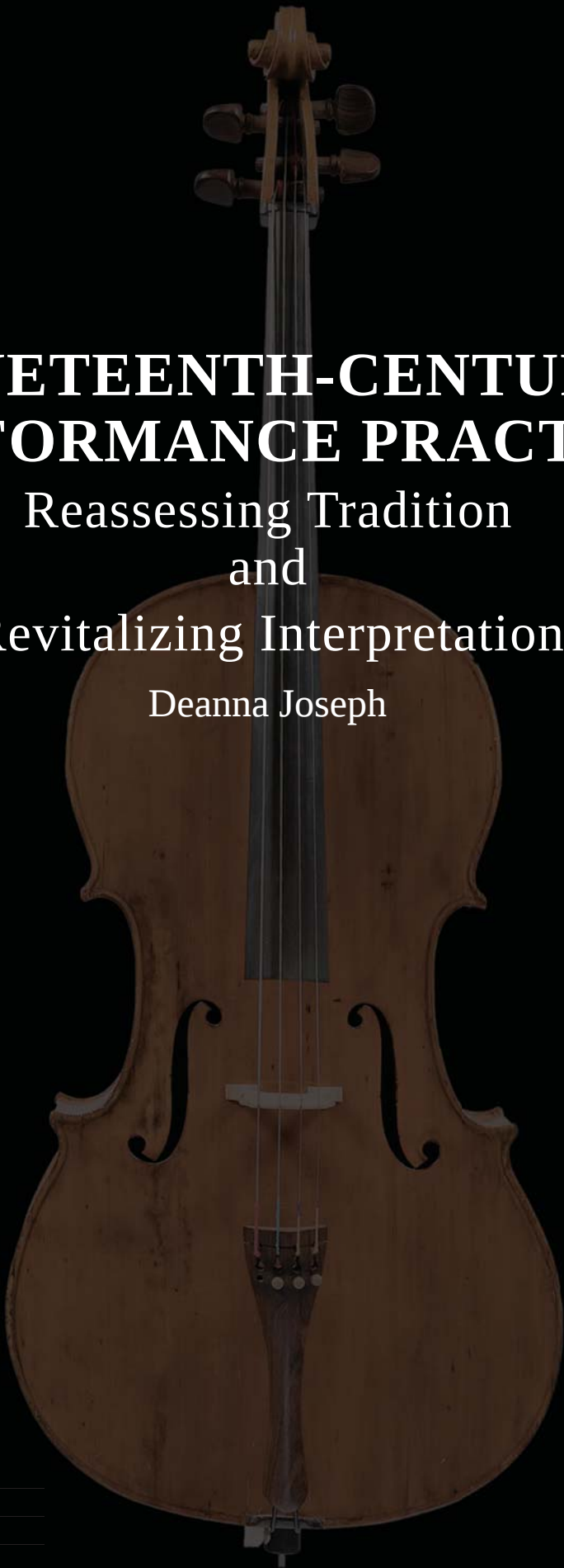




NINETEENTH-CENTURY PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Reassessing Tradition
and
Revitalizing Interpretation

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Historically informed performance procedures have become popular over the past fifty years. Music of the Baroque period has arguably received the greatest attention, and musicians are now aware of issues related to the number of singers in Bach's choir, the use of period instruments, and expressive elements such as tempi, tone color, and articulation. However, performance practices of the nineteenth century

have been slower to make their way into the mainstream. Classically trained musicians of our time have grown up playing and listening to the music of Romantic composers and frequently assume that what they have been taught is stylistically authentic. There is a certain comfort level with this repertoire, so much so that contemporary performers often have a preconceived sound concept and thus take performance traditions for granted.

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Scholarship of the last few decades has seen an increase in analysis of historical recordings, as well as research into nineteenth-century books on singing technique and interpretation and techniques on playing the piano, violin, and other instruments. Many treatises shed light on issues of tempo, phrasing, dynamics, and tone color, serving as guides straight from the pens of the performers and teachers of the Romantic era. Examining this historical evidence can lead musicians to reassess many preconceived notions about nineteenth-century music and revitalize

their approach to interpretation.

The following article will present research on nineteenth-century seating and stage placement, tempo and tempo freedom, tone quality and vibrato, and the use of portamento.

Seating and Stage Placement

The manner in which nineteenth-century orchestras and choruses were arranged in concert is well documented in various treatises and seating charts:

Orchestral seating was a subject of great interest to musicians in the first half of the nineteenth century, and treatises often published diagrams of famous orchestras. They almost always show the violins at the front of the orchestra, facing one another on opposite sides. The winds were often placed on risers, sometimes quite steep, in the rear; with the brass at the very back. Violas, cellos and basses might be found almost anywhere. When there was a chorus, it was placed in front of the orchestra or at the sides. The conductor of a concert orchestra usually stood in the

