

## Selecting Dots, Connecting Dots: The Score Anthology as History

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Anyone who teaches the music history survey for undergraduate music majors can approach the course in a variety of ways. Some instructors choose to use a textbook, others not; some incorporate class discussion while others take a more traditional lecture-centered approach; some structure the syllabus around genres, others around composers; some emphasize the social history of music while others place greater weight on style analysis. These are only a few of many possibilities. The one common element in the music history survey, it would seem, is a repertory of musical works selected by the instructor for close study. This repertory may take the form of a published anthology of scores or a custom-made collection, or some combination of the two. In any event, the anthology provides a platform for the survey as a whole, regardless of the instructor's particular approach: any given work can be examined from a variety of perspectives. The first movement of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, for example, offers plenty to chew on whether one wants to talk about music as a social practice (private vs. public patronage, the relationship between music and politics) or music as an object of analysis (the famous C<sup>#</sup> in m. 7, the unusual approach to the recapitulation). It also provides a point of reference by which to discuss Beethoven's development as a composer (the "heroic" period), the history of the symphony as a genre, and the capacity of instrumental music to convey ideas beyond the realm of sound. The anthology, in short, provides a series of focal points for teaching music history in a variety of ways.

Choosing the repertory for such an anthology can be challenging, to say the least. Indeed, the more repertory we know, the more frustrating the process can be. As instructors, we could easily spend a whole semester on Beethoven's symphonies alone but given the constraints of time, we inevitably have to settle for a movement (or maybe two) from the *Eroica*, or the Fifth, or the Ninth, or maybe two of these three but probably not all three, given the

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constraints of time. Repertory choice, after all, is a zero-sum game: the time allotted to any one work comes at the expense of another. And covering the entire history of music in two or three or even four semesters inevitably means leaving out works we would love to teach. We have to make hard choices, covering enough of the standard repertory to make students conversant with representative works by certain canonic composers, even while conveying the sense that the canon is neither immutable nor representative of the full breadth of music history. There is no standard finished picture from which to work. This is why the ready-made anthologies on the market differ widely and why those who use them are unlikely to follow them to the letter. We each have our non-negotiable favorites, and these may or may not be in a published collection. In effect, anyone who teaches a music history survey is the editor of a score anthology.

But this is scarcely news to anyone who has taught this course. The less obvious but no less real challenge is to create a score anthology that amounts to more than simply the sum of its parts. The anthology we construct must somehow provide a framework for a narrative of music history, a narrative that transcends the merely episodic. A good anthology will provide the evidence to illustrate how we got from Mozart to Beethoven and from Beethoven to Wagner and from Wagner to Debussy and so on. If students can grasp what each of the anthology's works represents (socially, stylistically, aesthetically), that is certainly a step in the right direction. If beyond this students understand how these works relate to one another—how they are connected—they will be moving toward a better awareness of music history as a whole. In this sense, a good anthology can be compared to a sort of connect-the-dots schema: when we engage with it, we transform what at first looks like a series of random points into a coherent image. And even if the resulting image is fairly simple—even crude—it is an image nevertheless. For most undergraduates at the beginning of a music history survey, the score anthology looks very much like a series of random points, one work after another in seemingly endless succession. By the end of the survey, with any luck, students will have connected at least some of these works in ways that suggest some kind of trajectory, some overarching structure across the history of music. With this insight, they will find it much easier after the course is over to fill in all those missing pieces we could not cover in the classroom for reasons of time. A great deal, then, depends on selecting works that lend themselves to being connected in tangible ways.

Teaching from works that stand in close relation to one another has a long tradition. Probably every historical anthology of music that includes coverage of the Middle Ages has traced a series of works that together illustrate a sequence in which a specific plainchant (1) becomes the basis of a two-part organum (2), which in turn provides the framework for a clausula (3), which,

when retexted and separated from the organum, becomes a motet (4). By examining one manifestation of this multi-stage process, starting from one specific chant, students can readily trace the outlines of the early history of polyphony. What would otherwise be abstract is made concrete through the use of carefully chosen repertory. In similar fashion, historical anthologies dealing with music of the Renaissance inevitably pair a sixteenth-century motet with an imitation or “parody” Mass built around that same work. All of this makes good pedagogical sense.

