

Wayne Bailey. *In Performance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. 358 pages. \$79.95. ISBN 978-0-19-938214-9 Ebook available through Redshelf.com. \$39.95. eISBN-13: 9780190238230

TONI L. CASAMASSINA

Wayne Bailey's *In Performance* (2016) aims to expose music appreciation students to art music by examining the spaces in which it is created and heard. As a professor of conducting and instrumental music, Bailey emphasizes that the historical narrative used in traditional music appreciation textbooks often distances students from the listening experience. To replace this method "mired in historical facts" (xvii) he suggests an alternative approach that gives primacy to performance venues and music makers. Although the notion is both intriguing and promising, especially in light of recent scholarly discussions of performance as a master narrative in music history, Bailey's work reads as a reorganization of style history and analysis, rather than a reconceptualization of it.¹

Students and teachers may purchase *In Performance* in print or digital format; in either case, online materials that accompany the text are available through Oxford University Press's Dashboard website, including quizzes, grade-book, mini-lectures by the author, links to other musical examples, and interactive listening charts. If instructors wish to use all 20 chapters of the text, they must require their students to purchase access to Dashboard, as the final two chapters (an extra 26 pages) are available only through that module. The units and chapters that make up the remainder of the text are: 1: The Fundamentals of Music (1–3); 2: Music of the Church (4–5); 3: Music of the Concert Hall (6–11); 4: Music of the Recital Hall and Salon (12–14); and 5: Music of the Stage and Screen (15–18). The preface addresses the book's structure, explaining how the student should navigate the multitude of features that surround the primary discussion. The introduction that follows offers a brief explanation of what art

1. Daniel Barolsky, Sara Gross Ceballos, Rebecca Plack, and Steven M. Whiting, "Performance as a Master Narrative in Music History," this *Journal* 3, no. 1 (fall 2012): 77–102.

music is and how is it made, as well as an outline of general concert etiquette. Bailey closes with a reference to Aaron Copland's *What to Listen for in Music* (1939), citing the three planes of listening: [sheerly] musical, sensuous, and expressive. He places himself alongside Copland by updating this list with a fourth plane—"musically aware" listening—which he describes as the combination of the other three planes, and which leads to full understanding of a piece of music.

Poised to compete with Pearson's third edition of Mark Evan Bonds's *Listen to This* (2015), *In Performance* has all the attractive photos and charts students and teachers have come to expect from a music appreciation text. In the same manner as Bonds's text, Bailey capitalizes on the availability of digital media, encouraging students to search for more music via streaming websites including YouTube. A newer feature included through Oxford's Dashboard is playlist sharing, in which students can build their own digital music library and share it with their classmates. Oxford's website, however, is not as sophisticated in appearance as Pearson's MyLab. There are also only 15 interactive listening charts out of 75 musical selections in the text, and they are not uniformly presented; some are visually rudimentary in comparison to the physical text.

The main triumph of *In Performance* is its practicality. In contrast to its contemporaries, the text offers detailed guidance for attending performances. Bailey addresses the logistics (e.g., purchasing tickets, how halls are structured, how long performances last) and etiquette (e.g., when it is appropriate to clap, what to do during intermission) of typical art music performances that other authors often take for granted. Explaining these elements might seem patronizing, but for those students encountering classical music for the first time it might be crucial. Furthermore, each unit begins with a segment titled "Where It's Playing," focusing on the main venues in which music is created and how performances are held differently in each space. The author implicitly communicates the necessity for music educators to encourage attendance at live performances, and that assisting our students to feel comfortable and aware of that environment is fundamental to that goal. In these sections Bailey also poses questions that the listener might ask in any given performance, for example, what the relationship of the soloist is to the conductor, or what the order of the program suggests. These questions deserve greater attention in the body of the text, as the skills necessary to answering them often require more elucidation than the chapters provide.

Bailey's experience with instrumental pedagogy shines throughout various aspects of the book. It emerges early in the text throughout his concise descriptions of the Hornbostel–Sachs classification system and the instruments of the orchestra. Again, this practicality will be appreciated by students who have little experience with identifying instruments, both aurally and visually. He explains

not only how the sound is made but what the instruments look like and how they are handled. Moreover, throughout the text he makes a point to clarify musical vocabulary in relation to these instruments (e.g., “in tune”).