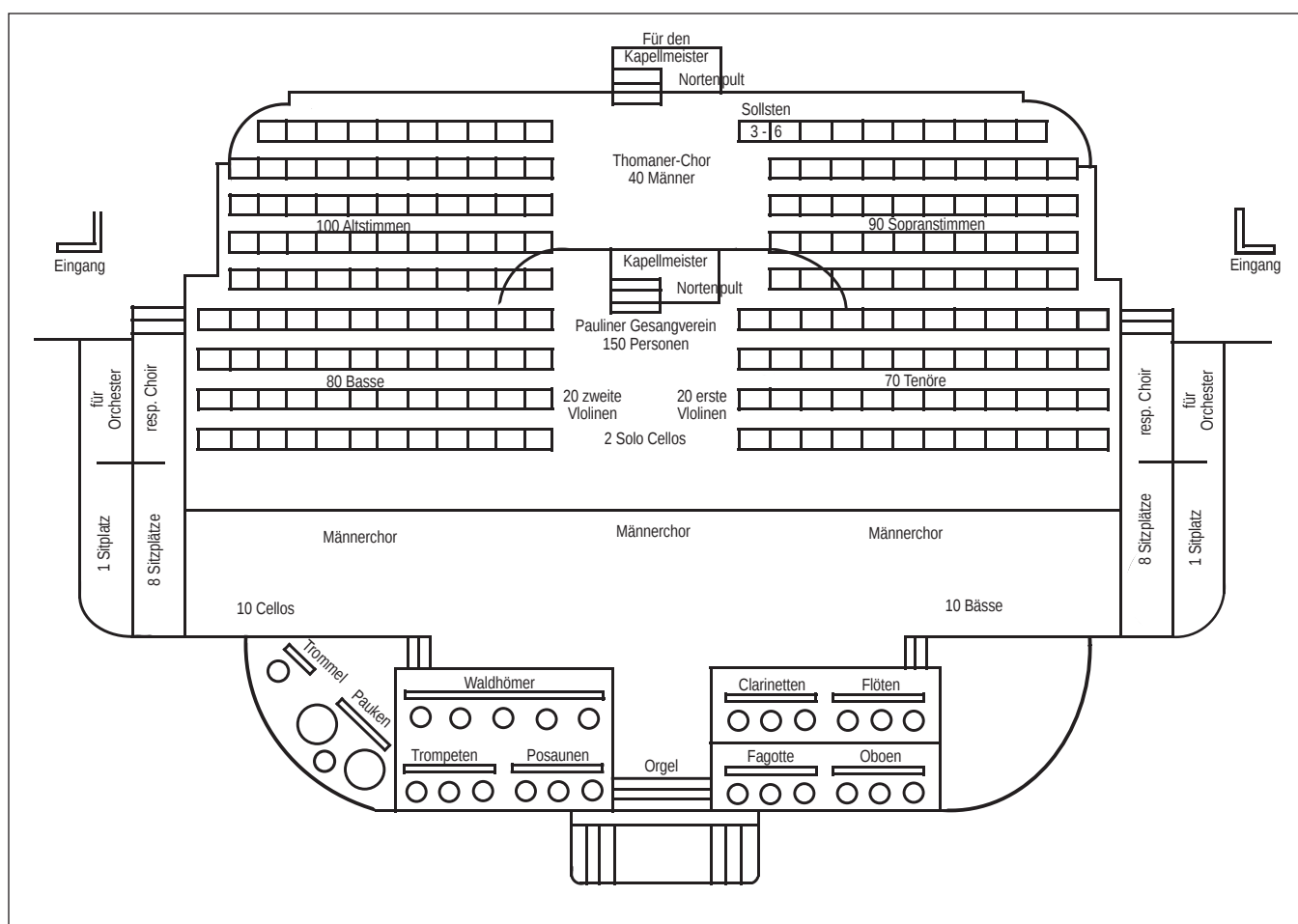


Figure 1. Leipzig Gewandhaus Seating Plan, 1880s – Bibliography: Kling, Henry. *Der Vollkommene Musik-Dirigent*. Verfasst und herausgegeben von H. Kling. Hannover: L. Gertel, 1890

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centre of the orchestra, among the instrumentalists; often he faced the audience.¹

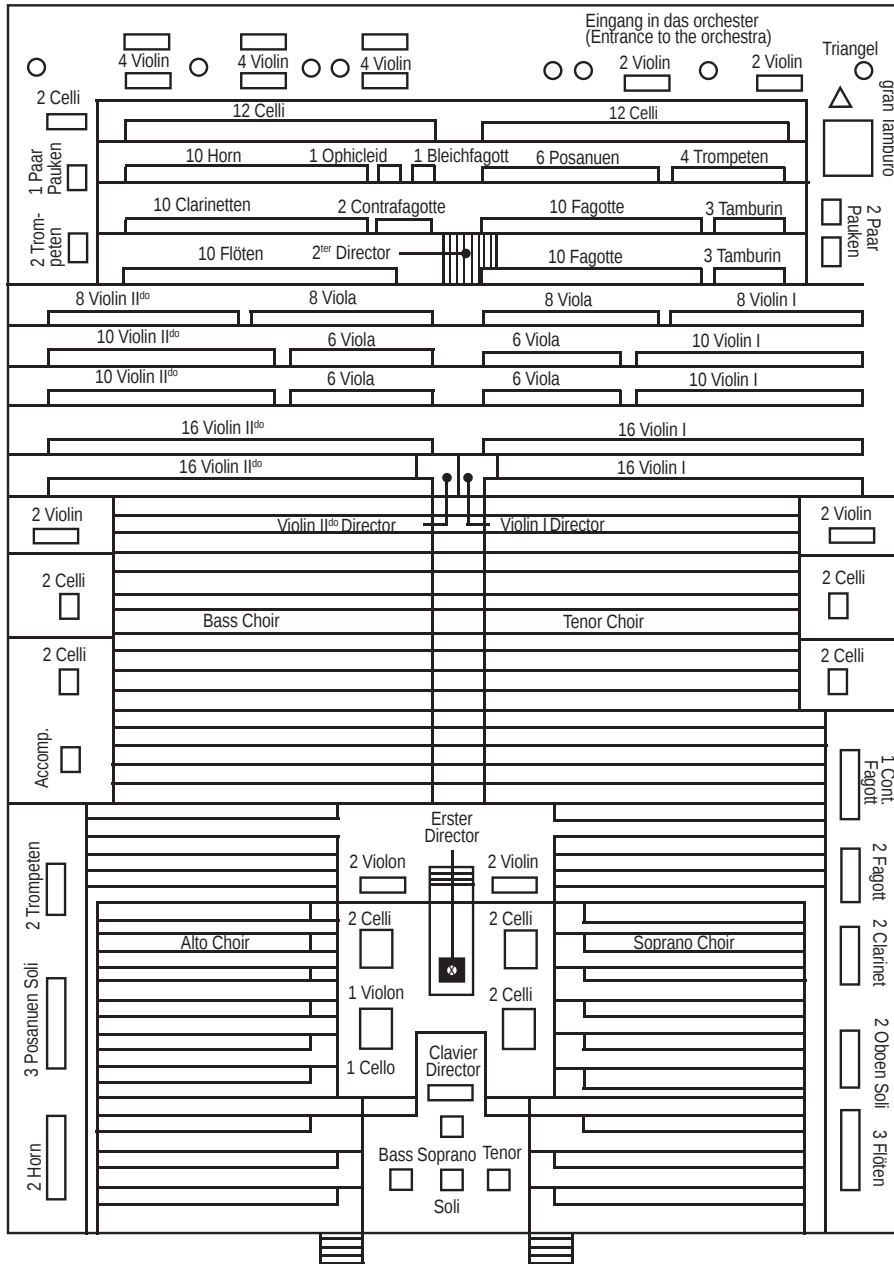
The fact that the chorus was virtually always placed in front of the orchestra is irrefutable. In some cases, this type of configuration even carried over into the early twentieth century.² One of the biggest problems with arrangements of this kind was that the chorus could not see the conductor very well, if at all. Hector Berlioz describes the layout of forces in the amphitheater of the Paris Conservatoire:

