

Two of the three articles on Style and Compositional Process deal with the Mendelssohn siblings' piano playing and how it relates to their compositional styles. R. Larry Todd's essay on the origins and meaning of Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* presents fascinating details that offer insights into their improvisational skills, compositional process, and aesthetic framework. Angela Mace's archival research is equally remarkable, as she uncovers performance details about improvisational strategies of Felix and Fanny. Benedict Taylor presents new interpretative clues in his analysis of Mendelssohn's sonata form strategies of his String Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 12. His article is thought provoking, as it opens up new hermeneutic windows for finding meaning in Mendelssohn's music.

The last part of the book, *Contemporary Views and Posthumous Perspectives*, looks at less developed topics about Mendelssohn's image and personality. Regina Back's "A Friendship in Letters: The Correspondence of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Carl Klingemann" and Lorraine Byrne Bodley's "Mendelssohn as Portrayed in the Goethe-Zelter Correspondence" highlight the high regard for his extraordinary talents. Pieter Zappalà and Cécile Reynaud deal with perceptions and successes of Mendelssohn's music in Italy and France. All four articles fill in gaps in our understanding of the composer's talents, perception, and personality.

This book continues the trend of exceptional Mendelssohn scholarship in form of collections of essays. While many chapters deal with biographical and cultural topics that are easily accessible to the general public (parts I, III, and V), the target audience is nevertheless primarily music historians; part II, *Between Tradition and Innovation*, and part IV, *Style and Compositional Process*, are rather technical in their discussions of specific musical procedures. This book will be on the bookshelf of most nineteenth-century scholars, but its partially interdisciplinary content also offers important ideas for scholars outside the discipline.

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Rethinking Hanslick: Music, Formalism, and Expression. Edited by Nicole Grimes, Siobhán Donovan, and Wolfgang Marx. Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2013. Pp. 360. Cloth \$90.00. ISBN 978-1580464321.

As the title *Rethinking Hanslick* promises, this volume offers fourteen studies that mark what Nicole Grimes terms "a paradigm shift" in the reception of the work of Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904) by seeking to "redress the manifold misreadings" that have grown up around it (5). A number of the contributors do focus attention on musical formalism and expression, as the subtitle would suggest; yet surprisingly, much of the most interesting material explores topics not hinted at on the book's cover, notably cultural politics, gender, ethnicity, and social identity. Taken as a whole, this

proves to be a compendium of substantial, well-informed, and rewarding articles that reconsider the significance and value of Hanslick's writings from a variety of angles.

Influential as both a music critic and an important aesthete, Hanslick left something of a bifurcated legacy, and this is reflected in *Rethinking Hanslick*. His major contribution to the field of musical aesthetics is *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, a treatise published in 1854, accepted as his *Habilitationsschrift* in 1856, and republished in nine updated editions during his lifetime. It has remained a canonical text, widely read up to the present. *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* is traditionally deemed a rather conservative declaration of musical ideals opposed to the avant-garde tendencies of the time. Hanslick was thus positioned firmly on one side of an ongoing debate over musical style that continued for the last half of the nineteenth century, a position cemented by Hanslick's vigorous championing of Brahms in the 1870s and 1880s. On these terms *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* was contested from the start, as is well charted in James Deaville's survey of "Hanslick's path through musical history." While some traces of partisanship remain, these disputes have now largely cooled, of course. Following Hanslick's revilement in the Third Reich, the academic tide swung largely in his favor in the postwar decades, perhaps not surprisingly, as he was himself a most successful academic who shared the historicist, rather conservative liberalism that characterized much of the musical establishment during the Cold War and, in slightly different forms, in the current age of neoliberalism, too.

