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Mapping Musical Life in Modern Urban Space

Guest editors: A. Chegai, M. De Santis, A. Tedesco

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Introduction

Andrea Chegai, Mila De Santis, and Anna Tedesco

The transposition of data, figures, and events from a printed historical narrative onto a two-dimensional surface such as a map opens up numerous research opportunities, but it also entails significant risks. Once plotted spatially, data may reveal patterns that might otherwise remain unnoticed: unexpected presences, unforeseen absences, juxtapositions, clusters, sparse areas, and disappearances—to the point that one may be tempted to conclude, with a certain enthusiasm, "I know what I see." The visual arrangement of these elements enables the construction of alternative storymaps and narratives, at times diverging from or even challenging official accounts, thereby transcending a hegemonic conception of reality.

At the same time, this visual, two-dimensional perspective, unlike the progressive and linear structure of narrative discourse, can create the illusion of grasping elements we do not yet fully understand, leading us to believe: "I see, therefore I know." This is, however, a deceptive perspective. Viewing such a map may also weaken our engagement with the tangible, embodied dimension of experience—the one encountered while moving through the streets and soundscapes of a city—replacing it with a detached bird's-eye view. Yet precisely when this elevated perspective reveals so many things simultaneously, it also risks flattening or distorting their interconnections; conversely, it may encourage us to associate elements that are, in fact, separated by insurmountable obstacles, simply because of their apparent proximity on the map.

Moreover, writing history also involves establishing hierarchies, without necessarily aspiring to completeness or exhaustiveness; it requires selecting material according to individual choices and priorities. To what extent, then, can the co-planarity inherent in the simultaneous visualization of data shape the selection of that very data?

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The two introductory reflections in this volume, by Louis Epstein and Roger Parker respectively, draw attention to these issues in different, though not incompatible, ways. The former adopts a decidedly pragmatic and multifaceted approach: *The Musical Geography Project* surveys a range of contexts shaped by a shared graphic and cognitive model, partly developed for pedagogical purposes. The discussion ranges from the activities of the Ballets Russes to the minstrel troupes active in North America after the mid-nineteenth century, from the travels of Renaissance polyphonic singers to a broader set of related phenomena, with particular attention to musical life in Paris during the interwar period.

Much of the success of such undertakings clearly depends both on the quantity of available data and the development of adequate methodological training in its use—a concern that lies close to the author's heart. The creation of a cultural map of this kind, unlike that of a merely physical geography, is ultimately a deliberate and interpretative act that presupposes a series of prior choices. Such a map does not constitute neutral territory: it must be approached critically, and one must be able to engage with it effectively both at the stages of data input and analytical output.

Roger Parker's approach, by contrast, is more ontologically oriented, adopting a perspectival framework: what changes in our experience of an environment when we traverse—even if only imaginatively—the places we are studying, rather than observing them from above through the mediation of a map? These questions closely align with the aims of the project *Music in London, 1800–1851*. The presence of a more clearly defined physical space (as opposed, for example, to the imagined community of the nation-state associated with the traditional notion of "national schools") entails specific methodological challenges and commitments.

With regard to musical life in the 1830s, London has long been regarded as lagging behind other European cities and countries, all of which were undergoing rapid transformation. The challenge, then, is to use the opportunities offered by the project to explore new ways of narrating musical history, in which the physical absence of composers canonized by traditional historiography no longer appears decisive. Consequently, the aim is to develop new approaches capable of accounting for emerging discursive networks, while also engaging with the perspectives opened by contemporary global history.

The presence of a dozen instances of musical activity in non-traditional venues in London during those years points to the existence of multiple, coexisting urban soundscapes—likely closer to the lived experience of con-

temporaries than a history centered exclusively on great composers and canonical works would suggest. This is clearly not a matter of replacing traditional symphonists or opera composers with those ephemeral (and often lost) musical presences, but rather of producing a fuller and more realistic account of "what happened, musically, in London in the 1830s."[1]

The other five essays in this volume examine the relationship between music, the city, and cartographic representation in a deliberately different manner. Each essay focuses on a distinct city—Rome, Florence, Paris, Madrid, and New York City—within a specific and clearly defined historical period. These case studies, arranged chronologically in the volume according to their subject matter, are characterized by the diversity of their themes as well as by the varied uses of the "bird's-eye view" afforded by cartographic representation.

The articles by Elena Oliva and Alessandro Maras stem from research carried out within the project *Mapping Musical Life* (MML).[2] The first seeks to construct a sound map of the "Feste michelangiolesche," a series of celebrations held in Florence in 1875 to mark the 400th anniversary of Michelangelo's birth. The second explores the soundscape of Rome at the height of the Risorgimento (1850s–1870s). In both cases, cartographic representation sheds light on social and political dimensions that are less apparent when attention is confined to individual musical events. In the Roman case, this ultimately leads to a broader rethinking of the city's musical historiography.

In Louise Bernard de Raymond's essay, this bird's-eye view "zooms in" on the Chaussée d'Antin, a neighborhood of the French capital particularly rich in musical institutions, as well as in musicians' and artisans' homes, instrument-making workshops, and publishing houses. The essay centers on the musical gatherings hosted in the homes of two amateur musicians—Baron de Trémont and the pharmacist Paul Antoine Gratacap—during the 1830s and 1840s, as documented in diaries, correspondence, and music collections. A nobleman and a bourgeois sharing a passion for music, they regularly welcomed both professional and amateur musicians into their homes in a manner reminiscent of public concerts, yet grounded in a gift economy, thus offering professional musicians opportunities to build and consolidate their networks.

1 Roger Parker, "Music and the Urban: London in the 1830s," *infra*, 37.

2 For further details, see Mila De Santis, "Urban Musical Life in Post-Unification Italy: The MML Project," *infra*, 213.

Matteo Giuggioli's essay is the only one addressing a musical work both as symbolic space and representation of urban space. Luigi Boccherini spent at least ten years working on *Musica notturna delle strade di Madrid* for string quintet, producing two versions preserved in manuscripts now held in Paris and Berlin—evidence of the circulation of this "local" music beyond the city that inspired it. The author highlights the modernity of the work, particularly in its attempt to evoke the city in musically realistic terms—a practice more fully developed in twentieth-century soundscape compositions—while also including explicit references to Spanish folk traditions.

Finally, the essay "Remapping Aesthetics through Musical Labor: Julius Eastman and the CETA Orchestra in New York City, 1978–79" by Ryan Dohoney challenges dominant spatial narratives of musical life in 1970s New York City, which have often been organized into a tripartite schema of Midtown (associated with the institutions and repertoires of the classical tradition), Uptown (academic composition, commonly—but reductively—linked to serialism, though in practice considerably more heterogeneous), and Downtown (hybrid, experimental, and cross-genre practices). Against this cartographic partitioning of musical culture, the essay proposes an alternative reading of the city's sonic geography through the figure of the composer, performer, improviser, conductor, pianist, and vocalist Julius Eastman, examined here in relation to the two-year period of his involvement with the CETA Orchestra.

Whilst the introductory essays by Louis Epstein and Roger Parker are grounded in wide-ranging research projects, the contributions by Wilson (*et al.*) and Mila De Santis, which conclude this volume, present fully developed accounts of recently completed research programs. These contributions adopt different perspectives: on the one hand, *Mapping Viennese Concert Life around 1800: An Interdisciplinary Journey*—a project involving the interdisciplinary collaboration of John D. Wilson, Francesca-Maria Raffler, Viktor Kochkin, and Nicole Yeung—focuses on a single city, Vienna; on the other, The *Mapping Musical Life* project examines six Italian cities (Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome, Naples, Palermo) from a north-to-south perspective, across the decades surrounding Italian unification. The two projects also differ methodologically. The first excludes open-air concerts from its scope, whereas the second regards them as a significant component of the urban soundscape. Finally, the former explicitly aims to reconstruct the biographies of lesser-known musicians through archival research, while the latter draws on an extensive body of information from

newspapers, building on and expanding the *ArtMus* database (*Musical Articles in 19th-Century Italian Newspapers*).[3]

At the same time, the two projects share significant common ground, first and foremost in their aim to catalogue both well-known and lesser-known musical venues and events and to locate them on historical maps. They also share the objective of creating publicly accessible databases intended for scholars across different disciplines as well as for a wider audience.[4] In both cases, cartographic representation enables a reconstruction of musical life that extends beyond designated venues, canonical figures, and major events, instead revealing the richness of everyday musical activity and the social interactions surrounding it.

The overall picture emerging from this volume is a compelling illustration of the possibilities offered by mapping, and more broadly by digital humanities, for reconstructing the musical and sonic realities of urban centers—including those imagined within artistic creation— across scales ranging from the local (a neighborhood) to the metropolitan (and even to comparative studies of cities within a single nation). Apart from Epstein's contribution, which explicitly articulates an educational aim, all the essays also imply, albeit implicitly, an educational and disseminative function for the results and methodologies they employ.

3 *ArtMus. Articoli musicali nei quotidiani dell'Ottocento in Italia*, accessed May 23, 2026. https://www.artmus.it/public/.

4 *Concert life in Vienna 1823–1826*, accessed May 23, 2026. https://viennaconcertlife.univie.ac.at/; *MML – Mapping Musical Life*, accessed May 23, 2026. https://www.mml-project.it/en/.

With a degree in Lettere e filosofia, a PhD in Storia dello spettacolo, and diplomas in piano and harpsichord, **Andrea Chegai** is a full professor at the University of Rome "La Sapienza". He conducts research into music in the cultures of the Ancien Régime (16th–18th centuries). His interests include also musical dramaturgy, historiography, philology, piano music and music education. He co-edits the biannual journal *Il saggiatore musicale* (Florence, L. Olschki, 1994-) and the series of critical editions *Musica teatrale del Settecento italiano* (Pisa, ETS). In 2025, he was awarded the "Luigi ed Eleonora Ronga" International Prize for musicological research by the Accademia dei Lincei (Rome).

Mila De Santis is Associate Professor of Musicology and History of Music at the University of Florence. Her research encompasses a wide range of topics in Italian music history from the eighteenth through the twentieth century, with a particular focus on composers such as Alfredo Casella, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Ferruccio Busoni, Luigi Dallapiccola, Alberto Savinio, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and Luciano Berio. She has also made significant contributions to the fields of musical lexicography, music and poetry studies, music criticism, and musical dramaturgy. She is a member of the Scientific Committee of the Centro Studi Luciano Berio and of the editorial boards of the journals *Chigiana* and *Civiltà musicale*, and serves as director of the *Musica|Toscana* book series for Libreria Musicale Italiana. Her most recent book is *Relazioni fruttuose. Incontri di musica e letteratura nel Novecento italiano* (Quodlibet, Macerata, 2025). She was Principal Investigator of two PRIN projects (Projects of Relevant National Interest): *Articoli musicali nei quotidiani italiani dell'Ottocento* ("Musical Articles in Nineteenth-Century Italian Newspapers") – ARTMUS (2012), and *Mapping Musical Life. Urban Culture and the Local Press in Post-Unification Italy* (MML) (2017).