But what about later repertories? Anthologies have not, on the whole, taken advantage of the kinds of pairings that are standard in their treatment of medieval and Renaissance music, in part because such relationships are not so widespread or so closely connected with the development of specific genres or styles. There is nevertheless potential for creating a comparable sense of historical continuity in later periods. A series of works chosen for their synergy can demonstrate just how often and carefully composers studied the output of their predecessors and created new compositions both within and against a historical tradition. By examining such connections, students will begin to realize that the composers they are learning about were themselves students of music history. Here are a few examples of how we might create such connections within the later (post-1600) portions of an anthology.

### C-Major Preludes

The Prelude in C Major from Book 1 of Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* (**Example 1**) is a standard item in historical anthologies of music. It may already be familiar to at least some students from their piano lessons or from a theory course in which they may have been asked to analyze the harmonic outline of the piece. It illustrates the *style brisé* and Bach’s role as a teacher of both performance and composition, and it provides a starting point—a benchmark, as it were—for addressing the nettlesome question of keyboard temperament in the Baroque. It also raises questions about how a composer opens a cycle of works that will take us through all twenty-four keys, major and minor.

If one is moving through a semester more or less chronologically, by the time one gets to Chopin and Liszt, Bach is a distant memory. But that memory can be revived—that dot can be connected—by focusing attention on the opening work of two important collections by these later composers. The most obvious parallel is with the first of Chopin’s Preludes, op. 24, also in C Major (**Example 2**). The set as a whole and this prelude in particular, as has often been pointed out, are clearly indebted to Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier*, and students can be asked to discuss (orally, in writing, or both) the stylistic relationship of these two preludes, Chopin’s knowledge of Bach’s music, knowledge of Bach’s music in general in the 1830s, the contrasting idioms of

the piano of the 1830s over against the harpsichord and clavichord of the 1720s, and any number of other issues. The discussion could be extended still further by taking into account the opening number of Liszt's *Transcendental Etudes* (**Example 3**), another cycle that opens in C Major and is also indebted to Bach. No matter which of the three different versions one chooses (S. 136 from 1826; S. 137 from 1838; or S. 139 from 1851)—and the three in themselves, time permitting, provide revealing differences in their own right—Liszt's bravura etude retains many of the introductory gestures evident in the comparable works of Bach and Chopin. From here, instructors might even give students the assignment of finding other C-Major works that open large cycles by other composers.

**Example 1:** Bach, *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1, Prelude in C Major, opening.

The musical score for the opening of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1, Prelude in C Major, is presented in five systems. Each system consists of a right-hand staff (treble clef) and a left-hand staff (bass clef). The piece is in C major and 4/4 time. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *legato* instruction. The second system features a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. The third system starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fourth system begins with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic and includes a *cresc.* marking. The fifth system concludes with a *dimin.* (diminuendo) marking. The right hand plays a complex sixteenth-note pattern, while the left hand provides a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and rests.

Example 2: Chopin, *Preludes*, Op. 24, no. 1.

The image displays the musical score for Chopin's *Preludes*, Op. 24, no. 1. The score is written for piano and consists of five systems of two staves each. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The piece begins with the tempo marking "Agitato." and the dynamic marking "mf". The first system includes a slurred eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand. The second system features a forte dynamic marking "sfz" above the first measure. The third system is marked "stretto", indicating a change in tempo. The fourth system has a piano dynamic marking "p" above the first measure. The fifth system concludes with a "rit." (ritardando) marking and a "pp" (pianissimo) dynamic marking. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 3: Liszt, *Transcendental Etudes*, no. 1 (S. 139, 1851).