Articles in the book by Fred Everett Maus, Anthony Pryor, and Felix Wörner discuss *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, demonstrating that critical discussions of Hanslick's ideas about the aesthetics of musical beauty still have vitality, particularly as they contest one-sided interpretations of his aesthetics as essentially conservative, if not reactionary. Most of the contributors concentrate, however, on Hanslick's work in Vienna as a music critic, memoirist, and on-the-spot historian, from the 1860s onwards. The rethinking of this side of Hanslick's work is both more complicated and more unsettled than that of his aesthetics. Readings of late nineteenth-century Viennese art and culture organized around now familiar narratives of the decline of a culture of liberalism and the intertwining ascents of nationalism, collectivism, antisemitism, and various modernisms have prevailed for some two decades. Several articles explore perspectives on Hanslick that have been facilitated by this approach. David Brodbeck's discussion of Hanslick's reception of the music of Carl Goldmark and Nicole Grimes's "German Humanism, Liberalism, and Elegy in Hanslick's Writings on Brahms," to take the two best examples, reveal the complexities Hanslick navigated as a standard-setting critic working to align his musical taste, his bourgeois identity, and his aesthetic premises. These essays both effectively regard Hanslick primarily in terms of virtues and conflicts inherent in the culture of the liberal German *Bürgertum* he inhabited. The related issue of Hanslick's Jewish identity—an identification he did not embrace, despite his mother's Jewish birth—is important

here as well. Faced with the discomfort that Hanslick felt with what he heard as the “Jewish-Oriental character” in Goldmark’s music, as opposed to an ostensibly more universal “European-Occidental” style, Brodbeck does not ascribe it to antisemitic bias but rather to a liberal, assimilationist desire to identify with German cultural values (see 139–142). Issues of Jewish identity are also raised in David Kasunic’s “On ‘Jewishness’ and Genre: Hanslick’s Reception of Gustav Mahler,” which turns rather opaque in its effort to coordinate the author’s wish to read Hanslick as Jewish and to reevaluate his judgment of Mahler, even against the critic’s fairly blunt appraisal of the First Symphony as “the kind of music which for me is not music” (327), to say nothing of Kasunic’s quixotic claim that as a critic Hanslick is some ways “Nietzsche’s kindred spirit” (314).

Alongside these contributions, which are consolidations of recently established critical approaches basically sympathetic to Hanslick, the volume includes a set of articles that take a more critical stance in resisting him in one way or another. These are among the most rewarding and freshest essays in the book. Lauren Freede’s exploration of the mix of accurate reportage and image creation in Hanslick memoir *Aus meinem Leben* (1894) is particularly useful as she shows it to be an often inadvertently “revealing document of the social religious and political fabric of fin-de-siècle Vienna” (189). Marion Gerards’s consideration of Hanslick’s criticism in light of contemporaneous gender discourse brings into focus biases that appear painfully obvious once they are glimpsed, while the article by Nina Noeske on Hanslick’s use of “the organism metaphor” does something similar by revealing how his rhetoric evoked loaded metaphors of “healthiness” and “unhealthiness.” Some of the ways in which personal commitments colored Hanslick’s opinions are suggested in both Timothy R. McKinney’s essay on Hanslick and Hugo Wolf, a critic whose opinions were far to the opposite side, and David Larkin’s discussion of Hanslick’s reviews of the symphonic poems of Richard Strauss and Dvořák. In principle, Hanslick was unsympathetic to the symphonic poem, the leading genre of modernist concert music at the time, but was markedly more favorable in his comments on Dvořák’s effort in the form than on Strauss’s. Part of the reason, as Larkin proposes, may well have been that Dvořák’s musical syntax is somewhat more traditional than Strauss’s, yet it is hard not to feel that Brahms’s allegiance to the Czech composer played a significant role as well. Related themes come together in some insightful ways in Dana Gooley’s “Hanslick on Johann Strauss Jr.: Genre, Social Class, and Liberalism in Vienna” and an essay on “Listening and Dancing in Hanslick’s Hierarchy of Musical Perception” by Chantal Frankenbach. Both of these authors treat Hanslick’s ambivalent if not conflicted feelings about dance music as a window onto the deeper issues of identity, class and the body that beset liberalism and the *Bildungsbürgertum*. In these essays the rethinking promised by the title appears at its sharpest and brightest.

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