Anna Tedesco is a full professor at the University of Palermo, where she teaches in the undergraduate programs in Humanities and in Music and Performing Arts, as well as in the master's program in Music and Performing Arts, which she coordinated for two terms. She has also held various institutional positions. She is a member of the faculty of the Doctoral Program in Music and Performing Arts at Sapienza University of Rome. She has also taught at the universities of Salamanca and Madrid (Complutense). Her research, published in national and international journals, focuses on opera from the 17th to the 19th centuries: in particular, she has studied musical life in Palermo during the 17th and 18th centuries, the musical patronage of the Spanish aristocracy in modern Italy, the reception of grand opera in Italy, and the influence of Spanish comedia on 17th-century opera. More recently, she has been working on the reception of 17th-century opera in the 20th century, with a particular focus on Monteverdi and Cavalli. She served as the local coordinator for a 2017 PRIN project ("MML—Mapping Musical Life, Urban Culture, and the Local Press in Post-Unification Italy"). She is a member of the IMS Study Group "Cavalli and 17th-Century Venetian Opera." She contributed to the Cavalli Critical Edition (Bärenreiter) by collaborating with Giuseppe Collisani and Nicola Badolato on the critical edition of *Egisto*. Together with Dinko Fabris, she edited a special issue of *Musica e Storia* (new series) on the reception of Monteverdi's theater in Italy during the first half of the 20th century. She served as vice president of ADUIM (Association of Italian University Professors of Musicology). As president of the Associazione Amici del Teatro Massimo in Palermo, she is actively involved in promoting music and opera to the general public.

REFLECTIONS

Digital Mapping and Musicological Claims to Authority

Louis K. Epstein

Maps bring the distant near and make the foreign more familiar. They help organize people, ideas, events, infrastructure, and natural resources within our geographic and historical imaginaries. In these ways, maps are not so different from scores, archival texts, or indeed musicological writing itself. There is no question that maps—those we consume and those we produce—are of value to musicological inquiry. We can and should, however, question how we might use maps in our research and teaching, and how critically we should consume and produce maps. These are questions I have sought to answer in collaboration with dozens of undergraduate students at St. Olaf College.[1] We have spent more than a decade developing *The Musical Geography Project*, which explores the intersections of space, time, and sound through musicologically-oriented cartography. In this essay, I argue that maps offer promising ways to improve our teaching and our public outreach, but they present fundamental challenges when it comes to doing research and writing history. To illustrate this argument, I'll draw on my own and others' mapping projects to demonstrate the diverse musicological functions that digital maps can serve, and I'll encourage critical approaches to the claims to authority that musicological maps often make.

When I began teaching music history, I saw maps as an important pedagogical tool: by engaging with musicological maps, students could construct their own understanding of the relationships between space, place, and sound through playful exploration. That might take the form of merely "reading" maps that visualize music history, for instance by using this map to examine the transmission of early-twentieth-century French music across three continents through the tours of the Ballets Russes.

1 See https://musicalgeography.org/the-team/ for a non-exhaustive list of my student collaborators since 2015.

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Fig. 1 – Map of Ballets Russes performances, 1909–29. Compiled by Emily Hynes.

Musicologists typically characterize Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* as a piece that changed the direction of twentieth-century music, but a map such as this one (*see* Fig. 1) can help students understand that the piece's reception history was more complicated and interesting than its legacy might suggest. For instance, students can use the map to determine whether Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* was as influential and important to global audiences in the teens and 20s as it is to us today. If you access the interactive version of the map and click on a number of these points, you will quickly realize that *The Rite of Spring* was not the signature piece of the Ballets Russes that history books and scholarship make it out to be; they simply did not tour the piece.

Just as this map can help my students imagine themselves on a Ballets Russes tour, a map can also help them imagine themselves navigating a place like Paris on a particular evening in the past, choosing among concert options and learning about the tensions between the music that was new at the time—the music we disproportionately emphasize in our teaching and scholarship—and the more conservative concert culture that dominated at the time.

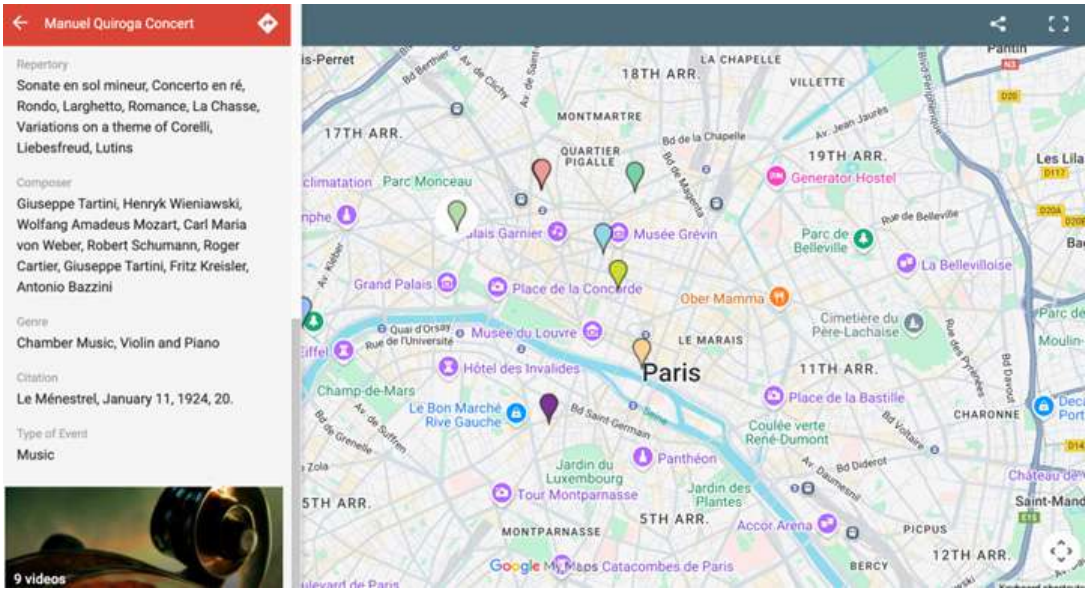

Fig. 2 – Map of concerts in Paris on January 12, 1924.

The information used to populate this map (*see* Fig. 2) is readily available in digitized historical newspapers, but the barrier to access that information remains steep for many: French language ability, knowledge of how early-twentieth-century Parisian newspapers were organized, resources to pay for a Retronews.fr subscription or navigate Gallica.fr, the digital repository of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. I cannot ask all of my students to overcome these learning and resource curves. But having created the map, I can transport students back in time by asking them to navigate an intuitive Google Maps interface. Again, they can ask: are scholarly emphases on the frisson of musical novelty in 1920s Paris accurate, or distortions of the likely day-to-day experience of average Parisian concert-goers? In this case, students quickly discover that repertory by Tartini, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schumann was more common than repertory by Debussy, Ravel, Milhaud, Poulenc, or Satie. To the extent that maps represent what is real, then, they can serve as a valuable counterbalance to historiographical distortions that scholars often perpetuate through teaching, despite our best intentions to the contrary.

In this way, maps' ability to represent more data points simultaneously than are legible on a single page (or in a single spreadsheet) afford them a claim to authority that most humanistic scholarship and teaching cannot

match. Whereas an article or a book can at best provide mere fragments of the evidence a scholar relies on to make an argument, and whereas an article or a book at its worst reduces that evidence to an unrepresentative sample, an evidence-rich digital map can present a larger sample with greater depth and therefore a less selective vantage point on the story being told. Todd Presner, David Shepard and Yoh Kawano have theorized maps' depth-plus-breadth capacities in terms of "thick mapping," borrowing from Clifford Geertz's ethnographic "thick description."[2] Similarly, in *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*, Janet Murray argues that digital platforms allow scholars "to tell stories from multiple vantage points and to offer intersecting stories that form a dense and wide-spreading web."[3] In other words, maps that serve as reference sources and archival portals allow users to construct their own narratives, or to perform their own peer review of the conclusions that scholars claim the mapped materials support. Johanna Drucker has described such maps as "an interface that is meant to expose and support the activity of interpretation."[4]

One brand of authoritative pedagogical map, then, is one that visualizes the movement of a large—or at least truly representative—number of music and musicians across time and space. But it is worth pointing out that these maps do not necessarily *need* to be maps: they could just as easily be searchable databases or digital exhibits. Beyond convenience, an important advantage of representing historical information cartographically is the potential for readers to draw spatially-informed conclusions about history on their own. But such conclusions hardly come automatically. If we want maps to serve that purpose in teaching contexts, then students need to be taught how to read maps, just as they need to be taught how to read scholarship. Diana Sinton is a geographer who has written extensively on what she calls critical spatial thinking: the ability to read a map for what it can teach us about the relationship between space, place, human behavior, and/or natural phenomena.[5] In line with Sin-

2 See Todd Presner, David Shepard, and Yoh Kawano, *Hypercities: Thick Mapping in the Digital Humanities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

3 Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), 102.

4 Johanna Drucker, *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 178–79.

5 Diana S. Sinton, "Critical Spatial Thinking," in *The International Encyclopedia of Geography: People, the Earth, Environment, and Technology*, ed. Douglas Richardson, Noel Castree, Michael F. Goodchild, Audrey Kobayashi, Weidong Liu, and Richard A. Marston (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2017).

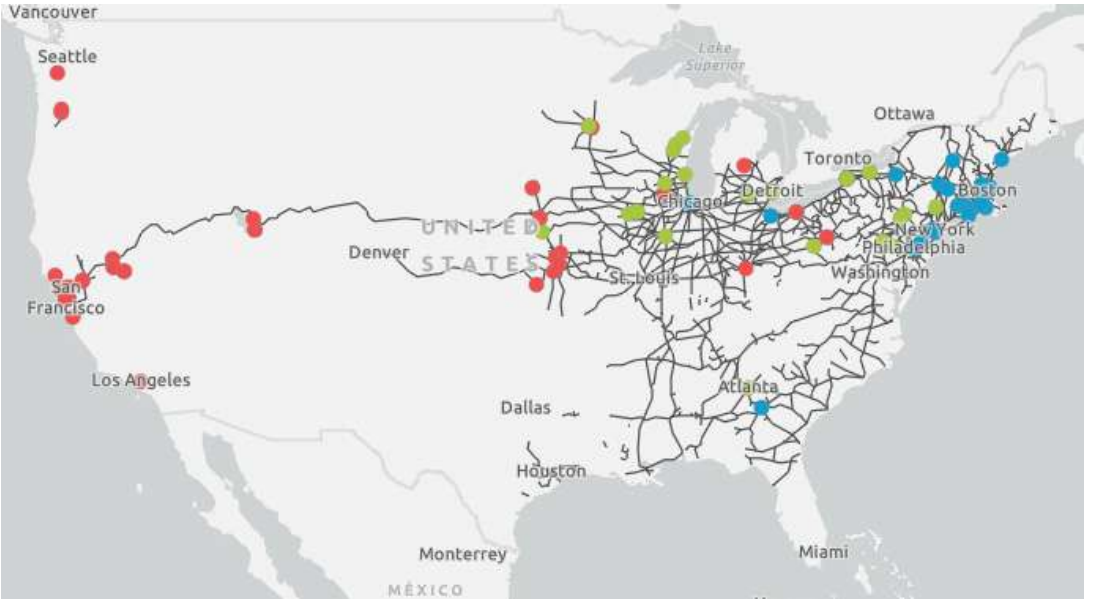

Fig 3 – Comparing minstrel troupe tours, 1865–79. Map prepared by Elsa Buck, Emma Byrd, Tess McCarty, Emma Rosen, and Jack Slavik, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/map-gallery-3/.

ton's ideas, I introduce students to certain aspects of music history through maps that entrain spatial literacy. For example, when I teach my students about the popularity of blackface minstrelsy in the United States in the late nineteenth century, I want them to understand that minstrelsy was hardly the aberration we characterize it as today but rather the primary product of the American popular culture industry. And it was linked to other industries as well. So, I use several maps showing touring by minstrel companies to help students understand that it is not just *where* music happened that matters, but also *how* music gets from one place to another.

