

Mozart Studies

Since the bicentennial of Mozart's death in 1991, the principal concern of much Mozart research has been to situate the composer and his music in increasingly well-informed biographical, historical, critical and analytical contexts. The contributors to *Mozart Studies* share this desire to paint ever-more rounded, focused and sensitive pictures of the composer by drawing upon wide-ranging historical materials and critical tools, and to project scholarly understandings considerably beyond the narrow frames of reference that traditionally characterized Mozart research. While chapters are grouped according to the principal areas and topics covered, it is intended that other thematic links between chapters will also emerge, drawing scholars' attention to areas primed for future investigation. In the best traditions of Mozart research, it is hoped that these essays will collectively affirm the vitality of Mozart scholarship and the significant role that this scholarship continues to play in defining and redefining musicological priorities.

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Trans.: 'Your spirit blew and the sea covered them: they sank like lead into the violent sea' (Exodus 15:10).
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Preface

In the final stages of work on this volume in early August 2005, I drove out to see friends close to White Lake in marshy southern Louisiana, one of the wildest and remotest corners of the United States. Getting out of my car on arrival I was greeted by a plethora of unfamiliar sounds ('music'?) the pleasures of which are so rarely accorded to a provincial Englishman – humming birds, cicadas rattling their distinctive crescendos and diminuendos, alligators splashing in a nearby gully and water moccasins rustling through the grass. As I entered the house, after an embarrassment of natural riches, the first sounds (*certainly* music) I encountered were from the rondo theme of the finale of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 19 in F K. 459, broadcast on the radio.

Hearing Mozart's music rarely surprises us these days, and when it does, it only serves as a reminder of the composer's ubiquitousness. The flurry of Mozart-related activities to coincide with the latest anniversary – 250 years since his birth – will no doubt add to the aura of omnipresence and enable him to tighten his grip still further on our collective musical consciousness. For the classically inclined musical public, Mozart continues to hold centre-stage, alternately a figure of fascination, an emblem of beauty, and a musical symbol, indeed, of the wonders of Western culture. For this reason, and many more besides, Mozart also provides inexhaustibly rich material for scholarly speculation.

Since the bicentennial of Mozart's death in 1991, the principal thrust of much Mozart research has been to situate the composer and his music in increasingly well-informed biographical, historical, cultural, critical and analytical contexts.¹ The contributors to *Mozart Studies* share this burgeoning scholarly desire to paint ever-more rounded, focused and sensitive pictures of the composer by drawing upon sophisticated and wide-ranging historical materials and critical tools, and in so doing project scholarly understandings considerably beyond the narrow frames of reference that traditionally characterized Mozart research. Thus, appreciation of Mozart's Requiem is enhanced through consideration of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century conceptualizations of death (Chapter 1); awareness of

¹For a succinct summary of important literature published on Mozart from 1991 onwards, see Peter Branscombe, 'Trends in Mozart Research Since the Bicentenary', in

Dorothea Link and Judith Nagley (eds.), *Words About Mozart: Essays in Honour of Stanley Sadie* (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY, 2005), pp. 1–19.

x *Preface*

orchestration skills in Mozart's instrumental music through attention to practical, pragmatic and aesthetic principles governing his choice of specific sonorities and rescorings (Chapters 2 and 3); understandings of Mozart's operas through musical and aesthetic contextualization of both broad and specific historical trends (Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7); and appreciation of Mozart's relevance to contemporary discourse and constructions of meaning through new and provocative lines of critical enquiry (Chapters 8 and 9). A volume of free-standing scholarly essays cannot hope to be comprehensive in coverage; nor should it aspire to methodological or hermeneutic uniformity. We celebrate the fact that very different historical and critical perspectives on strict counterpoint (Chapters 5 and 9) and on the reception of Mozart (Chapters 1 and 8) provide diverse insights into the composer and his music, that different viewpoints on Mozart's wind writing (Chapters 2 and 3) lead in discrete hermeneutic directions, that *Don Giovanni* still provides rich fodder for diverging critical, contextual and analytical enquiries (Chapters 6 and 7), that Mozart's operatic corpus as a whole, in fact, encourages writers to paint with a broad brush and a refined palette in equal measure. It is not simply our choice but also our obligation as scholars to continue to open the historical and critical lens on Mozart in order to deepen our understanding of how and why he continues to fascinate us.

Mozart Studies is designed to accommodate the reader wishing to progress from beginning to end (who will, we trust, value diverse methodologies and topics) as well as the reader wanting to home in on a particular area of Mozart research. While chapters are therefore grouped according to the principal areas and topics covered, it is intended that other thematic links between chapters will also emerge, drawing scholars' attention to areas primed for future investigation. In the best traditions of Mozart research, it is hoped that our essays will collectively affirm the vitality of Mozart scholarship and the significant role that this scholarship continues to play in defining and redefining musicological priorities in general.

Abbreviations

Literature

- LMF* Emily Anderson (ed. and trans.), *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, 3rd edn (London, 1985)
- MBA* Wilhelm A. Bauer, Otto Erich Deutsch and Joseph Heinz Eibl (eds.), *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen, Gesamtausgabe*, 7 vols. (Kassel, 1962–75)
- MDB* Otto Erich Deutsch, *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, trans. Eric Blom, Peter Branscombe and Jeremy Noble (Stanford and London, 1965)
- MDL* Otto Erich Deutsch, *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens* (Kassel, 1961)
- MGG1* Friedrich Blume (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel, 1949–86)
- MGG2* Ludwig Finscher (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd edn (Kassel, 1994–)
- NG1* Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980)
- NG2* Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn (London, 2001)
- NMA* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke* (Kassel, 1955–)

Journals

- AMZ* *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*
- COJ* *Cambridge Opera Journal*
- JAMS* *Journal of the American Musicological Society*
- JRMA* *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*
- ML* *Music & Letters*
- MQ* *The Musical Quarterly*