The violins and the violas are on the stage, and only the basses and wind instruments occupy the steps; the chorus is seated in the front of the stage, looking toward the audience. All the sopranos and altos are unable to see the movements of the conductor, since their backs are turned directly toward him. The arrangement is very inconvenient for this part of the chorus.³

To solve this issue, rather than moving the chorus behind the orchestra as we do today, two or more conductors were often used. A Leipzig Gewandhaus seating plan from the 1880s depicts a large chorus positioned at the front of the stage. There are two conductors, and the orchestra is arched in the back with the strings first, followed by the brass and woodwinds on platforms behind them.⁴ (Figure 1) An 1843 performance of Franz Joseph Haydn's *Creation* at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna required a first and second director, a third keyboard director, and two additional directors for the first and second violins—five directors in all.⁵ (Figure 2)

From an orchestral standpoint, it is interesting that “the eighteenth-century practice of standing to play in concert situations still prevailed in many places in the nineteenth century.”¹⁶ Until this time,

Figure 2. Seating plan for the 1843 performance of Haydn's *Creation* in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna – Bibliography: Schünemann, Georg. *Geschichte des Dirigierens*. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1913



the violins and violas sat for theatrical performances such as opera, where they were required to play in a pit, and stood for performances that required them to be on the concert stage.

Performances in venues outside major concert halls, such as churches, often created special problems due to the demands of the space. The position of the organ was the first and usually

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largest consideration and often forced flexibility regarding seating of the orchestra. Regardless of sight lines and other logistical issues, the chorus was still consistently placed in front or to the side of the orchestra—never behind—and perhaps modern-day experimentation with placing the chorus in front or to the side of the orchestra may reveal a new sound world or solve balance problems. (See the section at the end of this article titled “Putting Research into Practice” for more on incorporating this research into performances of today.)

Choice of Tempo and Tempo Freedom

Every sensitive musician is aware that the quest for historically appropriate tempos must be concerned with plausible parameters rather than with precisely delineated or very narrowly defined absolute tempos... many psychological and aesthetic factors, as well as the varying physical conditions in which performance takes place, militate against the notion that a piece of music should be rigidly bound to a single immutable tempo.⁷

Tempo is among the most variable and difficult issues in musical performance. The idea of intuiting the proper tempo or “feeling it” was popular with progressive composer-conductors such as Franz Liszt and Richard Wagner toward the end of the nineteenth century. Wagner was particularly opinionated on the subject, stating, “If one wants to summarize what the correct performance of a piece of music is for a conductor, it is based on his always setting the right tempo; for the choice and determination of that tempo immediately allows us to recognize whether the conductor understood the musical composition or not.”⁸

Though many nineteenth-century musicians chose to print metronome marks in their scores, by and large these marks were meant to be taken only as general indicators. The first edition of *Ein deutsches Requiem* contained markings for every movement, yet Brahms had them removed from all later editions and commented repeatedly that the metronome encouraged mechanical performances. In 1880 he expressed his general view in a letter to George Henschel: “Those [markings] which are found in the *Requiem* are there because good friends talked me into them. For I myself have never believed that my blood and a mechanical instrument go well together... What I know, however, is that I indicate my tempos in the heading, without numbers, modestly but with the greatest care and clarity.”⁹

Felix Mendelssohn, too, was reluctant to notate specific tempi for his music, and “though in playing he never varied the tempo when once taken, he did not always take a movement at the same pace, but changed it as his mood was at the time.”¹⁰ Camille Saint-Saëns reports that Berlioz did not observe his own tempo marks when leading a performance of his *Grande messe des*

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Regardless of sight lines and other logistical issues, the chorus was still consistently placed in front or to the side of the orchestra.

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morts: “The moderato (quarter=96) at the beginning of the ‘Dies Irae’ was more like an allegro and the andante maestoso (quarter=72) following, like a moderato.”¹¹

Flexibility of tempo is another important factor in nineteenth-century performance practice. A number of period recordings demonstrate great freedom and spontaneity of tempo. Most *tempo rubato* was not marked in the score, though “holding back some notes and hurrying others was not merely permissible but was an indispensable adjunct of sensitive performance.”¹² There were two general types of rubato: 1) the melody remained flexible over a basic pulse in the accompaniment (Frédéric Chopin was known for this style of playing); and 2) the tempo changed for a short period of time, while the overall texture either slowed or rushed ahead (a style associated especially with Liszt and Wagner).