In this map (*see* Fig. 3), it is apparent that minstrel tours spread through the country along with the burgeoning railroad network; pre-1870 tours among these particular groups were limited to the East Coast, while the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1870 opened the West Coast to minstrel troupes and made touring through the Midwest more profitable. This map and several others (below) show differences in touring patterns between companies featuring Black performers, on the left, and companies featuring white performers, on the right.

With guidance, students quickly perceive that minstrel companies were big business, and that white and Black-managed companies performed on

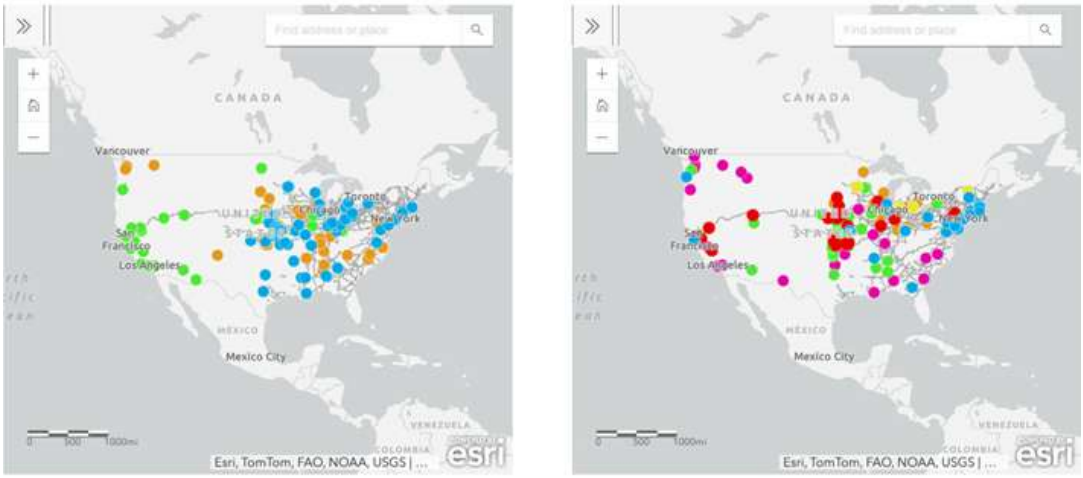

Fig. 4 – Comparison of black- and white-managed minstrel troupe touring, late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries. Maps prepared by Elsa Buck, Emma Byrd, Tess McCarty, Emma Rosen, and Jack Slavik, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/map-gallery-3/.

slightly different circuits. By themselves, these maps (*see* Fig. 4) do not tell the story; students need to be walked through the ways spatial patterns enter into conversation with more traditional forms of historical evidence.

Teaching with maps feels natural and is hardly a new idea; musicologists have been teaching with maps for decades, going at least as far back as the *Atlas historique de la musique* by Paul Collaer and Albert Vander Linden.[6] But using maps as resources and tools for researchers presents some difficulties. To reiterate a deceptively simple point, maps do not make arguments on their own, and even with effort, plenty of musicological maps stand little chance of making any argument at all. Merely representing the locations of people, events, musical venues, or other geolocated musical materials does not necessarily lead to spatially-informed or historiographical conclusions. This proved to be the case when my students and I undertook an ambitious mapping project focused on the careers of the first thirty graduates of the Washington Conservatory of Music, the first conservatory founded by and for Black Americans. We explored a number of ways to visualize the information we gleaned from newspapers, census records, city directories, concert programs, and over twenty archives, but almost none of our visualizations did anything to advance our argument. We made maps of performances by graduates in

6 Paul Collaer and Albert Vander Linden, *Atlas historique de la musique* (Paris: Elsevier, 1960).

Washington, D.C. and nationally. We mapped the archive, looking at how far afield newspapers reported on Washington Conservatory graduates. And we mapped HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) that competed with the Washington Conservatory for students.[7] These were all instructive exercises, at least pedagogically, but none of these maps led to any kind of meaningful spatial analysis, nor did they advance our argument. This is not to say that the research was fruitless; we ultimately published an article on what we learned along the way.[8] But our maps did not advance our research objectives so much as they served as a pretext for doing the research in the first place.

Happily, there are numerous examples of musicological maps that advance arguments and serve as research tools. As I have discussed elsewhere, Danielle Fosler Lussier's *Database of Cultural Presentations* offers one example of a spatially-oriented finding aid: it visualizes the destinations of hundreds of State Department-sponsored tours of United States-based musicians and ensembles between 1954 and 1980, and it gives users the option to navigate archival records through several search fields or by clicking blue markers placed one-to-a-country.[9] Created by the team compiling the *New Senfl Edition*, the mapping project *Senfl's World* provides another example, allowing users to access hundreds of archival records that help scholars piece together a biographical and cultural profile of the sixteenth-century Swiss Renaissance composer Ludwig Senfl.[10] A much older project, one that inspired some of my early work, offers one more instructive example: Emily Thompson's *Roaring Twenties* map serves as a resource complementing her 2002 book, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1933*. The *Roaring Twenties* map visualizes and, in some cases, sonically represents noise complaints made between 1926 and 1933 in New York City.[11] *Senfl's World*, the *Database of Cultural Presentations*, and the *Roaring Twenties* maps all serve as archival portals that go beyond mere

7 You can find a digital exhibit on the Washington Conservatory and our maps at https://musicalgeography.org/project/washington-conservatory-alumni/ (accessed May 24, 2026).

8 Louis K. Epstein and Maeve Nagel-Frazel, "Beyond Exceptionalism: The Washington Conservatory of Music and the Education of Black Classical Musicians, 1903–1960," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 77, no. 3 (Fall 2024): 623–73.

9 See Louis K. Epstein, "The Promise and Peril of Making Digital Maps Sing," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 74, no. 1 (Spring 2024): 263–85.

10 *Senfl's World*, accessed July 14, 2025. https://senfls-world.humap.site/.

11 *The Roaring Twenties*, accessed July 14, 2025. http://nycitynoise.com.

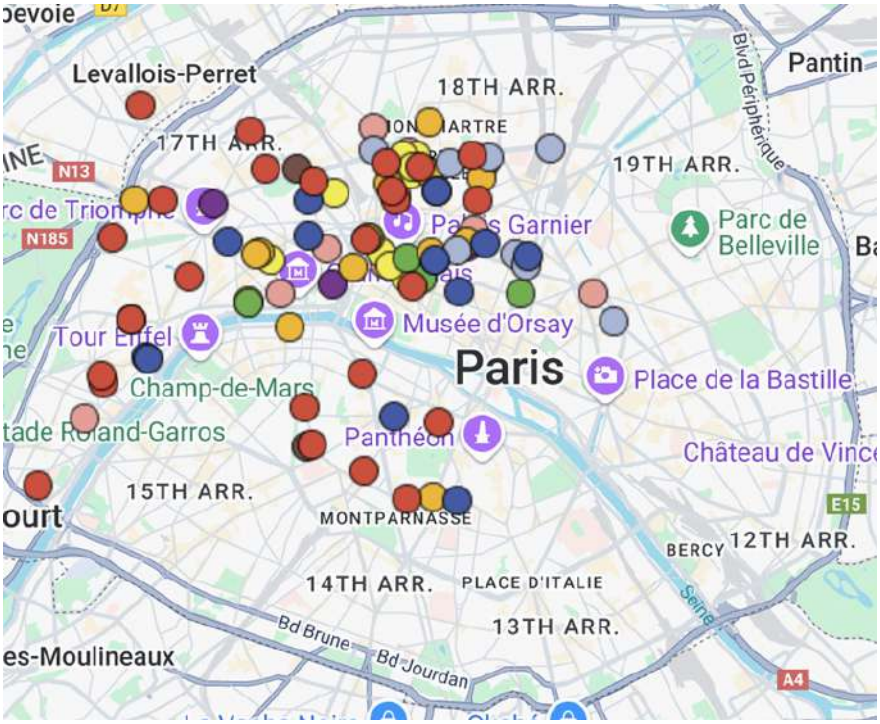

Fig. 5 – Musical venues in 1924 Paris by type, compiled by Phillip Claussen, Natalie Kopp, Katharina Bierman, and Breanna Olson, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/project/venues-in-paris-and-worldwide-2/.

databases to help musicologists move towards a thick description of historical musical life. They are both reference sources and opportunities to immerse oneself in an archive through spatial imagination, adopting an affective approach to music history much like that of my students navigating an evening's worth of performances in 1924 Paris. These maps situate archival objects, sound and video clips within the map interface, thus offering students and scholars alike an experience that can bring to life even the driest of archival materials or the most esoteric of narratives.