**1.** Presto. *Energico.* 8<sup>.....</sup>

*f* *rinf.* \*

*ff* *rinf.* *p* poco a poco cre-

*scen* - - - - - *do*

Piano à 7 8<sup>ves.</sup> *sempre più forte.*

*ed accelerando* - - - - - *sempre più forte.*

The score consists of five systems of music. The first system is for piano, with a treble and bass clef. It features a complex melodic line in the treble and a supporting bass line. Dynamics include *f* and *rinf.*. A fermata is placed over a measure, and an asterisk is below it. The second system continues the piano part, with dynamics *ff*, *rinf.*, and *p*. It includes the instruction *poco a poco cre-*. The third system shows the vocal part with lyrics *scen* and *do*. The fourth system is for piano, labeled *Piano à 7 8<sup>ves.</sup>*, with the instruction *sempre più forte.*. The fifth system continues the piano part, with *ed accelerando* and *sempre più forte.*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. A fermata is present in the first system, and an asterisk is below it.

Example 3: Liszt (continued).

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a piano (p) and vocal (v) staff. The piano part is characterized by intricate textures, including octaves (8), triplets (tr), and various articulations such as accents (acc) and slurs. The vocal part includes the lyrics "scen - do".

Key performance markings and dynamics include:

- rit.* (ritardando)
- non troppo presto* (not too fast)
- rinf.* (rinfacciato)
- legatissimo* (very legato)
- cresc.* (crescendo)
- poco rallentando* (slightly slowing down)

The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

### C-Major Openings Problematicized

The historical self-consciousness of Mozart toward Haydn and of Beethoven toward both Haydn and Mozart has been well documented.<sup>1</sup> Given the immense quantity of music from these three composers, it makes sense to choose works that can be specifically related to each other in some way. One option would be to focus on openings that problematize the “pure” key of C Major, starting with the first movement of Haydn’s String Quartet in C Major, Op. 33, no. 3 (“The Bird,” composed 1781, published 1782) (**Example 4**). In the very first measure, Haydn holds his cards close to the vest: the texture is thin, the harmony is ambiguous, and the rhythm is so repetitive as to resist easy identification of either meter or tempo. In the second measure, the dyad of C-E is filled out by the first violin to become C-E-G, and the meter and tempo become clear enough, but the whole process comes to a sudden stop with an unexpected cadence in the middle of measure 6. The harmonic clarity, moreover, is immediately undermined when the music starts up again with a restatement of the same idea on the equally ambiguous dyad D-F, filled out this time by an A in first violin. The process repeats itself once more on an even more unusual pitch-level, on B<sup>b</sup>-D, filled out by G (m. 13–14), before the music finally settles on the tonic for the first time in root position in m. 18, all in an exposition whose total length is only 59 measures.

Mozart uses this opening as a model for an even more radical undermining of a C-Major opening in the last of the six string quartets he published as his Opus 10 in 1785 and dedicated to Haydn, K. 465 (“Dissonance”) (**Example 5**). In the celebrated slow introduction to the first movement, Mozart introduces a single note, C, as a pulsating bass in the cello: once again, the harmony, rhythm, and tempo are altogether unclear. The viola then enters on A<sup>b</sup>, the second violin on E<sup>b</sup>, and the first violin on A<sup>♯</sup>, the last of these entries only a moment after the viola has moved from A<sup>b</sup> down to G. As in Haydn’s Op. 33, no. 3, the whole process comes to a stop before being repeated, again building up from the bass note of B<sup>b</sup> (m. 5), then yet again on A<sup>b</sup> (m. 9). The first unambiguous statement of the tonic does not arrive until the onset of the Allegro in m. 23. Mozart’s harmonic daring here is a direct response, in the same genre and in the same key, to Haydn’s opening gambit. The resemblances are well disguised but difficult to overlook. These parallels give greater urgency to the question of Mozart’s relationship—both personal and

