

## The Cambridge Companion to Music and Romanticism

This Companion presents a new understanding of the relationship between music and culture in and around the nineteenth century, and encourages readers to explore what Romanticism in music might mean today. Challenging the view that musical ‘romanticism’ is confined to a particular style or period, it reveals instead the multiple intersections between the phenomenon of Romanticism and music. Drawing on a variety of disciplinary approaches, and reflecting current scholarly debates across the humanities, it places music at the heart of a nexus of Romantic themes and concerns. Written by a dynamic team of leading younger scholars and established authorities, it gives a state-of-the-art yet accessible overview of current thinking on this popular topic.

BENEDICT TAYLOR is Reader in Music at the University of Edinburgh. He is author of *Mendelssohn, Time and Memory* (Cambridge, 2011), *The Melody of Time* (2015), and *Towards a Harmonic Grammar of Grieg’s Late Piano Music* (2016). He is co-editor of the journal *Music & Letters* and the recipient of the Jerome Roche Prize of the Royal Musical Association.

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# The Cambridge Companion to Music and Romanticism

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*Edited by*

BENEDICT TAYLOR

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## Preface

‘We are accustomed to judge a thing by the title it bears’ wrote Robert Schumann concerning the music of his colleague, Hector Berlioz. Titles can indeed be important. This volume is intended as a ‘Companion to Music and Romanticism’ – not, it should be noted, to ‘Romantic Music’, or ‘Music in the Romantic Era’. Unlike many earlier books on the topic, Romanticism is not taken here primarily to refer to a distinct period in music history, though there is nevertheless a clear historical focus on the long nineteenth century, resulting from the overlapping between the Romantic period as generally understood in literature and art (c. 1797–1848) and as commonly received as a musical epoch (from c. 1815 to c. 1914). Nor, on the other hand, is Romanticism understood simply as a musical style, even one characteristic of a group of figures we might choose to term ‘Romantics’ (including, no doubt, Schumann and Berlioz). Rather, it is conceived as a constellation of themes, ideas, and responses rooted in the cultural milieu of post-Enlightenment, post-revolutionary Europe, which intersect with music in diverse and challenging ways.

Reflecting both the nature of the topic and the current diversity of disciplinary responses to these questions, the present volume is designed as a series of conceptual approaches that interrogate the relation between Romanticism and music from a range of different viewpoints: *Horizons*, *Worlds*, *Aesthetics*, *Practices*, and *Histories*. Written by a dynamic team of leading younger scholars and established authorities, it seeks to offer a state-of-the-art yet accessible overview of current thinking on this popular topic.

Romanticism is not the easiest topic to elucidate. But it does come with several ostensible advantages for an editor. A Companion clearly aims at a degree of comprehensiveness in coverage; just as evidently, it will never completely fulfil this demand. The advantage of treating a topic like Romanticism, however, is that such failure is not only expected, but singularly apt. I have tried to avoid obvious lacunae in topics covered; still, an unscrupulous editor has a convenient excuse to hand for any omissions by appealing to the aesthetics of incompleteness and the Romantic fragment. Moreover, as Isaiah Berlin once argued,

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Romanticism marked an epochal change in the history of ideas in that two incompatible views could both be considered right in their own way. A range of viewpoints and approaches to the problem of framing Romanticism and music are given by the different contributors to this volume, not all of which may necessarily harmonise completely with one another (although there is in fact little significant disagreement between them). While some initial framework for the contributors was provided by the opening chapter, as I argue there, the tension between different understandings of Romanticism and its relationship with music – as a movement, historical period, style, or aesthetic – is one that authors will invariably negotiate for themselves. All the Companion's contributors are experts in their field, and I have tried to allow their different voices to come across as clearly as possible, reflecting the topic under discussion and the perspective of the individual author.

Finally, some much-needed acknowledgements. I would like to offer a short but heartfelt thanks here to all those who helped and contributed to the making of this volume. In particular I must mention Kate Brett for initially commissioning this companion and seeing it through to publication, Elaine Kelly for valuable advice when putting it together, Damian Taylor for helpful comments on the sections I wrote, and last but by no means least, all nineteen contributors for their enormous expertise and enthusiasm for the subject.

## Chronology

Romanticism is difficult to define in terms of a distinct historical period in music. The following chronology covers a large stretch of time broadly equivalent to the 'long nineteenth century' lasting from the French Revolution to the First World War, in which nearly all discussion of music and Romanticism is located. It concentrates on the period between the late 1790s and 1850, which covers both the eras usually associated with literary and artistic manifestations of Romanticism and music's subsequent 'Romantic generation' of composers. After mid-century the examples given are generally more confined to music, reflecting the oft-noted sense that music's purported 'Romantic' quality in this period was at variance with its surrounding culture.