So, maps can help us teach and can serve as reference sources and archival portals. But do maps move our research forward? In the cases I have just presented, we might argue they do not. I'm not sure that *Senfl's World* shows us anything about Senfl that we could not have learned by reading a biography of the composer. Similarly, Emily Thompson's map is meant as a whimsical companion to a book-length argument, not as a new way of thinking about the evidence the book summarized. In my experience,

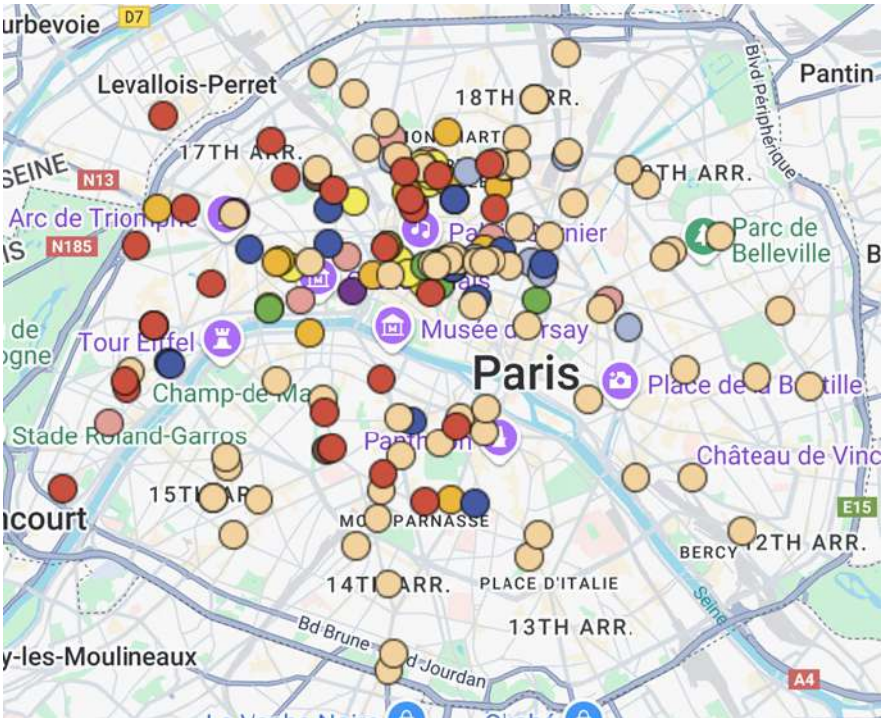

Fig. 6 – Musical venues in 1924 Paris by type, including cinemas, compiled by Phillip Claussen, Natalie Kopp, Katharina Bierman, and Breanna Olson, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/project/venues-in-paris-and-worldwide-2/.

maps that rely on spatial logics to advance scholarly research are relatively rare. One exceptional example is this map (*see* Fig. 5) of Parisian musical venues in 1924.

In a general sense, the presence of venues in the central and western thirds of the city is unsurprising: historians have long known that these were the parts of the city where important premieres took place, where artists and musicians congregated. More interesting here are the absences. Were there really no music venues in the eastern third of the city? Or is it possible that because eastern Paris was the home of immigrant and poorer communities, archives have not preserved detailed records of those communities' music-making? If we approach musical life in Paris more inclusively, we can identify at least one major category of venue in the eastern third of Paris in 1924: the anything-but-silent cinema (*see* Fig. 6).

As you can see, cinemas spread evenly throughout the city, demonstrating film's remarkably democratic reach across class and ethnic lines. Still,

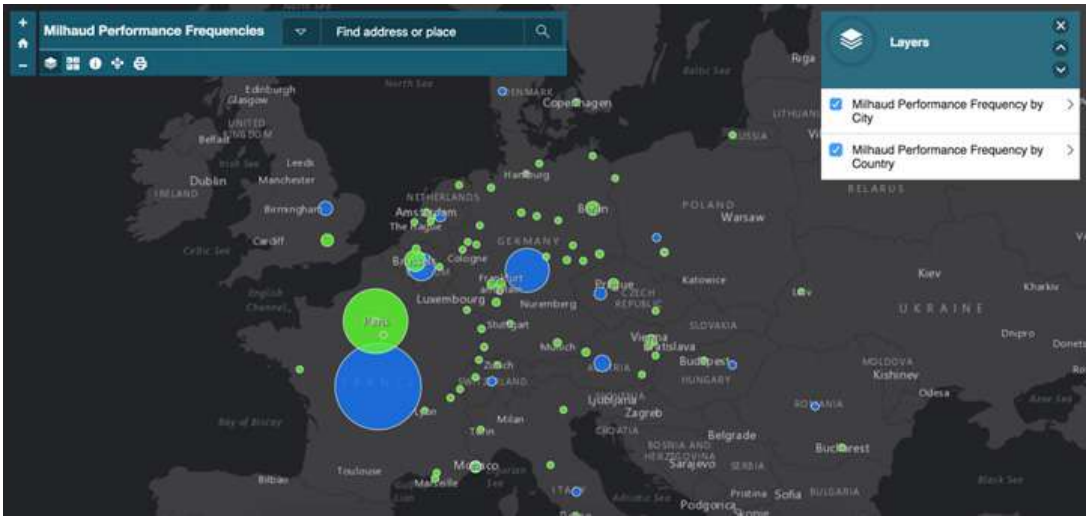

Fig. 7 – Performances of Darius Milhaud's music, 1922–33, by frequency. Compiled by Siriana Lundgren, Elizabeth Lacy, Anna Perkins, and Juliette Emmanuel, accessible at https://stolaf.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=a7c8ba1aae344d47bb1b2f3b41d00da9.

there remains an open question about what music Parisians living in the city's east made; this is a question that could inspire a great multi-lingual research study that draws on Italian, Arabic, Chinese, and Yiddish-language newspapers to understand the full range of musical performances in 1920s Paris.

A similar scenario unfolded when my students and I spent a summer researching the reception of the French composer Darius Milhaud. We determined that between 1922 and 1933, Milhaud's music was performed almost as much in Germany as it was in France. We did not need a map to tell us that—a count within a spreadsheet was just as effective—and the map we made (*see* Fig. 7) further confirmed that concert culture in Germany was more decentralized than in France, another fact we already knew.

When we mapped periodicals that reported on performances of Milhaud's music, however, a spatial pattern emerged that might have been less apparent within a spreadsheet: French sources, in blue, reported on performances of Milhaud's music in central and Western Europe. But German-language sources covered a much broader geography and suggested that traditional accounts of Milhaud's reception that focus disproportionately on French- and English-language sources are missing a key part of his career.

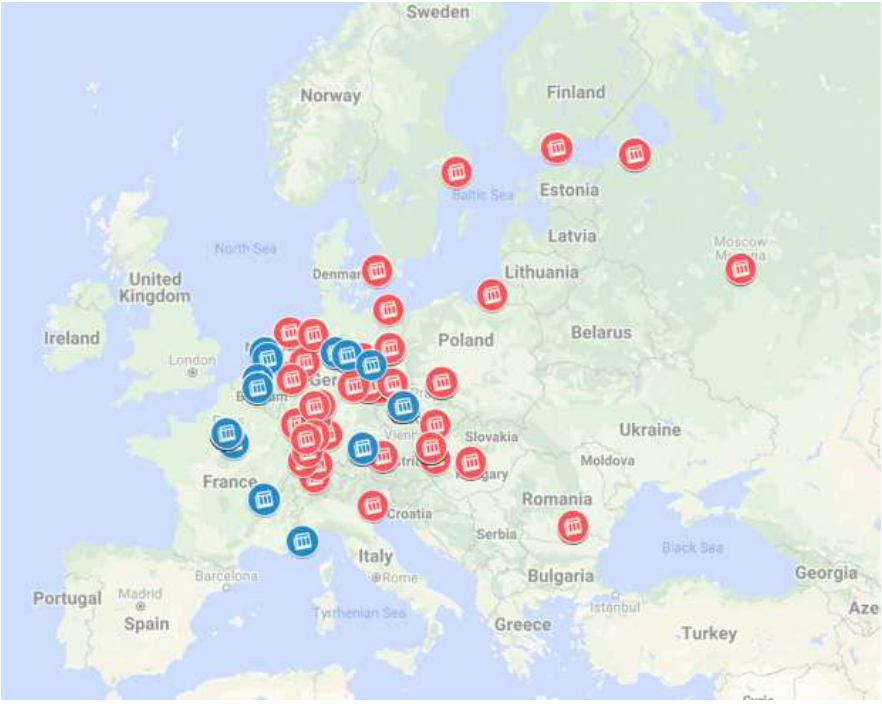

Fig. 8 – Milhaud's performances mentioned in the musical press, 1922–33. Compiled by Siriana Lundgren, Elizabeth Lacy, Anna Perkins, and Juliette Emmanuel.

Much like the map of venues in 1924 Paris, this map (*see* Fig. 8) tells us just as much about the archive as it does about how music history unfolded. Crucially, it inspires new research questions: what performances did Russian- or Spanish-language sources report on? Why were German periodicals much more likely to cover international events than French periodicals? And what does German interest in Milhaud's music tell us about his reception history in and out of France?[12]

One more example of a student-generated map that moves an argument forward is this visualization of classical music performances reported in the Washington *Bee*, a Black-owned newspaper active in early-twentieth-century Washington, D.C.[13] Unlike our maps of performances by Washington

12 I posed one answer to this last question in an article that emerged from this mapping research. See Louis K. Epstein, "The German Connection: Darius Milhaud's Unusual Path to Official Recognition in France," *Journal of Musicology* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2020): 94–121.

13 A contribution featuring this research is forthcoming: Maeve Nagel-Frazel and Louis Epstein, "In 1911: Mapping Black Classical Music in Washington, D.C.," in *Musical Capital:*

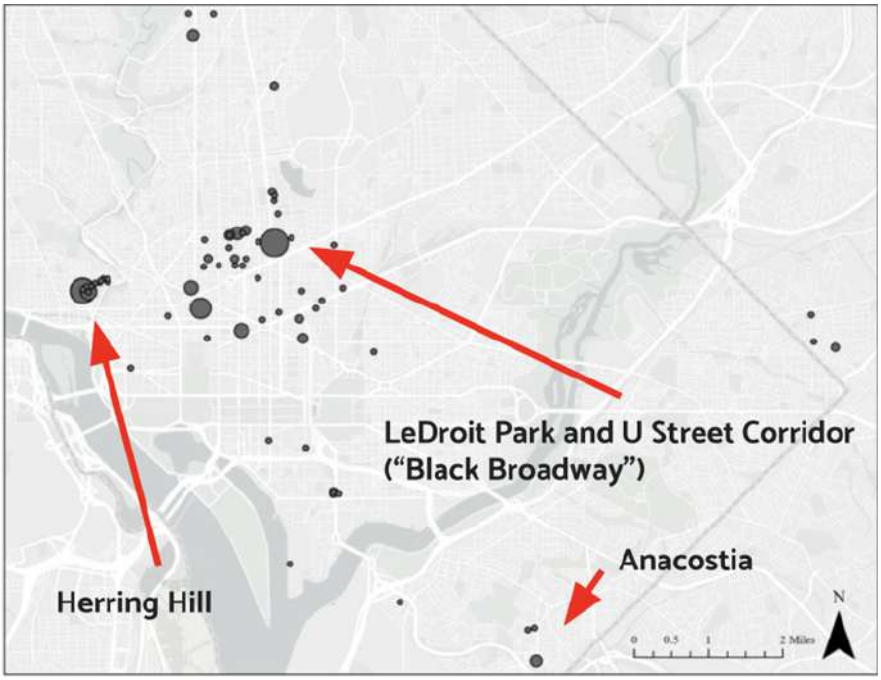

Fig. 9 – Black classical music performances mentioned in the *Washington Bee* in 1911, compiled by Maeve Nagel-Frazel.

Conservatory graduates, this map highlights the musical vibrancy of several historically important Black neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., including the all-but-forgotten neighborhood called Herring Hill at the foot of the present-day Dumbarton Oaks estate. It came as no surprise that so many performances took place along U Street, which has long been known as "Black Broadway" for its density of performance venues, including the famed Howard Theater. But seeing this cluster in Herring Hill helped us understand something about the human geography of Washington, D.C. that neither musicological narratives nor historical maps have shown.