1. See, for example, Jeremy Yudkin, “Beethoven’s ‘Mozart’ Quartet,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 45, no. 1 (1992): 30–74; Mark Evan Bonds, “The Sincerest Form of Flattery? Mozart’s ‘Haydn’ Quartets and the Question of Influence,” *Studi musicali* 22, no. 2 (1993): 365–409; and Elaine Sisman, “‘The Spirit of Mozart from Haydn’s Hands’: Beethoven’s Musical Inheritance,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*, ed. Glenn Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 45–63.



musical—to the older composer, who at the time was the undisputed master of the string quartet genre. What was Mozart trying to do here? Pay homage to Haydn? Outdo him? Some of both? Questions like these have a tendency to engage students more directly with issues of analysis.

**Example 4:** Haydn, String Quartet in C Major, Op. 33, no. 3, first movement, opening.

*Allegro moderato*

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*(p)* *(cresc.)* *(f)*

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*(p)* *(cresc.)* *(f)*

*p* *f*

*(p)* *(f)*

6

11

18

**Example 5:** Mozart, String Quartet in C Major, K. 465, first movement, opening.

The musical score for the opening of Mozart's String Quartet in C Major, K. 465, first movement, is presented in four systems. The tempo is marked *Adagio*. The score is for four instruments: Violino I, Violino II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is C major, and the time signature is 3/4. The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score is divided into four systems, with measures 6, 12, and 17 marked at the beginning of their respective systems. The dynamics fluctuate throughout, including *sf* (sforzando) and *fp* (fortissimo piano) markings.

What makes this connection even more intriguing is that Beethoven would make his own contribution to this compositional conversation in the first movement of his Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53 (“Waldstein”) (**Example 6**). Once again, an opening in C Major is repeated on an unusual scale degree ( $\flat$ VII, m. 5), the same scale degree that had undermined the C-Major tonality so early on in the string quartets of Haydn and Mozart. One might even make the case that the famous single-note C in the bass on the downbeat

**Example 6:** Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53, first movement, opening.

*Allegro con brio.*

The musical score is presented in six systems, each consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The tempo is marked *Allegro con brio.* The piece begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The bass line is characterized by a steady, rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The right hand features a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics, including *cresc.* (crescendo), *p* (piano), and *f* (forte). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

of m. 1 represents a nod in the direction of both Haydn and Mozart, but especially Mozart, whose “Dissonance” Quartet begins with a repetition of precisely the same pitch, the C two octaves below middle C. Admittedly, the effect is telescoped to a drastic degree in Beethoven’s sonata—a single note at a fast tempo—but this is the kind of question that can get students thinking about compositional motives in a very tangible way. It will also encourage them to think of music history as a discipline full of open questions rather

than a closed system of facts to be learned. Asked to compare and contrast these three movements, students might also begin to sense that Mozart and Beethoven were themselves students of music history. Instructors could expand the field still further to include the first movements of Mozart's String Quintet in C Major, K. 515, and of Schubert's String Quintet in C Major, D. 956 works whose openings similarly undermine the key of C Major.

### The "Tristan Chord"

Even the most summary history of music includes at least some discussion of the "Tristan Chord" from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Like the C-Major Prelude from Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, this is another one of those works students may have already confronted in a theory class. But what was the later fate of this notorious harmony? Here is an opportunity to show once again the ways in which later composers grappled with the history of music, for the "Tristan Chord" turns up in at least two unexpected and seemingly incongruous places: "Golliwog's Cakewalk" from Debussy's *Children's Corner Suite* (1908) and the finale of Berg's *Lyric Suite* (1926). Why would Debussy quote the distinctive melody and a transformation of the harmony of the "Tristan chord" in a piano piece labeled a "cakewalk" (a forerunner of ragtime) in a cycle related to childhood and specifically to the composer's young daughter? And is the passage in question (starting at m. 61) really a reference to *Tristan* at all? Not everyone thinks so.<sup>2</sup> Once again, however, disagreement can work to the instructor's advantage, to help demonstrate that music history is often a matter of dispute and not simply an aggregate of accepted facts, of unquestioned answers.