- 1781 Mozart moves to Vienna. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*.
- 1782 Rousseau's *Confessions* posthumously published.
- 1789 Outbreak of French Revolution. William Blake, *Songs of Innocence*.
- 1790 Death of Joseph II of Austria. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*. Goethe, *Faust: A Fragment*.
- 1791 Death of Mozart. Haydn travels to London. Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*.
- 1792 Beethoven, aged 21, arrives in Vienna. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.
- 1793 Execution of Louis XVI; French Revolutionary Terror.
- 1794 Fichte begins lecturing on the *Wissenschaftslehre* in Jena.
- 1795 Schiller, *Aesthetic Education of Man*, Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*.
- 1796 Jean Paul, *Siebenkäs*.
- 1797 Emergence of early Romantic circle in Jena and Berlin. Wackenroder, *Outpourings of an Art-Loving Friar*. Coleridge writes *Kubla Khan, or a Vision in a Dream. A Fragment*. Birth of Schubert.
- 1798 Haydn, *The Creation*. First issue of the *Athenäum* published by the Schlegel brothers (six issues, until 1800). Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*.



- 1799 Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Wackenroder/Tieck, *Fantasies on Art*, Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, F. Schlegel, *Lucinde*. Goya, *Caprichos*.
- 1800 Novalis, *Hymns to the Night*. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*. Volta invents early form of electrical battery.
- 1801 Birth of Bellini. Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland.
- 1802 Beethoven, Piano Sonatas, Op. 31. Chateaubriand, *René*. Schelling, *Philosophy of Art*.
- 1803 Birth of Berlioz. Jean Paul, *Titan*.
- 1804 Napoleon crowned Emperor of France by Pope in Rome. Beethoven, *Eroica* Symphony. Senancour, *Obermann*. Declaration of Independence in Haiti.
- 1805 British Navy defeats French fleet at Trafalgar. Wordsworth completes *The Prelude*. First volume of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* published by Arnim and Brentano in Heidelberg. Birth of Fanny Mendelssohn, later Hensel.
- 1806 France defeats Prussia at the Battle of Jena; dissolution of Holy Roman Empire.
- 1807 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Abolition of slave trade across British Empire.
- 1808 Premiere of Beethoven, Symphonies Nos. 5 & 6. Goethe, *Faust*, Part 1, Moore, first book of *Irish Melodies*.
- 1809 Death of Haydn. Birth of Mendelssohn. A. W. Schlegel, *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*.
- 1810 E. T. A. Hoffmann's review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Birth of Chopin and Schumann. De Staël, *On Germany*. Caspar David Friedrich, *The Monk by the Sea*.
- 1811 Birth of Liszt. Luddite riots against industrialisation in English Midlands. Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*.
- 1812 Napoleon's failed invasion of Russia. Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, cantos 1 & 2. J. M. W. Turner, *Snow Storm: Hannibal and his Army Crossing the Alps*.
- 1813 Napoleon defeated in Peninsula War (cf. Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory*) and at Leipzig at the 'Battle of Nations'. Birth of Wagner and Verdi.
- 1814 Field publishes first three *Nocturnes*; Schubert, 'Gretchen am Spinnrade'. Scott, *Waverley*.
- 1815 Final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. Congress of Vienna. Schubert, 'Der Erlkönig', 'Heidenröslein'.
- 1816 Beethoven, *An die ferne Geliebte*, Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Spohr, *Faust*.



- 1817 Byron, *Manfred*, Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*.
- 1818 Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1. Friedrich, *The Wanderer over the Sea of Clouds*. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*.
- 1819 Birth of Clara Schumann, née Wieck. Gericault, *Raft of the Medusa*. Peterloo Massacre in Manchester. Anti-Semitic Hep-Hep riots and repressive Carlsbad Decrees in German territories.
- 1820 Hoffmann, *Life and Opinions of Tomcat Murr*, Lamartine, *Poetic Meditations*, Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*. Ørsted discovers connection between electricity and magnetism.
- 1821 Weber, *Der Freischütz*. Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*. Constable, *The Hay Wain*. Death of Napoleon and Keats. Start of Greek War of Independence.
- 1822 Birth of Franck. Death of Hoffmann and Shelley.
- 1823 Schubert, *Die schöne Müllerin*.
- 1824 Premiere of Beethoven, Symphony No. 9. Birth of Smetana and Bruckner. Death of Byron.
- 1825 Mendelssohn, Octet. Opening of Stockton and Darlington Railway.
- 1826 Death of Weber. Mendelssohn, Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
- 1827 Death of Beethoven. Schubert, *Winterreise*. Heine, *Book of Songs*, Hugo, Preface to *Cromwell*, Delacroix, *The Death of Sardanapalus*.
- 1828 Death of Schubert. Auber, *La Muette de Portici*, Marschner, *Der Vampyr*. Paganini starts major European concert tour.
- 1829 Mendelssohn's pioneering revival of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in Berlin, and journey to Scotland (inspiration for *Hebrides Overture* and 'Scottish' Symphony). Rossini, *Guillaume Tell*.
- 1830 July Revolution in Paris. Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*. Stendhal, *The Red and the Black*. Tennyson, first collection of *Poems*.
- 1831 Meyerbeer, *Robert le diable*, Bellini, *La sonnambula* and *Norma*. Faraday discovers principle of electromagnetic induction.
- 1832 Chopin, *Nocturnes*, Op. 9. Mickiewicz completes *Dziady*. Death of Goethe and Scott. Great Reform Act in Britain.
- 1833 Mendelssohn, 'Italian' Symphony. Birth of Brahms and Borodin.
- 1834 Berlioz, *Harold in Italy*. Schumann co-founds *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Death of Coleridge.
- 1835 Chopin, Ballade No. 1, Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Schumann, *Carnaval*. Death of Bellini. Heine, *The Romantic School*, Leopardi, *Canti*.