Our mapping of the Washington *Bee*'s reporting (*see* Fig. 9) is exceptional in revealing something we might not have known otherwise. Most maps do the opposite. Because we often map the data we have, which is a known problem within digital humanities scholarship as a whole, many maps merely reinforce received wisdom in a way that is somewhat contrary

Sound and Power in Washington, D.C., ed. Emily Abrams Ansari, Daniel Boomhower, and Michael Uy (forthcoming).

Fig. 10 – Seven influential polyphonic composers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Compiled by William Beimers and Jacob West, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/project/polyphonic-composers-of-the-the-15th-and-16th-centuries/.

to the scholarly endeavor: not only do they not teach us anything new, but they put a scientistic, authoritative sheen on historical narratives that might otherwise be ripe for revision.[14] For example, I had two students update a 1960 Paul Collaer and Albert Vander Linden map of the movements of Renaissance composers in Western Europe (*see* Fig. 10).

The students deepened Collaer's and Vander Linden's research by drawing on more recent sources. And in transforming a print map into an interactive map, they were able to activate an affective experience of what might otherwise by an overwhelming amount of information of little interest to most students. But what they visualized in the map largely confirms that musicians circulated from north to south in search of work, bringing Flemish polyphonic compositional styles to Rome and Spain. The map was lim-

14 For other critiques of the fallacies of authority associated with maps, see Mark Monmonier, *How to Lie with Maps*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018); Bethany Nowviskie, "How to Play with Maps," in *Cultural Mapping and the Digital Sphere: Place and Space*, ed. Ruth Panofsky and Kathleen Kellett (Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 2015), 107–27.

ited in scope and in imagination: we only mapped the seven best-known composers of the era, the very composers whose biographies first established the traditional geographical narrative that we seemingly confirmed. Mapping a different group of composers, focusing on the comings and goings of all musicians to and from a particular city, or otherwise shifting the frame of study might have led to a different conclusion, one that helps us nuance the historical record rather than merely recapitulating it.

This last example points to what I think may be the ultimate value of mapping for musicology. I have slowly come to appreciate maps for their capacity to serve as visual representations that challenge hegemonic understandings of music history. Maps usually seem to represent the world *as it is*, although as geographers are typically quick to point out, two-dimensional representations of a three-dimensional world are always going to distort reality. If maps are going to distort, let's be self-conscious about which distortions we present. This is where Edward Tufte comes in handy: his visualization theories are geared towards finding visual ways to make arguments, rather than assuming that visualizations such as maps merely present data in an objective way. Among other things, Tufte celebrates maps that became famous for showing what other maps did not. Drawing from Tufte and others, I would argue that rather than visualizing received wisdom or even the archive, the perceived authority of maps can be exploited to the benefit of historiographical subalterns. Here I refer to a phenomenon that the geographer Nancy Peluso has dubbed "countermapping," a pillar of the broader subfield of critical Geographic Information Systems, or GIS.[15] Countermapping appropriates the perceived authority of cartography to represent what has long gone unrepresented or to upend conventional thinking about how geography *should* be represented. Indigenous studies helped birth countermapping, and it is appropriate that an iconic example of the technique is *Native Land Digital* (*see* Fig. 11), which replaces conventional political boundaries with overlapping, brightly colored, curved shapes that approximate the homelands of indigenous peoples all over the world.

Native Land Digital thus contradicts the many historical maps that show "empty" territory as a justification for colonization by revealing that those

15 Nancy Peluso, "Whose Woods are These? Counter-Mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia," *Antipode* 27, no 4 (1995): 383–406. See also Nadine Schuurman and Geraldine Pratt, "Care of the Subject: Feminism and Critiques of GIS," *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 9 (2002): 291–99.

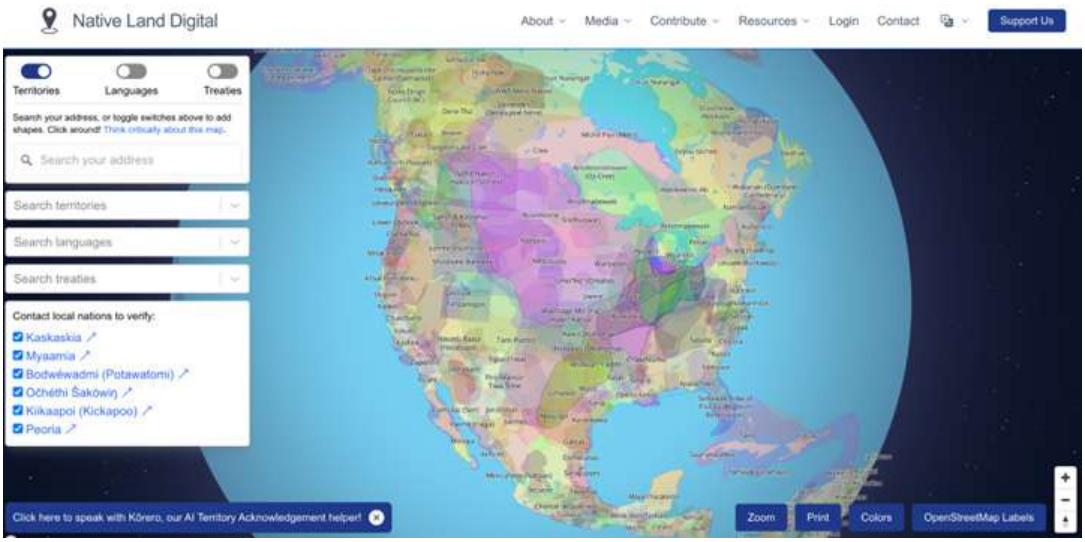

Fig. 11 – Screenshot of *Native Land Digital*, accessible at https://native-land.ca/.

territories were always already occupied. The map's creators recognized that, for many viewers, presence on a map has political significance; to reify people, natural resources, or music by "putting them on the map," so to speak, is to exert power. My students and I have been increasingly drawn to countermapping over the past few years as a response to the ways we uncritically reinforced hegemonic narratives of music history in our earliest maps. For instance, we've built on the *Native Land Digital* map to explore how mapping can help repatriate Native American songs and other forms of cultural expression that were collected by ethnomusicologists in the early 20th century.[16]

Along similar lines, our maps of tours by Black minstrel troupes; the tours of the Fisk Jubilee singers; Francis Johnson, a Black bandleader in early-nineteenth-century America and the leader of the first American band to perform for the Queen of England; and of the life and legacy of composer, singer, and arranger Harry T. Burleigh—all of these are countermaps that push back against traditional narratives that place Black Americans and

16 See, for example, *Native American Song Collection* (https://musicalgeography.org/project/native-american-song-collection/), *Indigenous Song Collection of Frances Densmore* (https://musicalgeography.org/project/indigenous-song-collection-of-frances-densmore/), and *Teaching Indigenous Cultural Expressions* (https://musicalgeography.org/project/teaching-indigenous-cultural-expressions/).

their music primarily in the southern half of the country. Demographically, of course, census data shows that through the 1920s, the vast majority of Black Americans lived in the American South. But by countermapping the activities of Black musicians in the north and abroad, we can challenge two common, overly simplistic narratives that are ubiquitous in music histories: that the music of Black Americans is coterminous with Southern, rural, folk culture; and that Black Americans haven't always already been a part of art music cultures in the US and Europe.

Maps have great potential to deepen and expand the scope of musicological research, but they also pose significant risks. The skeptic in me argues that maps are simply too good at misrepresenting, and that those who read and make maps are too likely to kneel to their authority. If my skeptical side is right, it may be difficult to justify making mapping central to musicological research. At the same time, if we look outside of musicology for guidance, and specifically if we're willing to learn from our geographer colleagues, we can make use of maps and mapping in all the ways I've described without relinquishing our own authority as scholars. As Todd Presner, David Shepard, and Yoh Kawano point out in *Hypercities*,

> Mapping is a verb and bespeaks an on-going process of picturing, narrating, symbolizing, contesting, re-picturing, re-narrating, re-symbolizing, erasing, and re-inscribing a set of relations … Maps are visual arguments and stories; they make claims and harbor ideals, hopes, desires, biases, prejudices, and violences. They are always relational, in dialogue or in contact with someone or something. They may or may not attempt to reference, reflect, or represent an "external reality" (however one defines that), but they are fundamentally propositions, suffused with world-views, structuring epistemologies, and ways of seeing.[17]

In other words, if every map could be published with a warning label—"Intentional Misrepresentation of Reality for the sake of Inquiry"—we might begin to treat maps in a safer way, as more conditional than authoritative. Bethany Nowviskie has similarly argued that "we should not focus on maps as finished visualizations, as products of analysis; rather, we ought to consider mapping a hermeneutic activity, a process or methodology." Playing on the title of Mark Monmonier's *How to Lie with Maps*, she continues, "We must understand the making of maps and images as iterative and

17 Presner, Shepard, and Kawano, *Hypercities: Thick Mapping in the Digital Humanities*, 15.

speculative … we can license ourselves to lie—experimentally, playfully, procedurally, and productively."[18] Nowviskie's conception takes the pressure off of mapping as leading towards an authoritative product and instead unleashes the potential for mapping to change how a musicologist might approach their task.

Mapping may most productively serve as a heuristic—a tool that facilitates musicological work, but neither a methodology nor an end in itself.[19] Prioritizing place and space means devoting more attention to units of study that are not always central to musicological research, units like performance venues and neighborhoods, travel routes and natural resources. Mapping makes me more attentive to the mundane and to ephemera, to the affective, experiential knowledge of people who lived and moved in the spaces I study. Dance historians Harmony Bench and Kate Elswit encapsulate the affective power of mapping when they write, "analyzing movement in historical and cross-cultural contexts challenges digital humanities to grapple with the phenomenon of live bodies, which are not fixed in print or image, but carry, borrow, and share techniques, styles, theories of corporeality and composition, gestures, and ways of being as they travel."[20] Media-rich, so-called "deep" or "thick" maps that disaggregate data and provide new access points to archival materials thus have the potential to make history and historical agents come alive, and in the process open historical interpretation to new practitioners who may or may not be scholars. Bringing history alive goes hand in hand with Anne Kelly Knowles's argument that maps are a "mode of presentation [that] appeals to the imagination," as well as Bethany Nowviskie's notion of maps as playspace.[21] Too often musicologists ignore music's inherent ephemerality, its sense of *play*, and the mundane pathways of its circulation through society. Our research thus stands to benefit from more widespread use of geographic information

18 Nowviskie, "How to Play with Maps," 114.

19 I am grateful to Mark Everist for suggesting this framing. Others have argued that mapping is, in fact, a distinctive method. See for example Barbara Piatti, "Literary Cartography: Mapping as Method," in *Literature and Cartography: Theories, Histories, Genres*, ed. Anders Engberg-Pedersen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), 45–72.

