

***Music in America 1860–1918: Essays, Reviews, and Remarks on Critical Issues.* Selected, prepared, and introduced by Bill F. Faucett. Monographs and Bibliographies in American Music 19, edited by Michael J. Budds. Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2008. xiv + 259 pp. \$46.00. ISBN 978-1576471418 (Paper)**

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In *Music in America, 1860–1918*, compiler and editor Bill Faucett presents a rich collection of first-hand historical reviews, accounts, and articles on both well-known topics, including the search for an American musical identity, and neglected aspects of American music, such as copyright issues during this era. The selections included in the volume provide an opportunity for readers to experience a representative sampling of the defining musical topics, outlooks, and personalities of the era. The task of chronicling the musical paths of this definitive period in United States history is not unproblematic, because American culture from 1860 to 1918 witnessed a contentious search for national consciousness that sometimes resulted in thorny discussions of what American music was or should be. Yet each chapter and the topics and themes touched upon present a recognizable American musical tapestry, woven together with its diverse and sometimes contradictory strands. While the volume offers no ground-breaking interpretations of the material (and Faucett does not claim such an interpretive intention), the primary significance of the compilation is the assembly of carefully chosen and valuable textual excerpts that draw attention to the role written representations had in the formation of America's musical identity, rather than to musical works themselves.

As part of Pendragon's series of Monographs and Bibliographies in American Music, the book includes a brief foreword by series editor Michael Budds, who immediately seeks to establish the uniqueness of the volume, stating, "No other comparable collection concerning this particular subject exists" (xi). Following a preface that explains the book's technical aspects, Faucett begins with an

introductory chapter that outlines the scope and content of the compilation, putting forward two main motivations for the book. First, he suggests that the collection of written excerpts can help to clear up the misperception that musicians and those involved or interested in serious music-making during this era were unoriginal, and that the view of them as imitators of their European predecessors and counterparts is a stereotype in long need of correction. Second, Faucett aims to show that this era produced a large amount of serial writing on musical events, people, and compositions, offering an important lens to view musical ideas and life through contemporaneous written criticism. This justification is quite important, as these excerpts document the largely overlooked yet significant role print culture had in the construction of American musical identity.

Even though Faucett has arranged the main chapters chronologically, they are organized just as much by topic, with the selections in each chapter arranged by an ascending timeline. Chapters 2–4 focus on identity, the Civil War, and music education, respectively. The next two chapters introduce passages relating to Gilmore's Peace Jubilees, other significant music festivals, and a collection of excerpts chronicling the reception by critics of performers and conductors, who had just as much to do with shaping American musical culture as did composers. Chapter 7 includes passages relating to copyright and publishing and to the proposed establishment of a national conservatory. Chapters 8 and 9 move to selections on Dvořák and nationalism before turning to excerpts on the American classical canon, including passages on works by John Knowles Paine, Edward MacDowell, John Philip Sousa, George Chadwick, and a few others. In the following chapter Faucett abruptly shifts topics, redirecting our attention with selections focused on the relatively unexplored impact of technology on music during this time. Chapter 11 deals with the reception of "modern" music, including orchestral works, jazz, and ragtime, and Chapter 12 features excerpts written just prior to and during World War I, offering views on asserting American musical independence from the cultural dominance of Europe. The final two chapters reflect the problematic nature of American music itself: each is really a scrapbook of topics and writings that do not align themselves neatly in any of the previous chapters but that nonetheless offer some interesting perspectives and quotations on American musical culture. Taken as a whole, the arrangement of material might seem rather arbitrary, but it reflects the subject matter in mirroring the less than unified picture of American music during this period.

Other aspects of the organization are important to mention. Each chapter and individual excerpt is preceded by brief introductory comments, which are helpful in whetting the reader's appetite for the subsequent selections but do not offer detailed critical commentary or contextualization. Faucett offers

no conclusion or afterword, but these are not really necessary due to the clear intent of the book as an anthology of primary materials. At the end of the book there is a useful timeline of landmarks in American music prepared by Budds, along with a succinct list of cited sources and recommended readings. The list seems rather thin, but this is perfectly logical, as the focus of the book is on source materials rather than secondary resources. The listing of periodicals at the end of the bibliography is a nice summary, but redundant, since all the source readings have full bibliographic entries that identify the periodicals from which each is extrapolated.

Overall, *Music in America, 1860–1918* is packed with useful information on individuals, milestones, and works important to this era. The textual selections Faucett includes and their bundling into broadly conceived chapters illustrate clearly how American musical culture of the time was wrestling with issues such as self-definition, resulting in interesting textual constructions of identity. The nation's notable identity crises and self-conscious quest for a distinctly American music in this period is perhaps best illustrated in Chapter 11, which gathers together passages on the critical reception of "modern" music by American critics, composers, and educators. Major contemporary Europeans Strauss, Debussy, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and even Liszt are given coverage, but Faucett also includes selections dealing with the music of U.S. composers Ornstein, Loeffler, and Ives. Moreover, this chapter incorporates several short selections on jazz and ragtime, highlighting the peculiar musical dynamic at work in American culture at this time. The implication here is that the pursuit of a uniquely American music during this period needed discourses that stressed continuity but also pointed to flexibility and individuality to differentiate "modern" American music from European examples. Faucett does not state explicitly whether he considered such interpretations in his selection process, but the combination certainly inspires this type of inquiry and illuminates America's problematic search for its own identity.

While the compilation effectively presents a diverse set of topics and themes involved with American music, it does omit one topic that would have rounded out the volume nicely. The neglect of selections addressing the importance of American women during this era, whether they were composers, performers, educators, or patrons, is significant. A small sampling of women writers, including excerpts by Constance Woolson, Mabel Daniels, and Florence Currier Pillsbury, are interspersed among the chapters, but the topic of women involved in music is limited to two small passages discussing women composers. Given the prominence of the Suffrage movement during the time frame of the book, a chapter devoted to women or more excerpts written by or focusing on women would have been welcome.

What, then, is the significance of this book? Is the claim that the compilation is “one-of-a-kind” accurate? Based on the contents, it is, as no other volumes in the critical literature on American music assemble excerpts from serial musical publications on this subject and from this time period. And what are the most beneficial pedagogical uses for this volume? Perhaps most importantly, the selections, whether taken individually or in groups, immediately call for examination of both the actual music and the deeper socio-cultural factors at play. Interpretations of cultural history or theoretical frameworks for the music are not offered. Instead, the volume simply identifies common musical topics in serial publications during this era, allowing the instructor wide latitude in shaping points of discussion and selecting readings and corresponding music for use in the classroom. Moreover, the musical landscape presented in the volume certainly does not survey the entire territory of the period, but can be used in conjunction with similar volumes of primary source materials compiled from the era, such as Karl Koenig’s *Jazz in Print (1856–1929)* (2002). Alongside other such anthologies, this collection would certainly help students understand more thoroughly the complex musical motivations of this era.

The six decades of musical activity that this book encompasses are as much characterized by the consumers, participants, and interpreters of musical culture as the producers. The content of *Music in America, 1860–1918*, thus, is more about the socio-cultural milieu out of which music arose, with its focus on individual, national, and institutional values and issues, rather than the canonizing of American composers and compositions. One would hope that for student readers the selections would underscore the sometimes paradoxical nature of American music history, revealing a linear, historical imperative in the study of the subject to be unrealistic and unfaithful to the actual musical culture of the time. Indeed, the collection of texts included by Faucett does not form a neat historical narrative, and this is a strength of the book, which I hope will inspire students to dig deeper and weave their own interpretive tapestries in new and innovative ways out of the overlooked and overlapping materials of America’s musical past.