *Fassung letzter Hand*" (p. 403). Through an examination of Mozart's drafts, sketches, and autographs of the piano concertos as well as certain habits of Mozart's compositional process, Levin demonstrates that, at least in the case of these works, there is no final or definitive text. As the sources reveal, Mozart's piano concertos were continuously altered by the composer in performance, leading Levin to argue persuasively that "the opportunities provided by this rich set of alternative readings deserve to be known and performed" (p. 406).

These last contributions provide a fitting conclusion for this honorary collection of essays so diverse in topic, methodology, scope, and disciplinary grounding. Not only are their ideas applicable to the entire century of Bach and Mozart, however whole or divided it may be, but they also speak to the tremendous importance of musical scholarship within the world of performance, a hallmark itself of the work of Christoph Wolff.

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**Transcendent Mastery: Studies in the Music of Beethoven.** By Bathia Churgin. (North American Beethoven Studies, no. 4.) Hillsdale, NY: Pen-