Although they appear too rarely, the performer spotlights are also a highlight of the text. Bailey chooses as his focus musicians mainly from the twentieth century and the present day, including Lang Lang, Beverly Sills, Robert Shaw, and Ethel Merman. There are no comparable spotlights on musicians of earlier eras, however, and the author misses the opportunity to explore the influence and contributions of individual performers throughout history on the development of musical taste, style, and technique (e.g., Barbara Strozzi, Niccolò Paganini, Clara Schumann). Still, focusing on modern musicians assists Bailey in his aim of making art music more accessible to his students. His most inspired repertory choices for the listening guides are also from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, including pieces by Paul Dukas, Libby Larsen, and Jennifer Higdon.

Despite the author’s protestations that *In Performance* is not intended to teach music history, that is precisely what it does. Although the units are organized by venue, they have an interior hierarchy that includes chapters based on genre, which in turn are treated chronologically. For instance, Unit 3: Music of the Concert Hall, Chapter 6: “Music for Soloists with Orchestra—The Concerto” describes the progression of the genre from the Baroque through Romantic eras, focusing on major composers and canonical works. Information relating to the performance location is relegated to prefatory introductions at the beginnings of units and sometimes chapters, and occasional asides about performance practice or performers in highlighted boxes outside the main text. For this book to deliver on its promise of teaching music through performance, these sections would have needed to be more frequent, more expansive, and made central to the narrative.

The organization of the text by modern performance venue is also its main drawback. Structuring the content in this manner works against the understanding of music in its originally intended contexts, as music today is often heard in a different type of space than that for which it was composed. Bailey partially acknowledges this issue in Chapter 13: “Solo Keyboard Music,” part of Unit 4: Music of the Recital Hall and Salon. Before beginning his discussion, he spends a quarter of a page explaining how and why much of the music in the chapter wasn’t written for the recital hall. The text might then have dealt frankly with the music in its modern performance contexts, but the remainder of the chapter continuously has to reference the original spaces. Throughout his discussion of organ music, for example, Bailey must also describe elements of the church and its religious services. In this instance, the student must negotiate learning about sacred styles that are being presented in a category of performances that

one hears in a secular environment. Although Bailey contends that he chose this method because modern listeners do not experience music in a “historical fashion” (xvii), part of teaching appreciation is giving students the knowledge to listen to music with historically informed ears.

Because each chapter of *In Performance* progresses chronologically, creating a mini-history of each genre, discontinuities arise in the presentation of the content that seem out of order. For example, the chapter on the symphony begins with a description of its development from the dance suite and orchestral suite, including a musical example from Bach’s *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D* (BWV 1068). As a result, the student is reading about Baroque genres designed for the smaller spaces of the court or coffeehouses, within a chapter about the repertoire of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century symphony, as heard in the present-day concert hall. This vacillating from the present to the past (and back again) is contrived and confusing.

The organizational schema also doesn’t account for music that was not intended for a typical performance space. For instance, the chapter on wind bands mentions that a large body of the repertoire was composed for the battlefield and other outdoor settings, rather than for the concert hall, where it is categorized in the book. Perhaps most obvious, however, are the two bonus chapters, *Jazz and Popular Music since 1950*, that are relegated to the Dashboard website because they do not fit into any of the book’s four units. Furthermore, giving primacy to performance venue ignores the fact that most of the art music experienced by students is not heard in person at all, but via recordings. Bailey shows considerable socio-economic naïveté in his assumption that students will have ample access to live performances (78), which today rarely provide a student’s first exposure to classical music. Considering that the book encourages listening to streaming audio and viewing performances on websites, there is sharp disconnect with how it aims to teach listening and observational skills when the venue is virtual.

A second significant weakness of *In Performance* is its oversimplification of material. Perhaps in an effort to make the text user-friendly, Bailey often generalizes terms and concepts to the point of obscurity. For example, he defines “bel canto” as “a form of opera from the Romantic era featuring beautiful arias” (349). Beautiful arias are part of most styles of opera, and the definition lacks any mention of virtuosity or singing technique. While a lengthy description of the term is obviously not expected in an appreciation textbook, an accurate one should be. There are also instances of conflation, in which the author equates terms that carry different shades of meaning; for instance, he indicates that melodies may also be referred to as tunes, themes, or motifs. Each of those terms, however, has its own discrete connotations, and they are not interchangeable. This lack of nuance also manifests as an uncomfortable essentialization of time

periods: e.g., timbre in music of “earlier eras” was “either not recognized by composers or it was simply not an important way to express their ideas” (10); the only significant locations for musical composition in the Baroque period were Italy and Germany (36); the Classical era was one in which secular music was deemed more important than sacred music (37); and the Romantic generation “used their music to be self-expressive” (39).