20 Harmony Bench and Kate Elswit, "Mapping Movement on the Move: Dance Touring and Digital Methods," *Theatre Journal* 68, no. 4 (December 2016): 583.

21 Anne Kelly Knowles, "GIS and History," in *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship*, ed. Anne Kelly Knowles (Redlands, CA: ESRI Press, 2008), 7.

systems (GIS), because digital mapping can help us break out of some of the entrenched habits of our discipline.

Of course, as humanists, we have much to offer geographers and GIS in return, especially in response to the many flaws of GIS. Digital humanists and critical GIS scholars have widely catalogued these flaws; a good summary can be found in Jack Gieseking's "Where Are We? The Method of Mapping with GIS in Digital Humanities," which notes that GIS was developed by the military-industrial complex and huge corporations, then adapted by natural and social scientists to visualize and analyze huge data sets.[22] GIS was never intended for use by humanists and in so many ways does not respond to humanists' needs. More than twenty years after the advent of the subfields of qualitative and critical GIS, the most popular out-of-the-box mapping platforms such as Carto, ArcGIS, and Google Maps still do not embed media smoothly or attractively; they abjure ambiguity and uncertainty; and they tend to break down when they encounter data sets that include complete sentences or diacritics inherent to most languages other than English. I work in twentieth-century history; happily, most out-of-the-box mapping platforms use projections that roughly correspond to how my research subjects understood the world, although I still complain about the frustrating maintenance of the Mercator projection as the default. But my medievalist colleagues rightfully note that GIS rules out the possibility of systematically visualizing data that corresponds to a non-Euclidean or pre-Cartesian cartography. When musicologists or humanists try to shoehorn their research into the GIS box, we run the risk of rendering our research rigid and prescribed, rather than leaving it flexible and ludic. Under the spell of digital maps, a constant risk (to which I too have fallen prey) is that we take our data set—a list of spatially-tagged performances or venues or touring destinations—and we ask, "What can this data do for us?" rather than asking a research question that starts with "Where did music happen, and which aspects of music can be better understood by examining spatial data?" Other common and not unreasonable concerns among non-digitally inclined musicologists include the possibility that we will learn to use a new technology only for it to become obsolete, or that we will not be able to learn the technology because it requires too much specialization, or that learning the technology will change us from

22 Jen Jack Gieseking, "Where Are We? The Method of Mapping with GIS in Digital Humanities," *American Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (September 2018): 641–48.

humanists—people interested in the stories of individual humans and interested in human cultural practice—into social scientists who have forgotten the power of individuals' stories and musicking to reveal deeper truths about humanity. Add to this the likelihood that digital projects will not be maintained or accessible over the long term—that print publications will outlast digital products—and there are many reasons not to undertake the creation of digital maps as a substantive scholarly or pedagogical output.

I acknowledge all of these challenges as significant. But in the traditional humanist and musicological complaints about GIS I also see potential for reconfiguration and renewal—for musicological concerns to inform the development of GIS. Geographer Matthew Wilson has observed that so-called qualitative GIS foregrounds the positionality of the researcher, a quality similarly central to ethnographic methods within musicology, and I relish the possibility of a GIS that more transparently reveals the agenda or the positionality of the researcher.[23] Even more radical is the possibility that a more musicological GIS might embrace the ambiguity and limited relativism of humanities disciplines while retaining the claim to authority present in the map's representation of space. Humanities scholarship is full of productive mistakes: speculations or even statements of fact that provoke responses closer to the truth, wrong turns that lead to right ones. Could we regularize visualizations of uncertainty or conditional fact—if point A is correctly placed then point B is not—and thus accept the messiness of time, place, history, and humanity? Can we visualize trajectories or presences on the basis of our confidence in their likelihood, rather than representing all our evidence uniformly? For instance, the following map (*see* Fig. 12) uses translucent markers to indicate where H.T. Burleigh's songs are not listed on Marian Anderson's concert programs, but were likely performed as encores.

Similarly, Harmony Bench and Kate Elswit have used lines of different thickness and solidity to illustrate how members of the dance troupe Ballet Caravan associated tour stops with different destinations.[24] In do-

23 Matthew W. Wilson, "Towards a Genealogy of Qualitative GIS," in *Qualitative GIS: A Mixed Methods Approach*, ed. Meghan Cope and Sarah Elwood (London: SAGE Publications, 2009), 156–70.

24 See *Moving Bodies, Moving Culture*, accessed July 16, 2025. https://www.kateelswit.org/moving-bodies-moving-culture.leafletmap/#2/32.1/-15.5. The map is discussed in greater detail in Bench and Elswit, "Mapping Movement on the Move: Dance Touring and Digital Methods," 594.

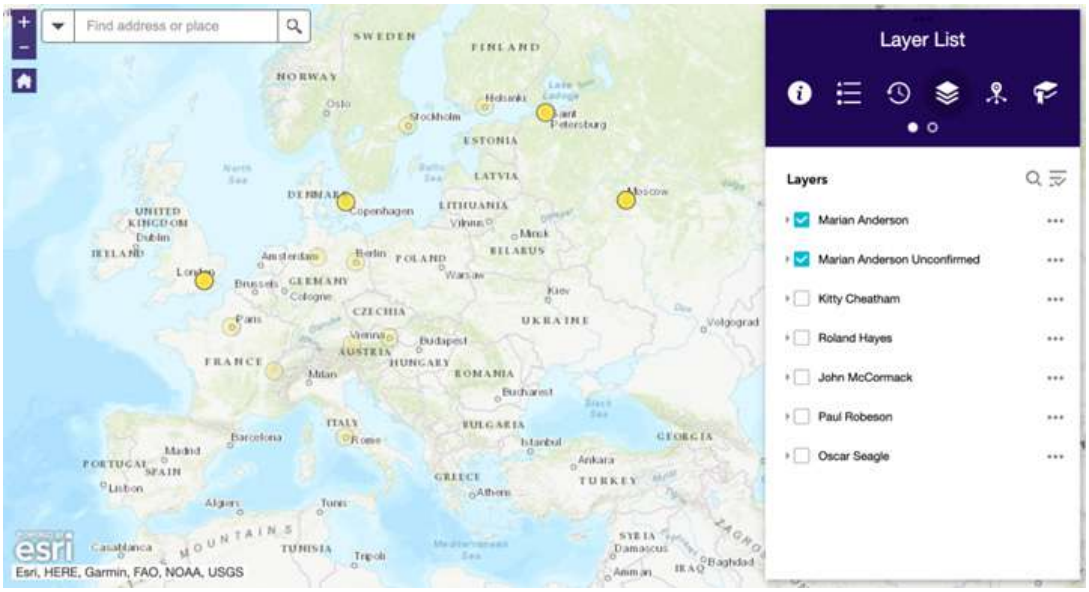

Fig. 12 – Map of performances of music by H.T. Burleigh organized by performer, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/map-gallery-2/.

ing so, Bench and Elswit map thoughts and ideas as much as physical presence, offering a successful marriage of humanistic inquiry with the visualization potential of GIS without sacrificing their research questions.

We need to use these and other techniques to develop a more musicological GIS that humanizes data despite the uniformity demanded by tools designed to aggregate, cluster, and count. When mapping indigenous song practices of the distant past, for example (*see* Fig. 13), we can deeply research and ethically represent the individuals who transmitted the music we're studying, rendering maps as tools to relate individual biography to prosopography or cohort study.

And whenever possible, we should sonify as we visualize, harnessing music specifically and sound more broadly to compose a counterpoint to the tyranny of the visual. The aural markers of space and place have enormous potential to resist this tyranny and engage a broad audience in our research and teaching. There are a few examples of custom GIS applications that already apply these ideas on a broad scale, including StreetMusicMap, Radioooo, and Radio.Garden.[25]

25 Another custom musicological GIS worth consulting as much for its ethical failings

Fig. 13 – Map of Frances Densmore's indigenous sources, by Sophie Kushner, accessible at https://musicalgeography.org/indigenous-educator-resources/.

To conclude, I would encourage us all to grapple self-critically with the rhetorical power of cartographic representation. In whatever form they take, we need to apply critical pressure to our own maps' claims to authority. We need to implement scholarly norms—counterargument, careful and transparent documentation, peer-review—around this new form of scholarly publication, always acknowledging the in-process nature of the work, and always seeking to grapple with the traditional privileges, hierarchies, and orthodoxies that maps can too easily reinforce. To make and consume maps well is to act ethically, because maps are a tool for wielding and representing power. If a map is an archival portal or a teaching tool rather than a visualization of a scholarly argument, we need to say so. If our work visualizes or sonifies what is a discrete, selective, and/or incomplete archive, we need to say so. Admitting the incompleteness of our work only makes it more credible, more authoritative, and more scholarly.

as for its impressive technical features is *The Global Jukebox*, which I reviewed in Epstein, "The Promise and Peril of Making Digital Maps Sing," 278-282. Alan Lomax, Michael Del Rio, Anna L. Wood, et al, *The Global Jukebox*, accessed July 16, 2025. https://theglobaljukebox.org/.

Despite the challenges described above, there is no question in my mind that musicologists should keep mapping, particularly as new digital tools become available. But we should cherish our humanistic epistemologies and skill sets, we should keep music at the center of our work, and we should resist shifting our goals to accommodate the affordances of what is ultimately just one more tool in our toolbox. We should make digital maps that uphold our musicological claim to authority by emphasizing mapping as a process. We should engage in mapping as play and heuristic. Above all, we should advance musicological mapping as a critical tool for revising and re-presenting how we see and hear music history.

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Abstract

Maps offer musicologists promising ways to improve teaching and public outreach, while presenting fundamental challenges when it comes to doing musicological research and writing music history. Drawing on a range of student-generated and professionally produced mapping projects, this article demonstrates the diverse musicological functions that digital maps can serve, from pedagogical tools and archival portals to instruments of historiographic correction.

Musicologists can productively leverage evidence-rich digital maps to present a larger sample with greater depth and therefore a more comprehensive vantage point on the story being told—a capacity theorized by Todd Presner and collaborators as "thick mapping." Yet maps do not make arguments on their own. Too often musicologists map the data they have, putting a scientistic, authoritative sheen on historical narratives that might otherwise be ripe for revision. Countermapping—appropriating the perceived authority of cartography to represent what has long gone unrepresented—provides one kind of corrective, as do emerging techniques for visualizing uncertainty and humanizing data.

Ultimately, humanists in general and musicologists in particular should embrace mapping as a heuristic: a tool that facilitates musicological work, but neither a methodology nor an end in itself. With an eye towards questioning the authority that maps purport to wield, musicologists can engage in mapping as process, play, and a tool for revising and re-presenting how we see and hear music history while keeping music, and humanistic epistemology, at the center of our work.