Later nineteenth-century conductors apparently used the latter a great deal. The fact that Liszt incorporated frequent tempo fluctuations in his conducting was well known. As early as 1826, the article on the metronome in the *Dizionario e bibliografia della musica* states, “If the beat is always kept with an extreme exactness, a perfect ensemble is necessarily

achieved. But such a symmetrical and square performance lacks magic. One should deck the yoke that is imposed on the beat with flowers, and from time to time free oneself from it with felicitous license.”¹³

But how does a twenty-first-century conductor know how and where to employ the extensive rubato that would have been considered tasteful and effective in the nineteenth century? A detailed list from 1839 by Carl Czerny states that a *ritardando* or *rallentando* should be employed:

- On the return of the principal subject
- When we separate a phrase from the melody
- On long notes strongly accented
- In the transition to a different time
- After a pause
- On the diminuendo of a quick, lively passage
- Where the ornamental notes cannot be played “a tempo giusto”
- In a well-marked crescendo serving as introduction or windup to an important passage
- In passages where the composer or performer gives free play to his fancy
- When the composer marks the passage *espressivo*
- At the end of a trill or cadence.¹⁴

Note that one phenomenon Czerny mentions is the interrelationship between tempo and dynamic changes. De-

spite what most musicians are currently taught, recordings demonstrate that in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, louder could mean faster and softer could mean slower.¹⁵ Dynamics and tempi were natural partners. Since this was commonplace, composers had no need to mark these tempo changes in the score.

Ritardando and *accelerando* alternate all the time. This manner has already become so fixed in the minds of the musical public that they believe a *diminuendo* must be slowed down and a *crescendo* speeded up; a tender phrase (e.g. in an *allegro*) will be performed more slowly, a powerful one faster. At times this kind of treatment may well be applicable but how to determine where requires very deep insight into the composition and very correct feeling.¹⁶

Tempo changes at major structural divisions helped delineate the composition's form for the audience. Brahms commented a number of times that the first performance of a work would be the time to underline the structure of a piece through marked tempo changes within movements, whereas when the work became more familiar to the public, this kind of exaggeration would not



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be needed.¹⁷ As a conductor, Brahms sometimes added tempo modifications not provided in the published score.¹⁸ Of the limited number of Brahms's conducting scores that are available, the most notable is the one he used to conduct *Ein deutsches Requiem* at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna in 1870.¹⁹ (Figure 3) Notice the addition of a fermata and two tempo markings—*breit* and *tempo viv*—in Brahms's own hand.

A 1920 recording by Arthur Nikisch (1855–1922) and the Berlin Philharmonic of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* demonstrates a degree of freedom that seems extreme today but was most likely common during the late nineteenth century.²⁰ (To listen to this example on YouTube, refer to the endnotes link.) In particular, one can hear the tempo fluctuations that occur between the first and second themes, which are exaggerated in the recapitulation, as well as considerable freedom of tempo in the development section. These tempo changes highlight structural aspects of the music.

In summary, the philosophy of informed tempos having “plausible parameters” is a good starting point when dealing with music of the nineteenth century.²¹ The “right” tempo depends on many factors that run the gamut from logistical considerations, such as the acoustic of the performance space, to subjective factors, such as the mood and musical understanding of the conductor.

Metronome markings are meant to be guides and should in no way bind a performer to a “perfect” tempo that must be recreated in every performance. The general consensus among nineteenth-century musicians was that various performances of the same piece could have a range of suitable tempos, and that flexibility within a given tempo was implied. Manipulating the



Figure 3. Used by permission of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute

tempo was considered expressive and could help the audience more quickly understand the structure of the piece upon the first hearing. Czerny's guidelines for *tempo rubato* provide modern performers with parameters for when and where to include this expressive device, although even he includes in this list of rules that it is also admissible “in passages where the composer or performer gives free play to his fancy.”

Tone Quality and Vibrato

Before the twentieth century, vocal and instrumental vibrato were not a continuous part of tone production but rather were used as expressive tools. Violinists such as Joseph Joachim (1831–1907) and his famous student Leopold Auer (1845–1930), as well as major singing pedagogue Manuel Garcia (1805–1906), all despaired at the intro-

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duction of noticeable and constant vibrato in music of the time. For them, this was clearly an affectation that covered up a lack of true artistry and control. Musical authorities of the time believed that “the basic sound should be a steady one and that vibrato, along with other ornamental techniques, should occur as an incidental coloring or embellishment on particular notes.”²² Constant vibrato was seen as either a technical fault or a sign of a good singer past his or her prime, and the basic belief was that something constant could no longer be expressive. According to Garcia’s singing treatises, the first of which came from 1840, singers should strive for “a steadiness of sound,” which he defined as “a firm and continuous flow of sound, free from every sort of tremor or quavering.”²³

Garcia was one of the most influential pedagogues of the nineteenth century. His father, Manuel Garcia I, and sisters, Maria Malibran and Pauline Viardot, were enormously successful opera singers. He taught singing for nearly fifty years at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he invented the laryngoscope; his students included famed soprano Jenny Lind, the important teacher Matilde Marchesi, and Julius Stockhausen, who served as baritone soloist for the 1868 premiere of Brahms’s *Requiem*. Certainly, there were singers who used noticeable, steady vibrato, or Garcia would not have commented on it. However, Garcia’s treatises point to the fact that he did not encourage steady vibrato in his students.²⁴

Brown quotes Sir Henry Wood’s book *The Gentle Art of Singing* (1927), as it gave an interesting account of the increase of vibrato in singing:

There has been a good deal written and said lately about the vocal tremolo [vibrato], which is out of place, but it is no new fault. I think

“

Metronome markings are meant to be guides and should in no way bind a performer to a “perfect” tempo that must be recreated in every performance.