Berg's work for string quartet, as we now know, is deeply autobiographical. The composer's program for it, kept secret for decades, chronicles his love affair with Hanna Fuchs-Robettin.<sup>3</sup> It uses musical ciphers (Alban Berg = A-B = A-B<sup>b</sup> ["B" in German]; Hanna Fuchs = H-F = B<sup>b</sup> ["H" in German]-F), among other means, to outline the story of their illicit relationship in sound. Students will welcome the human side of what for many will be an otherwise highly demanding work. In quoting the "Tristan Chord" within a twelve-tone movement (at m. 26–27), Berg wittily demonstrates from a purely musical

2. See, for example, Mark DeVoto, "The Strategic Half-diminished Seventh Chord and the Emblematic Tristan Chord: A Survey from Beethoven to Berg," *International Journal of Musicology* 4 (1995): 146–47.

3. See George Perle, "The Secret Program of the Lyric Suite," in *The Right Notes: Twenty-three Selected Essays by George Perle on Twentieth-Century Music* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995), 75–122. Perle first presented his discovery of the work's program in *The International Alban Berg Society Newsletter* no. 5 (June 1977), an issue that also includes Douglass M. Green's "Berg's De Profundis: The Finale of the *Lyric Suite*," in which Green argues that this movement is a wordless setting of Baudelaire's poem of that name.

standpoint the flexibility of this new system of composition. He also comments, in effect, on the mutability of conventions: what had been perceived as extreme dissonance in a work written in 1859 now comes across as a moment of almost saccharine tonality in a twelve-tone movement written in 1926. In the classroom, all of this will help make twelve-tone composition less daunting, less impersonal, more expressive.

### Genres Within Genres

Composers sometimes use one genre within another for expressive purposes, creating connections that have to do more with generic functions than with parallels between specific pieces. Chopin's Nocturne in E<sup>b</sup>, op. 9, no. 2, for example, can provide a useful point of reference for Alfredo's off-stage singing in Act I of Verdi's *La Traviata*. Both feature long, arching melodies over the simulated strumming of a guitar, and the two are functionally the same: these are serenades, night-pieces intended to seduce. We often speak of the "singing" quality of Chopin's melodies, and here is a pairing that helps make that characterization all the more compelling.

The suite is another genre that figures more than once in the realm of opera. The opening ballroom scene of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, for example, moves through a series of dances, each of which carries with it a particular cultural resonance. When the Count and Countess Ceprano enter, for instance, it is to the music of a stately minuet, which by Verdi's time had come to epitomize the music of an earlier age and by extension the morals of a bygone time. This moment stands in stark contrast to the frenzied *galop* that had opened the scene and the lively *ballata* that is the Duke's opening aria ("Questa o quella"). A similar structural principle underlies Act I, scene 1, of Berg's *Wozzeck*, in which the hapless Wozzeck shaves the captain. Here, the mood once again shifts with each successive dance type (prelude, pavane, gigue, gavotte, etc.).

### Different Settings of the Same Text

Settings of the same text by different composers open up many opportunities to compare and contrast styles. The settings of Giovanni Battista Guarini's "T'amo mia vita" by Luzzaschi (ca. 1590, published 1601) and by Monteverdi (published 1605), is but one of many madrigal texts that offer excellent examples of stylistic contrast. The Lied repertory provides other examples of a single text set in very different ways by multiple composers. Goethe's "Kennst du das Land" from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* was a particular favorite from the late eighteenth century onward. This poem was set by composers as diverse as Carl Friedrich Zelter (1795), Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1799), Beethoven (1809), Schubert (1815), Fanny Mendelssohn (1822), Robert

Schumann (1849), Wolf (1888), and Berg (1907), among others. When presented with a selection of settings like this, students can better understand the challenges facing composers and the ways in which composers confronted those challenges.