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REFLECTIONS

Music and the Urban: London in the 1830s

Roger Parker

After centuries in which music history has been routinely parceled according to genres and/or national schools, the idea of "urban music," of music in and of the city, has suddenly become a compelling category, one I take to be celebrated and explored in the present large project. The sense of escape, of liberation from previous, constraining and now outmoded terms of reference, might seem immediately obvious: whether from ideologies of "the music itself," or from contentious and self-serving divisions between categories such as "popular" and "serious," or from vague—more often unspoken—articulations of the inevitability of the nation-state as a defining artistic category. The case of music in London in the 1830s provides an evident example of this and much more.[1]

It would be comforting to be able, now some years after the end of the project, to refer to my own culminating monograph: one that seeks to offer an imperial, imperious, imperative overview of the topic;[2] if you will, a

1 It is a topic that, beginning in 2013, I had the great fortune to spend five years (and more) examining thanks to the support of the European Research Council. The project involved myself, a total of eight postdocs and a host of visitors. Basic to the personnel was an interdisciplinary division: historians, literary scholars, musicologists and art historians were always part of the mix, other disciplines appearing from time to time. The basic *modus operandi* was to produce themed investigations that then became publications (special issues of journals, edited books, single-authored books); these investigations (which almost always started out as conferences) came about because of individual enthusiasms among the members of the core group.

2 My alliterative epithets come, of course, from Joyce's *Ulysses*, and a classic melding of two grand Empires separated by almost 2000 years: "We think of Rome, imperial, imperious, imperative … What was their civilisation? Vast, I allow: but vile. Cloacae: sewers. The Roman, like the Englishman who follows in his footsteps, brought to every new shore on which he set his foot … only his cloacal obsession." James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Paris: Shakespeare & Co., 1922), 126. https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Ulysses,_1922.djvu/129.

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mapping of the terrain that would neatly demonstrate its significance and achievements. Alas, I am not in a position, and—my guess—will never find myself in a position to offer such an overview.[3] There are many explanations for this inability, some too personal to be of much interest here. But my preferred justification is to return to an old distinction made by Michel de Certeau, one with which many will be familiar. It involves, in a famous article, a distinction Certeau makes between *voyeurs* and *walkers*. The former gaze down on the city from a skyscraper, isolated from its noise; "above these waters, an Icarus can ignore the tricks of Daedalus in his shifting and endless labyrinths. His attitude transforms him into a voyeur. It places him at a distance. It changes an enchanting world into a text … The exaltation of a scopic and gnostic drive."[4] The scopic and gnostic: the desire to see and the desire to know melding together. But then there are also what Certeau calls "the ordinary practitioner[s] of the city," there are the *walkers*. These he calls "*Wandersmänner*, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write even though they are unable to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen: their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other's arms."[5] Certeau also uses other ways to configure this distinction which may be useful for my purpose here.

3 Book-length collections did, however, appear in abundance during and after the project's tenure. So far these have included: James Q. Davies and Ellen Lockhart (eds.), *Sound Knowledge: Music and Science in London, 1789–1851*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016); Oskar Cox Jensen, David Kennerley, and Ian Newman (eds.), *The Art of Miscellany: Charles Dibdin and Late Georgian Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Katherine Hambridge and Jonathan Hicks (eds.), *The Melodramatic Moment: Music and Theatrical Culture, 1790–1820* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018); Gavin Williams (ed.), *Hearing the Crimean War: Wartime Sound and the Unmaking of Sense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Sarah Collins (ed.), *Music and Victorian Liberalism: Composing the Liberal Subject* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Roger Parker and Susan Rutherford (eds.), *London Voices, 1820–1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019); Oskar Cox Jensen, *The Ballad-Singer in Georgian and Victorian London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Roberta Montemorra Marvin (ed.), *Opera Outside the Box: Notions of Opera in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2022); Christina Fuhrmann and Alison Mero (eds.), *Opera and Print Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2023); James Grande and Carmel Raz (eds.), *Sound and Sense in British Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023); James Grande and Brian H. Murray (eds.), *Scripture and Song in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023); James Grande, *Articulate Sounds: Music, Dissent, and Literary Culture, 1789–1840* (Oxford: British Academy/Oxford University Press, 2024).

4 Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," in *The Certeau Reader*, ed. Graham Ward (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 102.

5 *Ibid.*

One is to talk about the planned and readable city on the one hand (and this might seem inevitably to involve mapping of a kind), and—on the other—what he calls the *migrational* city. Perhaps at base, this is a recycling of the older anthropological distinction between place (in French, *lieu*) and space (*espace*). In Certeau's words, place is comparatively neutral, "an instant configuration of positions"; while space is what he calls "a practiced place," an "intersection of mobile elements … actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it."[6]

And thus to my explanation. I have always been, and I think will remain, at heart one of those *Wandersmänner*, more comfortable moving through the terrain, approaching the next prospect chiefly through the experience of the last rather than from a preconceived plan, reacting (if you will) to the changing weather (that is, for the most part, the changing academic weather) as I move. It is, then, for this reason that I can present here nothing like an imperial overview; instead, I need to offer something more like a chronological tour of research progress: I want, in other words, to tell you something about how my London-based "music in the city" project *became*, the governing themes/schemes through which it passed, and then proceed to some ruminations about the book I am about to complete.

Let me start by rehearsing a question that—alas—was posed quite often when I first announced my topic. The question, not meant at all aggressively, went something like this: "But tell me: what *happened*, musically, in London in the 1830s? Why choose that particular place and that particular decade?" Behind the question was, in many cases, a common-enough music-history assumption, even in today's radically altered scholarly landscape. Even without rehearsal of that over-quoted dictum about "Das Land ohne Musik,"[7] general musical histories of the past century or so are likely to feature nineteenth-century London as a distinctly marginal venue. Of course, for those determined to name-check the metropolis, various straws can be grasped at. It is a matter of fact, for example, that Felix Mendelssohn, certainly a canonic history-book figure, visited London very often during this decade, premiered some of his famous works there and seemed in many ways to become a poster-boy of evolving British musical attitudes. Indeed, on his first visit in 1829, one might find the traces of something

6 Michel de Certeau, "Spatial Stories," in *Defining Travel: Diverse Visions*, ed. Susan L. Roberson (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), 90.

7 The epithet has its origin in the title of a book about England: Oscar A. H. Schmitz, *Das Land ohne Musik: Englische Gesellschaftsprobleme*, 4th ed. (Munich: G. Müller, 1914).

world-historical. As if to announce the departure of the last remnants of the eighteenth century, Mendelssohn encountered the castrato Giovanni Battista Velluti in London and pronounced him literally the stuff of nightmares: "his voice so excited my loathing that it pursued me into my dreams that night."[8] It is also the case that several luminaries from the Romantic-era opposing camp (as it were) also stepped off the continental ferry: during the 1830s Bellini, Paganini, Liszt, Chopin all set foot in the city; Verdi and Wagner would follow in the next two decades, both seeking the injections of cash for which London was famous and both, for their pains, encountering strenuous opposition.[9]

The pattern of reference says something unmistakable about those general histories of music. Their attitude to London might remind us of a Russian joke that apparently circulated in the Brezhnev era:

> Q: What is the great world-historical event of 1875?
> A: Vladimir Ilych Lenin turned five!

The joke serves as an epigraph in Michael André Bernstein's book *Foregone Conclusions*, and involves what he famously called the historical method of "backshadowing."[10] In this instance, London becomes worthy of comment only when the true objects of history, those great men and their musical works, entered its portals. And alas in the 1830s such men graced London rather infrequently, did not tend to settle, and rarely gave the city the prestige granted by world premieres of their most important creations. The

8 Letter of May 18, 1829, quoted in J. Q. Davies, *Romantic Anatomies of Performance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 13. I should add that Davies's work in this book, which began as a dissertation on London in 1829, completed at the University of Cambridge in 2005, was a crucial influence on my entire *Music in London* project.

9 As a recent case-in-point of the attitude of general music histories, one might go no further than Richard Taruskin's monumental *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). The General Index in vol. 6 has just four entries for "London" that refer to the nineteenth-century volume (vol. 3). Three are indeed references to visits from "great" composers: "Liszt in," "Paganini concerts in," and "Verdi commissions from"; the fourth, "music criticism in," might seem more promising, but in fact refers to Addison and the eighteenth century. For the tendency of Taruskin's in so many ways deeply impressive music history to default into a history of canonic composers and their works, see Gary Tomlinson's review, "Monumental Musicology," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 113, no. 2 (2007): 349–74.

10 Michael André Bernstein, *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 1, 9.

ironies of this circumstance, the absence of "great men" and their "great works," and thus the absence of the basic raw materials of one conventional kind of music history, are many. One of the sharpest is that London was, as it turns out, a prime mover in setting into sounding motion, of making an active industry from, the ideology that fueled such historical attitudes. It was, sooner than Paris, sooner than Vienna, the first city to establish a substantial archipelago of concert venues and organizations dedicated to "classical" music in the modern sense.[11] But the music history books of old didn't talk about that kind of circumstance: theirs was—to repeat—a history of composers and their works; and in this game London was (and not just in the 1830s) distinctly lacking.

So, the starting point of the ERC group was to explore ways in which, spurred on by a city-based inquiry, the project could strive to narrate a new kind of musical history, one in which the physical absence of Great Composers would be irrelevant and in which a fresh kind of chronicle could be constructed, one that would avoid technical analysis of musical works and attempt to confront the issue of musical meaning from larger, more socially grounded perspectives. It would be a story that privileged listeners at least as much as it did performers and creators, and would—for this reason alone—feature women as prominently as men. What is more, we imagined that this new story would fundamentally be constructed from what one might call the emerging discourse networks that were such a proliferating feature of London's musical scene: the explosion of writing about music (from journalists and others) that was one noticeable product of the city. We wanted, in short, to consider the manner in which journalists and other writers in London started to respond to music, looking and listening in different ways as they began to think more and learn more about the art form they were required to attend and discuss.[12] In short, we wanted to explore some of the myriad ways in which, via the press, discourse about the styles and manners of playing and listening to music were reconfigured during the period. The cumulative effect, we hoped, would be to make clear that many of the broadest cultural and political transformations then taking place in society had *musical windows*: that specific musical events or new

11 For some essential background here, see William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Music Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

12 The place to start here is still Leanne Langley, *The English Musical Journal in the Early Nineteenth Century*, PhD diss. (University of North Carolina, 1983).

musical circumstances could, usually fueled by the press but sometimes by humbler communication networks, be seen to have broader resonances within the public imagination.