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I have explained fairly clearly why it exists, and how it can be cured. If it is not taken in hand at the very first singing lesson, it grows rapidly into a habit, and becomes so firmly established that it is most difficult to eradicate and is always liable to crop up from time to time. A tremolo often reaches the audience as out-of-tuneness and any teacher who has tried to teach the octave duet for soprano and mezzo soprano, “Agnus Dei” in Verdi’s *Requiem*, to singers of whom one has a decided tremolo and the other a true even, still tone, will understand why. It is impossible to get the octaves to sound in tune. The voice with the tremolo never blends in with the still tones of the other. The sharpness and flatness of the tremolo becomes clear.²⁵

In regard to string playing, James Winram made the following observations about vibrato in his book *Violin Playing and Violin Adjustment* (1908): “[Vibrato] should be judiciously used at all times, as it is quite possible to have too much of a good thing. Beethoven’s music will sound lovely with very little close shake [‘close shake’ is the old English term for vibrato], or is preferred with none at all whereas Wagner’s will gain rather than

lose by its introduction. The character of the music must be taken into consideration, and good taste will surely be sufficient guide.”²⁶

Around 1880, the anonymous author of *Hints to Violin Playing* linked the habit of continuous vibrato to bad taste and poor technique:

The close shake is an imitation of that tremulous wave which often comes unbidden into the human voice during the performance of a strained note. Some singers, through ignorance or pernicious training, introduce this wave so often that they eventually lose all control of the voice, and cannot sing a note without the detestable and irritating quiver rattling through it. Many good tenor and treble singers remain in the second or third class, which might easily advance to the first, but for this wretched and damning tremola. A singer thus afflicted, or a harmonium with the tremola stop out, are the two things that any one with a sensitive ear wishes to be away from.... My earnest injunction, therefore...is, master the close shake, but do not let the close shake master you.²⁷

Most vibrato techniques were essentially for soloists. Continuous vibrato did not begin to spread into orchestral string playing until early in the twentieth century.²⁸ However, this did not necessarily preclude use of vibrato in ensemble music by instruments that momentarily took on a soloistic role. In performing string quartets, German violinist Louis Spohr (1784–1859) insisted that only when the player “has a decided solo part, and the other instruments merely an accompaniment, can he be allowed to embellish in the ordinary manner of solo pieces.”²⁹ Furthermore, in orchestral playing he instructed the string player to abstain from “everything appertaining to the embellishment of

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solo playing which, if transferred to the orchestra, would destroy all unity of performance."³⁰

According to Brown, some singers produce a significant number of relatively long notes with little or no vibrato, while the voices of others have a fairly continuous vibrato. However, as with the violinists on these recordings, vibrato, where it is used, is almost always very narrow and controlled, and seems to be a vibrato of intensity rather than one of pitch."³¹ A recording of Schubert's *Heidenroselein*, sung by German soprano Minnie Nast (1874–1956) is an excellent example of the clear tone and lack of continuous vibrato that was prized by singers of the time.³² Keep in mind when listening to this excerpt that Nast was a famous opera singer; she created the role of Sophie in Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1911. Note that even the sustained notes are pure; not much vibrato is heard.

Today, vibrato is considered basic to vocal and instrumental tone production.³³ A new standard for proper

technique has become the artist's ability to vibrate on every note. One could say that nowadays technique informs style rather than style informing technique, as it was in the nineteenth century. Removing vibrato, especially in late Romantic repertoire, might seem shocking to modern audiences. However, using it as an occasional expressive tool rather than as a steady constant can increase the palette of tone color and stylistic expression available to the contemporary conductor and can result in more varied, exciting performances of this repertoire.

Portamento

Portamento in violin playing became widespread as early as the 1770s. By the end of the century, singers had started to incorporate portamento into performance.³⁴ The term portamento, at its root, means "to carry."

In singing, string playing, and wind playing "portamento" had two basic

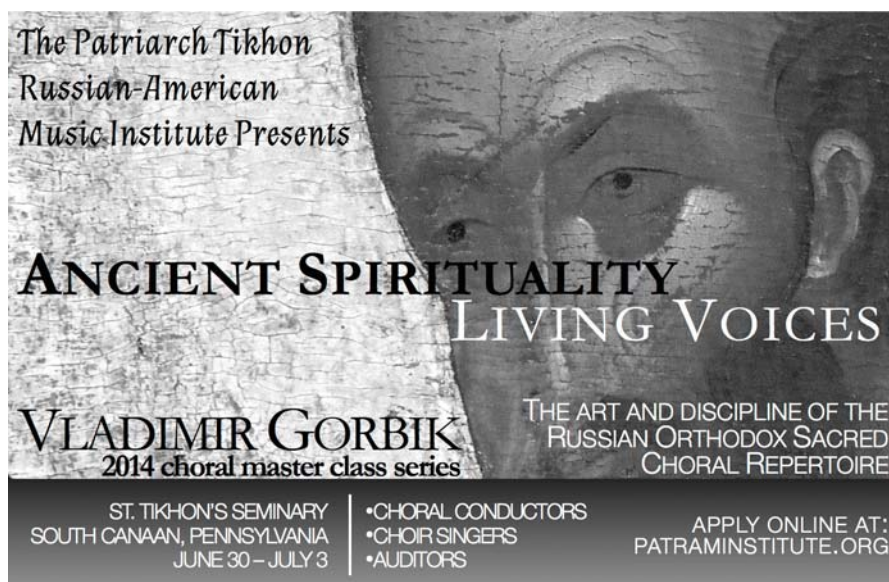
connotations: both implied a smooth connection of one sound with another, but this connection could be seen either simply as legato or as a linking of different notes by a more or less audible slide through the intervening pitches.³⁵