### Specific Compositional Techniques

The use of the same compositional technique in different settings can also provide a good focus of comparison in establishing a broader narrative of music history. Ostinato, for example, figures in a number of standard excerpts from published score anthologies. Students may profitably compare and contrast such works as Monteverdi's concertato madrigal *Zefiro torna*, for two tenors and basso continuo, with either the Act I or Act III laments from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, or with the opening chorus of Bach's Cantata *Jesu, der du meine Seele*, BWV 78, or with selected passages in Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*. Assignments like this can help bring material studied earlier in the semester (or even in a previous semester) back into focus and provide a larger context for the specific work at hand.

### Analogous Dramatic Situations

The operatic repertory is full of stock scenes: revenge arias, love duets, prayers, triumphal marches, and so on. Any of these can provide a useful basis for comparison. One type of number that lends itself to discussion is the opening aria which introduces both the character and the dramatic situation. Among the many possible examples would be Uberto's "Aspettare e non venire" from Pergolesi's *La Serva padrona*; Leporello's "Notte e giorno faticar" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*; and Figaro's "Largo al factotum" from Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*—all sung by baritones, as it happens.

### Autobiographical Ciphers

Berg's incorporation of his own name and the name of his secret lover into the *Lyrical Suite* is but one of many instances in which composers have written themselves into their works. Comparable connections are present in Schumann's *Carnaval*, with its well-known permutations on the composer's name (S-C-H-A = E<sup>b</sup>-C-B<sup>b</sup>-A) and Asch, the birthplace of his erstwhile fiancée, Ernestine von Fricken (A<sup>b</sup>-C-B<sup>b</sup>) and in Shostakovich's String Quartet no. 8, each of whose movements incorporates some version of the composer's name (D-S-C-H = D-E<sup>b</sup>-C-B<sup>a</sup>). The final contrapunctus of Bach's *Art of Fugue* would also fit into this tradition and provide an object of discussion as time permits.

### Arrangements and Reworkings

The possibilities here are many. Composers have been arranging and reworking compositions by their predecessors since the Middle Ages, and the tradition has extended down to the present day. One particularly useful instance of this may be found in Johann Christian Bach's Keyboard Sonata in D Major, Op. 5, no. 2 (1766), whose first movement illustrates the basic principles of what would eventually come to be known as sonata form. Mozart reworked this movement into the opening movement of his Keyboard Concerto in D Major, K. 107, no. 1 (1772), orchestrating it and adding brief tutti flourishes to meld sonata form with the ritornello structure that had long been basic to the genre of the concerto. Once again, students can witness a composer studying a work by an admired predecessor and building on it to create a new work, and in this instance, a new work in a new genre.

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Today's students often find music history a remote and at times overly abstract subject. By focusing on specific works of music, we can provide tangible points of reference to which we can relate our teaching, no matter which aspect of music history we choose to emphasize. And by choosing works that stand in some kind of relationship to one another, we can humanize the subject as well. Even before they arrive in class, students have heard over and over again about the super-human musical abilities of the Great Composers. When they study a work like Mozart's "Dissonance" Quartet, K. 465, they will certainly see evidence of that. But when they study this same work in relation to one of Haydn's string quartet in the same key (Op. 33, no. 3), they will also begin to realize that even the Great Composers had to struggle to set themselves apart from their predecessors (typically another Great Composer), and in this particular case to negotiate the fine line between friendship and rivalry. Students can relate to this last point especially well, for all of them will have experienced this kind of relationship in one form or another, even if not in the realm of musical composition.

To the extent that we can create at least some degree of synergy among a series of highly disparate works, we can help students realize that history is not nearly as random as it may at first seem. By showing them the ways in which at least some of these musical works speak to each other, we can help these works speak to our students as well. And if we have done our jobs well, students will be alert to connecting the various dots they will (we hope) encounter after the course is over.