The text also seems to avoid confronting challenging socio-political and cultural aspects significant to the musical genres discussed. In his explanation of minstrelsy, Bailey casually references that white performers wore blackface but makes no connection to slavery and racism in American history, simply stating that the genre “consisted of jokes, songs, dancing, variety acts, and parodies of operettas of the time” (297). In the margin, his definition states that blackface was the practice of whites “performing in imitation” of African-American slaves. Where there is little space for exposition, semantics matter; “imitation” suggests mimicry rather than mockery, failing to communicate the racist exploitation that the genre represents in American musical history. If music of the past is to hold meaning for students in the present, as the author emphasizes in his preface, these major issues cannot be suppressed.

In Performance also struggles with outmoded ideas and approaches to certain topics. Some are simple, such as the suggestion that Beethoven composed his Symphony No. 5 to imitate the sound of fate knocking at the door, an anecdote by an unreliable source that was written years after the work’s composition. Others are more significant, including the concept of correctly performing a composer’s intent, which musicologists have long described as the myth of authenticity. The book’s discussion of women in music prior to the twentieth century is similarly outdated. Although the author successfully offers a succinct explanation regarding the social history surrounding women in music prior to 1900, he propagates the notion that their contributions are not important by failing to focus on any of their works. Bailey, clearly conscious of this omission, balances the void in his treatment of modern music by offering substantial examples of female composers, performers, and musical selections.

Amid the larger complications that make *In Performance* difficult to use are smaller, questionable aspects of the editing and writing style: redundancies, colloquialisms, formatting inconsistencies, and truncated paragraphs that read as bullet points rather than a complete set of ideas. In each chapter the pertinent vocabulary is highlighted in bold within the body of the text, and on the same page these terms are also defined and highlighted in green in the margins. Sometimes the marginal definitions are more explanatory than those in the text, but they are usually repetitious. This distracts from the main text, and students might opt to forgo reading the prose altogether, when they can simply scan the margins for important keywords. The author’s use of colloquial expressions

(e.g., Mozart “bats the motif around” in Symphony no. 40 in G minor [112]; the fundamentals unit “evens the playing field” for students [xviii]) hampers the clarity of the text, especially for international students whose first language is not English. The main formatting inconsistency regards italics. When used for bolded vocabulary, it seems random and unexplained. This is especially obvious in vocabulary groupings; for example, “trovatore” is placed in italics, while “trouvère,” “Minnesänger,” and “troubadour” are not (33); “episode” is italicized, while “fugue,” “subject,” “answer,” and “counterpoint,” are not (37). Also, italics are used unnecessarily in the text to create emphasis that the writing should do itself. Finally, there is an odd brevity to much of the writing; it isn’t pithy—it’s just short. Many paragraphs are only one or two sentences, some of which belong to an earlier or later one (see p. 230, where a single sentence on the piano sonata should be the final one of the previous paragraph). Sometimes sentences should be combined (see p. 231, in which five separate one-sentence paragraphs on stylized dances would function better together), or statements simply lack information and require further explanation (e.g., the second movement of a concerto is defined but not explored in a brief one-sentence paragraph on p. 85).

While the premise of *In Performance* has great potential, the book struggles to reach it. Bailey’s claim to eschew the historical method seems unfounded after reading through his chronologically arranged chapters, and his insistence that music being understood through performance is trivialized by its marginalized discussion outside the main prose. The listening guides, which contain some of the best scholarship in the text, are challenging because the chapters don’t always effectively prepare students with the information they need to use them. The forced structure makes the content difficult to follow. Indeed, the book would read more easily if it were organized by genre, with an introductory chapter wholly devoted to exploring different performance venues, including the logistics and etiquette of concert attendance. The lack of nuance and presence of outmoded ideas reflects the author’s personal experience with the material rather than a deep and current understanding of it. While a music appreciation textbook might not need to be written by a musicologist, historical perspective on the music it discusses is valuable. This is notably missing in *In Performance*, as only one of the book’s eleven named reviewers is a musicologist.

For teachers of appreciation looking for a textbook with a viewpoint that doesn’t focus strongly on a chronological history of music, there are better options. Steven Cornelius and Mary Natvig’s topic-based text *Music: A Social Experience* (2012) and Mark Evan Bonds’s listening-centric *Listen to This* (3rd ed., 2015) offer more depth and diversity of content. Those specifically wanting a text that teaches history through performance, however, will just have to wait.