Interestingly, complaints about the overuse of portamento began almost instantly, as "it became increasingly common to associate *portamento* with a conspicuous slide."³⁶

A reviewer of operas at the Magdeburg Theater in 1798 noted that the *prima donna*, Toscani, "constantly slid through the in between notes on rising or falling fourths, fifths, or sixths, and since she carried on with this incessantly, with her in any case piping voice, a dreadful meow developed out of what was supposed to be an Italian embellishment."³⁷

Portamento initially came from vocal music, and it is difficult to discern just how much was employed and where it was deemed appropriate. Joseph Joachim and Andreas Moser's *Violinschule* (1905) states that "[a]s a means borrowed from the human voice...the use and manner of executing portamento must come naturally under the same rules as those which hold good in vocal art."³⁸ This is important for understanding how singers may have used portamento, because "the bowings and fingerings in string music make it more revealing."³⁹

Haydn's string quartets, op. 33 (from 1781–82), contain fingerings by the composer and indicate the use of portamento for special effects. Mendelssohn's quartets contain bowings and fingerings by his close colleague Ferdinand David and suggest portamento in places that most modern musicians would not expect.⁴⁰ Although there are few clues in vocal music, the operas of Giacomo Meyerbeer contain many clear indica-



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tions for vocal portamento. Wagner also included instructions for vocal portamento in specific places in his scores. In *Der fliegende Holländer*, he added the marking *con portamento* to indicate his wishes.⁴¹

In addition, recordings by performers who knew late nineteenth-century composers provide helpful information for analysis. Portamento plays a significant part in two arrangements of Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* by Joseph Joachim (1903) and in a 1916 recording of Edward Elgar's *Violin Concerto* made under the direction of the composer; both the soloist (Marie Hall) and the orchestra employ portamento liberally.⁴² Brown notes that "[v]irtually all the authors who discussed portamento in singing and in string playing stressed the danger of abusing it; but their notation of abuse is directly dependent on what they considered to be the norm."⁴³

Instrumental Portamento

Although various early-nineteenth-century sources criticize portamento in ensemble music, by the middle of the century it was an accepted practice.⁴⁴ Similar to the use of vibrato, the use of portamento was most likely due to the rise of conservatory training, which prepared violinists to be soloists, even though their careers would probably be spent playing in ensembles. As with vibrato, composers assumed that performers would apply portamento "with taste, and in the right places,"⁴⁵ although the overuse of this technique continued to be criticized, as seen in the following biting quote from Antonio Salieri:

This feeble and childish mannerism has, like an infectious disease, spread to some orchestral players and, what is most ridiculous, not merely to our courageous violinists, but also to violists and even double bass players.

“**Using vibrato as an occasional expressive tool rather than as a steady constant can increase the palette of tone color and stylistic expression available to the contemporary conductor and can result in more varied, exciting performances of this repertoire.**”

Because a tolerated evil always gets worse, such a mannerism, particularly in a full orchestra, must necessarily change a harmonious body into a collection of whining children and meowing cats.⁴⁶

An excellent, and perhaps extreme, example of orchestral portamento appears in Willem Mengelberg's 1927 recording of the prelude to Act I of Wagner's *Lohengrin*.⁴⁷ Portamento is added primarily in melodic passages rather than those of an accompanying nature, and they draw the listener's attention to the given line, adding an expressive element.

Vocal Portamento

If instrumental ensembles in the nineteenth century applied portamento more freely than we do today, what about choral ensembles? Early recordings of choral groups are rare, making the practice somewhat hard to discern. Portamento is discussed a number of times in the writings of Siegfried Ochs (1858–1929), founder of the Philharmonic Choral Society of Berlin. Ochs wrote a series of books called *Der deutsche Gesangverein* ("The German Choral Society"), which consisted of practical journal entries for conductors that addressed problem spots in choral-orchestral masterworks.

His entries on choral portamento are inconsistent. In one place he refers to it as an *Unart* (a bad habit, common in bad choirs) but then also gives detailed directions on how to execute it. For example, he explains how to train a choir to make a portamento in the first movement of Brahms's *Requiem* by sliding on the "L" in "Die da Leid."⁴⁸ Wilhelm Furtwängler's recording of *Ein deutsches Requiem* from 1947 demonstrates a pronounced portamento at this very spot.⁴⁹ A 1941 recording of the St. Olaf Choir singing "Beautiful Savior" conducted by its founder and first conductor, F. Melius Christiansen, is another example of choral portamento.⁵⁰

Portamento in choral singing as well as orchestral string playing has been so limited in musical performance for so many years that to modern audiences it tends to sound in poor taste. However, there can be no doubt that by the middle of the nineteenth century, it had become a freely employed expressive tool—and was at times subject to abuse. Portamento remained present in vocal and instrumental technique until well into the twentieth century.

Putting Research into Practice

Can any of this fascinating research work in performances of today? The

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answer is yes. I conducted two choral-orchestral performances incorporating this research, and each was well received by both the performing musicians and the audiences.

On April 11, 2010, I conducted a performance of Bruckner's *Mass in D Minor* with a two hundred-voice choir, standing in front of the orchestra, and a large orchestra standing (not sitting) behind them. (Figure 4) Logistically speaking, choral-orchestral performances tend to be quite complex due to the number of people involved. This performance had the additional challenges of seating and other placement logistics unfamiliar to the musicians, the presence and coordination of two conductors, and the implementation of performance techniques that were new to every musician involved in the project.

