Ravel Studies

Demonstrating the vibrant nature of current research on Maurice Ravel, one of the most significant figures in twentieth-century French music, a team of distinguished international scholars provides new interdisciplinary perspectives and insights. Through historical, critical, and analytical means, the volume reveals the symbiotic relationships between Ravel’s music and aesthetic, cultural, literary, gender, performance-based, and medical studies. While the chapters progress from French aesthetic–literary association, including with Colette and Proust, to more extended disciplinary couplings, with American history, jazz, dance, and neurology, the organization is relatively free to enable other thematic links to emerge. The volume presents a refreshing variety of scholarly approaches to Ravel and his music, set within broad contexts and current musicological debates. In a Ravelian spirit, it is intended that the essays will serve collectively as a model for expanding the agendas of other composer-based studies.

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Contributors

Erik Baeck (MD; Fellow, American Academy of Neurology) is Honorary Chief in the Department of Neurology at the Algemeen Centrum Ziekenhuis, Antwerp (ACZA) in Belgium. He has longstanding interests in musicology, having been a prizewinner of the International Competition for Young Conductors at Besançon in 1963, and having conducted works of Ravel. His musicological publications range from articles in journals such as Nachrichten zur Mahler-Forschung and Revue de musicologie, through to monographs on Peter Benoit: een pathografie van leven, werk en persoonlijkheid (2000) and André Cluytens: itinéraire d’un chef d’orchestre (2009).

David Epstein (1930–2002), formerly Professor in Music at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), was a distinguished international figure in music theory and analysis. He is best remembered for his influential texts: Beyond Orpheus: Studies in Musical Structure (1979) and Shaping Time: Music, the Brain, and Performance (1995; winner of the Deems Taylor Award from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers). Long-time Music Director of the MIT Symphony Orchestra, he was a guest conductor with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Jerusalem Orchestra, and Berlin Radio Orchestra, as well as founding conductor of the New Orchestra of Boston; in 2003 he was awarded posthumously the prestigious Max Rudolph Award by the Conductors Guild.

Nicholas Gebhardt is Lecturer in American Studies at Lancaster University, with interests in intellectual contexts including American social and cultural history, American studies, sound arts, and popular music studies. He worked previously in radio broadcasting as Music Director of 2SER-FM in Sydney. His publications include Going for Jazz: Musical Practices and American Ideology (2001), and articles on Michel Chion and Ajay Heble; he is currently completing a book called Music is Our Business: The Rise of the Popular Musician in American Culture, 1882–1929.

Steven Huebner holds the James McGill Chair in the Schulich School of Music at McGill University, Montreal, where his research focuses on French and Italian music. He is the author of The Operas of Charles Gounod (1990) and French Opera at the Fin de Siècle: Wagnerism, Nationalism, and Style (1999; winner of the Prix Opus 2000). His articles and reviews have appeared in 19th-Century Music, Journal of the American Musicological Society, Cambridge Opera Journal, Music & Letters, and Journal of the Royal Musical Association; he is currently preparing a cycle of essays about Ravel.
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Stephanie Jordan is Research Professor in Dance at Roehampton University, London. A former dancer, musician, and dance critic, she is the author of Striding Out: Aspects of Contemporary and New Dance in Britain (1992) and Moving Music: Dialogues with Music in Twentieth-century Ballet (2000; awarded the 2001 Special Citation of the Dance Perspectives Foundation, New York); she is sole or joint editor of five other volumes. Her monograph Stravinsky Dances: Re-visions across a Century (2007) examines recent choreographic productions and rereadings of the Stravinsky legacy as well as early settings of his work.

Emily Kilpatrick is a freelance musicologist and pianist based in London. Her published articles include 'Into the Woods: Re-telling the Wartime Fairytales of Ravel', Musical Times (2008), 'Jangling in Symmetrical Sounds: Maurice Ravel as Storyteller and Poet', Journal of Music Research Online (2009), 'L'Enfant et les sortilèges: fantaisie lyrique, poésie musicale', Quodlibet (2009), and “The Carbone Copy: Tracing the Première of L'Heure espagnole”, Revue de musicologie (2009). She is also a highly regarded vocal accompanist and piano duo partner; with Roy Howat she has recorded Fauré's piano duets (Belle Epoque: A Portrait of Gabriel Fauré, 2009).

Deborah Mawer is Professor of Music within the Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts at Lancaster University. Her books include The Ballets of Maurice Ravel: Creation and Interpretation (2006), Darius Milhaud: Modality and Structure in Music of the 1920s (1997), and The Cambridge Companion to Ravel (Cambridge University Press, 2000); her articles and reviews on varied topics have appeared in the Journal of the Royal Musical Association, Twentieth-Century Music, Music & Letters, Opera Quarterly, Music Theory Online, and the British Journal of Music Education, as well as in essay collections on French music.

Michael J. Puri is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Virginia, where his research interests include critical theory, hermeneutics, and the music of Wagner, Ravel, and Debussy. His articles and reviews have appeared in 19th-Century Music, Music & Letters, and Notes; his article on Ravel's dandyism, published in the Journal of the American Musicological Society, received the 2008 Alfred Einstein Award. He has recently finished a book entitled Decadent Dialectics: Memory, Sublimation, and Desire in the Music of Maurice Ravel (forthcoming).

Lloyd Whitesell is Associate Professor of Music History in the Schulich School of Music at McGill University, Montreal. He has published articles on Maurice Ravel, Benjamin Britten, film music, minimalism, modern tonalities, and the anxiety of influence. An essay collection which he co-edited, Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity (2002) that included his essay on 'Ravel's Way', won the 2002 Philip Brett Award for excellence in gay and lesbian musicology. He is the author of a monograph on The Music of Joni Mitchell (2008).
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Musical references employ a mixture of bar numbers and rehearsal figures depending on the available editions of a work. Generally, bar numbers are used for piano or chamber music scores and rehearsal marks (Figures) are used for full orchestral or staged work scores. Consequently, a shorthand system has been devised for orchestral references: Fig. 1−1 refers to the bar preceding rehearsal figure 1; Fig. 1 denotes the full bar with this label attached; Fig. 1+1 refers to the bar following rehearsal figure 1.

In musical discussion, the sign ‘/’, as in F/F, indicates a simultaneity, and, dependent upon context, sometimes the specific notion of modal ‘mixture’: the presence of alternative pitches used in a flexible, inflected manner. Separation of pitches by commas indicates a neutral listing, such as for scalic components. Separation of pitches by means of ‘−’ denotes a voice-leading progression: a directed linear motion from one pitch to another. Minor chords within a harmonic progression are indicated by lower-case Roman numerals, as in the expression ‘G: ii−V−I’ (within a tonality of G major); or by the qualification ‘m’, as in the expression C−A−D−F. Finally, the chordal symbol ‘ø’, as in Dø, denotes a half-diminished seventh construction (i.e. D, F, A, C).

Unless otherwise marked, music examples which involve transposing instruments (such as David Epstein’s reduced orchestral scores) are presented at sounding pitch.