Encouraging these new techniques was difficult early on in the rehearsal process. The soloists, choir, and string players were accustomed to playing with consistent vibrato, and minimizing this took many reminders. Vibrato for them, unlike their nineteenth-century counterparts, was a ubiquitous part of their technique, and achieving a different aesthetic required a significant amount of "undoing" their previously rehearsed approach. The addition of portamento was met with similar resistance, and many of the musicians thought it sounded silly and even humorous.

Eventually the performers were able to implement a small amount of portamento in the places I requested, but it was hardly audible. At this stage, I decided to have them practice portamento out of context; before they could execute it in a performance, they needed to learn how to do it correctly. Once a comfort level was established, the choir and orchestra were able to utilize portamento with relative ease and eventually even be expressive with



Figure 4. Photograph during the April 11, 2010, performance of Bruckner's *Mass in D Minor* at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Rochester, NY. Performance utilized organ (back center), full orchestra, and a chorus of 200 singers, SATB soloists, a main conductor, and a sub-conductor. Photo by Leslie Scatterday.

it. I was fortunate to have the luxury of ample rehearsal time to experiment with these techniques and allow them to evolve.

The addition of *tempo rubato* was a challenge in two ways. First, performers of today are accustomed to having ritardandos and accelerandos written in the score. To remedy this problem, I had the choir and orchestra members write in a few of the tempo changes, just to keep everyone relatively together. The second challenge was, of course, coordinating this with two conductors. The sub-conductor and I rehearsed leading and following in a few of the chorus rehearsals the week before the concert. Thankfully, my colleague was a sensitive musician who was able to follow every one of my whims quite impressively. By the performance, we were able to add in even more *tempo rubato* where it was

not marked, and the musicians became comfortable with being flexible.

Seating was initially a challenge, particularly for the orchestra, because orchestras today are comfortable playing in only a few standard seating plans. The majority of choirs, however, are more accustomed to changes in seating. The winds were off to the left; brass, to the right; both on platforms. To make things even more challenging, the acoustic in the cathedral where we performed was reverberant, and it was difficult for them to hear one another. We also added the organ, which could only be utilized in the final dress rehearsal at the cathedral.

Despite all of the unknowns, the concert was a huge success and created buzz among the audience and the musicians. The overwhelming comment after the performance was, "Why don't we perform this repertoire with the

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chorus in front of the orchestra more often?" Arranging the chorus in front of the orchestra allowed the chorus to sing an haunting *pianissimo* and also allowed the orchestra to play *fortissimo* when marked, rather than having the typical dynamic battle with the chorus constantly striving to be heard and the orchestra being silenced. It was freeing for both groups. The two-conductor setup worked well, and I found it advantageous to have one conductor who could give all attention to the orchestra and one who could focus on the chorus.

From Nineteenth-Century Traditions to Today

Contemporary musicians often assume that the way they are trained to perform music of the nineteenth century represents an accurate and unbroken tradition. Piecing together information about performance practices of the time, however, suggests that great value can be found in rethinking our approach to performing music of the Romantic era. By the mid-twentieth century, music had evolved into a more "standardized" art in which perfection tended to outweigh self-expression.

It is unclear exactly what brought

on this shift: perhaps the growth of audio recording, an advance that gave musicians the ability to scrutinize their performances after the fact; perhaps the reign of conductors who were known for their precision and who made many recordings, such as Arturo Toscanini and Robert Shaw. The increasingly complex music of the twentieth century sometimes required a metronomic precision and clarity, and many composers of this period ask performers to do exactly what is on the page.

Musicians of the 1800s valued a different aesthetic, one in which expression was encouraged in every way possible.

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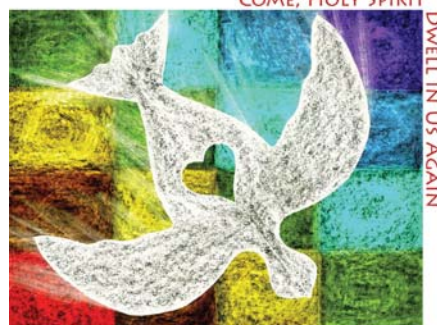
Conference Faculty Includes:

Reggie Weaver, John Bell, Pearl Shangkuan, Mary Ibis



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NINETEENTH-CENTURY PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Each performance was to be a distinct artistic experience aimed to stir the emotions of the audience. Fortunately, audiences of the twenty-first century are becoming more open to experimentation along the lines of tempo, seating, stage placement, and expressive techniques. Studying performance traditions of the nineteenth century gives us the opportunity to appreciate more fully the sound world of the people who composed and performed the music of this period, revitalizing our understanding and interpretation of this beloved repertoire. 

NOTES

¹ John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, "Orchestra," in *Grove Music Online*, accessed

September 22, 2012, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Richard Sternfeld, *Chronik des Philharmonischen Chores in Berlin* (Berlin, H.G. Hermann, 1907), 53.

³ Hector Berlioz, *Berlioz's Orchestration Treatise: A Translation and Commentary*, trans. and ed. Hugh Macdonald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 204.

⁴ Diagrams of these stage arrangements can be found in the introductory notes to David Friddle's edition of Liszt's oratorio, "Christus." See Franz Liszt, "Christus," ed. David Friddle, (New York: Bärenreiter, 2005), 19.

⁵ Franz Liszt, "Christus," ed. David Friddle, (New York: Bärenreiter, 2005), 13.

⁶ Daniel J. Koury, *Orchestral Performance Practices in the Nineteenth Century: Size, Proportions, and Seating* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Research

Press, 1986), 175. Koury goes on to say, surprisingly, "The violins and violas in Leipzig did not sit to play until about ten years after the advent of Artur Nikisch as conductor; which would be about 1905."

⁷ Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 283.

⁸ Warren Bebbington, "Wagner as Conductor" (unpublished manuscript, Melbourne, 2009).

⁹ Quoted in Styra Avins, "Performing Brahms's Music: Clues from His Letters," in *Performing Brahms: Early Evidence of Performance Style*, ed. Michael Musgrave and Bernard D. Sherman (Cambridge, UK, 2003), 22. Henschel was a well-known baritone, pianist, composer and conductor; and good friend of Brahms.

¹⁰ Sir George Grove, ed., *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London 1879–89), s.v.



ACDA Member Wins First-Ever Music Education Grammy

The first-ever Grammy in music education was awarded to Kent Knappenberger at the 56th annual Grammy awards in January 2014. More than thirty thousand nominations from all fifty states were submitted for the award, which was created to honor current music educators who have made significant contributions to the field of music education. Knappenberger has been a music teacher and choral director at Westfield Academy and Central School in Westfield, NY, for almost three decades. The American Choral Directors Association would like to congratulate Kent on this well-deserved achievement.

Reassessing Tradition and Revitalizing Interpretation

- "Mendelssohn." Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 284.
- ¹¹ Camille Saint-Saëns, *Musical Memories*, trans. E.G. Rich (London, 1921), 136–7. Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 287.
 - ¹² Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 375.
 - ¹³ Pietro Lichtenthal, *Dizionario e bibliografia della musica* (Milan, 1826), quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 390.
 - ¹⁴ Carl Czerny, *Vollständige theoretisch-practische Pianoforte-Schule*, op. 500, 3 vols (Vienna, 1839). Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900* 386.
 - ¹⁵ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 384.
 - ¹⁶ Caecilia J. Feski, *Eine Zeitschrift für die musikalische Welt*, vol. 15 (1833), 270. Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 384.
 - ¹⁷ Musgrave and Sherman, *Performing Brahms*, 143.
 - ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
 - ¹⁹ Johannes Brahms, *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Op. 45. Leipzig und Winterthur: Rieter-Biedermann, 1868. Duplicate from the library of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna.
 - ²⁰ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 5*, with Arthur Nikisch (conductor) and the Berlin Philharmonic, recorded November 13, 1920. In *Arthur Nikisch*, Symposium Records 1087, 2 compact discs, released in 1991. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0iFnC_WpVU&feature=youtu.be
 - ²¹ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 283.
 - ²² *Ibid.*
 - ²³ Manuel Garcia, *Garcia's Treatise on the Art of Singing* (London: Leonard, 1924), 49.
 - ²⁴ Musgrave and Sherman, *Performing Brahms*, 151.
 - ²⁵ Sir Henry Wood, *The Gentle Art of Singing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927). Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 522.
 - ²⁶ J. Winram, *Violin Playing and Violin Adjustment* (Edinburgh and London, 1908). Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 533.
 - ²⁷ *Hints to Violin Playing*, c. 1880, quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 534.
 - ²⁸ Brown states that "orchestral string and wind sections would have naturally played without vibrato unless it was so marked...[and] the view that vibrato was detrimental in ensemble playing seems to have been generally acknowledged." *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 528.
 - ²⁹ Louis Spohr, *Louis Spohr's Celebrated Violin School*, trans. John Bishop (London: Cocks, 1843), 233.
 - ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 234
 - ³¹ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 535.
 - ³² Franz Schubert's *Heidenröslein*, Minnie Nast, soprano. EMI Centenary Edition 1897-1997: 100 Years of Great Music (11 CD box set). ASIN: B000002S8V. London, EMI Classics, 1997. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ws5gRdnOzjo&feature=youtu.be>
 - ³³ With the noted exception of ensembles dedicated to historical performance practice.
 - ³⁴ Brown notes that Manuel Garcia, in his *Traité complet de l'art du chant* (1840), used the terms "port de voix and con portamento...to designate the technique of sliding audibly from one note to another, reserving the term legato for the normal smooth connection between notes." *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 559.
 - ³⁵ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 558.
 - ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 559.
 - ³⁷ Johann Freidrich Rochlitz et al., eds., *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel: 1798/9-1848), quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 563.
 - ³⁸ Joseph Joachim and Andreas Moser, *Violinschule*, 3 vols., (Berlin: 1905), quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 580.
 - ³⁹ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 580. Brown also states that "the employment of portamento in string playing was largely analogous with that in singing."
 - ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 583–4.
 - ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 581.
 - ⁴² *Ibid.*, 586.
 - ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 587.
 - ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 564.
 - ⁴⁵ *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 16 (1814), 175–6. Quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 565.
 - ⁴⁶ *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (1811), quoted in Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900*, 563.
 - ⁴⁷ Richard Wagner, *Lohengrin, Prelude to Act I*, with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, conducted by Willem Mengelberg, recorded June 10, 1927. In Mengelberg: *Maestro Appassionato*, Maestro History 205253, 10 compact discs, released in 2001. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTc9SBHZsYA&feature=youtu.be>
 - ⁴⁸ Siegfried Ochs, *Der deutsche Gesangverein* (Berlin: Max Hesse Verlag, 1926). Quoted in Musgrave, *Performing Brahms*, 159.
 - ⁴⁹ Johannes Brahms, *Ein deutsches Requiem*, with the Orchester und Chor der Luzerner Festwochen, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano, Hans Hotter, baritone, conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler, recorded August 20, 1947. In *Johannes Brahms, Ein deutsches Requiem: Two Live Performances*, Music and Arts CD 1085, 2 compact discs, released in 2001. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQymrCUKREU>
 - ⁵⁰ F. Melius Christiansen, *Beautiful Savior*. Recorded ca. 1941. Choral Masterworks Series, vol. 1. St. Olaf College, E-2178-9. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xxNW67UReQ&feature=youtu.be>