Some further background may at this point be useful. It's an historical cliché of the greatest respectability that the 1830s in Britain marked a period of change or, as they called it then, of Reform. Whether or not such special pleading on behalf of an entire decade can ever be justified, there is little doubt that cultural commentators of the time, overwhelmingly based in the metropolis and perhaps caught up in its pervading rhetoric, were prone to see their milieu in such dynamic terms. And, as mentioned a moment ago, this rhetoric clearly spread to musical developments. In that sphere, reform has usually been characterized as the decisive emergence and growing self-confidence of a realigned audience for symphonic and other types of German instrumental music, a movement whose trajectory clearly encouraged the long-lived English enthusiasm for rabid, xenophobic polemics against opera, in particular Italian opera.[13] The decade also saw an accompanying celebration, sometimes verging on idolatry, of German instrumental music and its talisman, Ludwig van Beethoven. This story—the rise of a newly-configured "elite" audience in London, together with different kinds of concert, fresh repertoire and adjusted behavior both in listening to and in discourse about music—has of course been told many times. Less often mentioned is that its attractions in our present, concert-music-beleaguered period, are obvious: in many ways the London sea-changes seemed to introduce a kind of musical world we still tenuously inhabit, or at least like to idealize. The capital's musical realignments around the 1830s could, in other words, be thought to put in place, and just as Queen Victoria began her long tenure, yet another example of what one recent book has called "the spectral presence of the Victorian past … all around us":[14] in this case a presence found not so much in the persistence to the present day of the nineteenth-century fabric of our cities, but in the surprising longevity of the cultural practices those cities did so much to enable and then foster.[15]

13 For an acute examination of this opera-going attitude, and much else, see Jennifer Hall-Witt, *Fashionable Acts: Opera and Elite Culture in London, 1780–1880* (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2007).

14 Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham, "Introduction," in *Haunting and Spectrality in Neo-Victorian Fiction*, ed. Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), xi.

15 Such sentiments are central to a book that, although devoted to visual culture, proved decisive in its influence on many aspects of our project: Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon:*

It was, then, with an awareness of the potential seductions of this sense of historical kinship and closeness—of the sway that spectral presences can have over us, not least when gazed at nostalgically from supposedly bleaker times—that the *Music in London* team began to examine afresh some fault lines that accompanied the musical 1830s in London, some new tensions that seemed to shadow the locomotive cultural energies of the age.

An immediately arresting aspect of this period is that music in general was thought to be in the ascendant; more disconcerting is that this state of affairs was not always greeted with enthusiasm. Some critics were indeed triumphant. A correspondent of the aptly, imperialistically, entitled new journal *The Musical World*, writing in 1838, used language similar to that applied to the burgeoning railway network now spreading around London's periphery and even penetrating the city itself: "The nineteenth century seems peculiarly to belong to musical art. […] The history of the arts affords no example of a development of genius at once so powerful and rapid."[16] On the other hand, this metropolitan expansion (which was a pan-European phenomenon, but with London, the world's largest and most developed metropolis, in the vanguard) could also be seen in terms of the darker side of urban expansion, the side that brought poverty, overcrowding, pollution, and disease. To escape from London for a moment, at around the same time that *The Musical World* was celebrating the metropolis's "powerful and rapid" musical expansion, the French journalist Albert Cler described Paris as in the grip of "so-called amateur concerts, which have lately increased and multiplied in a most fearful manner, and which now constitute a perfect pest, [one that] we might term the musica-morbus. All these frightful abuses are caused by the mania which has seized the Dilettanti of the middle-classes."[17] This negative image—of music-making as dangerously porous, spreading through the population, oblivious of class structures, just like the cholera epidemics that periodically ravaged so many nineteenth-century cities—is echoed surprisingly often in the English press. Here is one deluded commentator:

People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

16 *The Musical World* (17 May 1838), 47.

17 Albert Cler, "The Dilettante," in *Pictures of the French: A Series of Literary and Graphic Delineations of French Character by Jules Janin, Balzac, Cormenin* … (London: Orr and Co., 1840), 153–60. For further information about Cler and his attachment to the satirical magazine *Le Charivari*, see David S. Kerr, *Caricature and French Political Culture 1830-1848* (Oxford, 2000), p. 31.

> England, more than any nation in the world, is governed by fashion ... She controls our opinions, our manners, our habits of social intercourse, our tastes; reconciling us to error in our judgements, discomfort in our lives, and barbarism in the fine arts. Music is a fashion at present, and therefore everyone is musical ... Its influence is almost as extensive as that of the blessed sun himself, cheering and animating all nature. [...] But we abuse this … by sacrificing the genuine delights which we could derive from music suited to our different degrees of taste and education, to a vain and heartless affectation and parade of technical learning and skill.[18]

There are strands to this commentary that we can revisit later, in particular the idea that music should be calibrated "to our different degrees of taste and education"; but for the moment we might follow its broader argument a little further. It becomes clear that this writer's discontent focused principally (as it did for Albert Cler) on one instrument: the domestic piano. What had gone wrong? After all, the technological developments of the instrument—due (it was routinely claimed) in no small part to triumphs of British engineering—were significant, and in tune with the progress of the age. However, this writer declared that "while the powers of this noble instrument are daily extended by our manufacturers, those powers are every day more and more abused by our performers."[19] What he called this "general contagion" could be easily summed up. "The established forms of the concerto and the sonata are thrown aside, and all instrumental compositions, for public or private performance, consist of *fantasias*, *capriccios*, *pot-pourris*—any thing, in short, that releases the author from the fetters of art and enables him to string together as many flourishing vagaries as he may think proper."[20] Bewigged, ever-youthful Mozart remained untouchable within this new economy, a paragon of high-mindedness and classical spirit; but even the sublime Beethoven

> in his grand and expressive compositions for the piano-forte, introduced passages similar to those of which the music of Czerny, Herz, Pixis, &c. is almost entirely made up. [They] have fallen into the error of mistaking the means for the end, of indulging in difficulties for the sake of outreaching each other.

18 "Fashion in Music," in *The Metropolitan: Monthly Journal of Literature, Science, and the Fine Arts* 1 (May–August 1831): 23.

19 "Fashion in Music," 23–4.

20 "Fashion in Music," 24.

> They have ransacked their brains for strange modulations; and have put their fingers and instruments to the torture to achieve surprising feats of dexterity; while their auditors, bewildered by their intricacies, or wondering at their sleight-of-hand, have fancied themselves delighted with their music.[21]

In other words, and as mentioned earlier, music was multiplying dangerously: its new cascades of notes and proliferating harmonies, now unfettered by formal constraints and causing agonized distortions in the performing body, were spreading through the urban population, unheeding of divisions between public and private space, and even of the class divisions that urban proximity had made so newly fraught.

These and other questions sustained the opening years of the ERC adventure. One might characterize what was happening as a process of seeing the conventional concerns of musical history through an alternative lens: one that was less concerned with what (still) is sometimes called "the music itself," and more concerned with the manner in which the changes occurring in urban society were inflecting the manner in which music was performed and the way it was perceived.

But then—in part through changing circumstances, but very largely through the initiatives of the non-musicological postdocs, who had none of my musicological baggage and who ranged far further than me in so many directions—these concerns began to seem to me unduly limiting. What I had imagined as *the* "musical world" of London began, in other words, to seem constrained: too tied to the disciplinary restrictions of the past. I might have liked to see myself as one of those Certeauvian *Wandersmänner*; but my footsteps seemed resolutely to tread along certain paths, above all the paths in which elite music activity took place, and resolutely avoided others, in which musical activity took other, startling forms and manners. In short, it became clear to me that my already-drafted chapters, all of them concerned with the debates outlined above, were now only half the monograph I intended to write.

Although this sounds like a damascene moment, it was actually a gradual realization that the question I had been so insistently asked at the outset—"What happened, musically, in London in the 1830s?"—might have a more complete, in a way a more naïve, less mystified answer; that, if you will, I was still too chained to older ways of configuring what constituted the basic material of music history. In response, a new space began to

21 *Ibid.*

emerge; one that, if you will, used the streets of the city as a laboratory for stretching previous disciplinary boundaries. Readers will, I hope, bear with me if I now attempt to answer that "What happened?" question in as determined a prosaic manner as possible: one released from the disciplinary shackles that had earlier detained me. How many types of music can one imagine taking place in the city, and—to take the question as close to ground zero as possible—not in a decade, or a year, or a month, or even a week, but simply in one day. Here are twelve categories of such diurnal musical activity: ones that could, if with a certain bending here and there, be arranged into one of those "around the clock" confections so popular in London at the time.[22]

1. Inhabitants of all kinds hum or whistle in the street; a mother sings to her children at night; children play rhyming games. There is no notation, there are relatively few traces or means of recuperation; but the challenge of writing about this music is nevertheless there; also, the challenge of capturing what differences have come about as times and technologies change (such activities indeed have a history, not least a history within a definable local habitation).

2. Music in the streets more generally, perhaps supplied by ballad singers or by child labor—the latter often immigrants trafficked from other countries—operating mechanical instruments. This was, as it happens, a thriving industry in London at the time, and became much involved in emerging debates about music and class, music and technology, music and race.

3. Music in pubs or taverns, which often crossed over with street music (ballad singers in particular moving from one venue to the other).

4. Band music, whether played by *ad hoc* groups in the street (often, again, by immigrants), by the military or (increasingly as the decade goes on) by groups of factory employees. Sometimes this music took place in the streets, sometimes on the move, sometimes in the burgeoning green public spaces that were forming in London at this time.

22 The most famous of these is George Augustus Sala, *Twice Round the Clock; Or, The Hours of the Day and Night in London* (London: Houlston and Wright, 1859); but there is a huge weight of such "*flâneur*" literature devoted to London, not least of which is Charles Dickens's first book publication, his *Sketches by "Boz": Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People*, 2 vols. (London: John Macrone, 1836).

5. The huge industry of tonic sol-fa education and other mass choral activities, usually organized by the middle-classes and directed at the classes below them, often explicitly with the intention of occupying such groups with "useful" leisure and thus (it was hoped) keeping them away from the entertainment on offer in category 3 above.

6. The entire edifice of music featuring in religious worship, whether in churches or other buildings, purpose-built or not. An enormous volume of musical activity occurred here, rarely talked about in today's "urban culture" industry.

7. Theatre music in "illegitimate" establishments: popular entertainments, licensed and unlicensed, that flourished in London at this time. In the mid 1830s there were approximately twenty theatres in London, most of them featuring far from elite entertainment.

8. Music in pleasure gardens: another meeting place for people of different classes, with outdoor dance floors a central feature.

9. Music in dance halls, from the popular to the exclusive. This activity might form part of the broader category of "music on the move," which could encompass most of the other categories listed here.

10. Music in hybrid entertainments of many kinds: in panoramas, in scientific displays, in lectures, etc.: entertainments catering for a broad social spectrum of consumers.

11. Music in the domestic sphere, which might stretch from—say—a guitar-accompanied song among the laboring classes to a piano recital in the bourgeois or aristocratic drawing-room.

12. Music education: vast numbers of children and others learned musical instruments both in private and public contexts.

And, after those twelve categories, we would then, as a tiny, minority-interest affair, add the elite venues that had earlier been my sole focus: the operatic events, the concert halls, oratorio performances, glee clubs and

exclusive "ancient music" groups, and (just beginning at this time) chamber-music societies.[23]

Just to compile this list makes one realize that, to embrace a city's entire musical activity, let alone for a decade, looks newly daunting. And there is even then so much that has been ignored. One thinks of all the "para-musical" activity that inevitably collects around all the activities listed above. To name just three, musical instrument-making, music publishing, and musical journalism were all hugely expanding—assuming, one might say, industrial proportions—in London at just this time. And it also becomes clear that these categories, rather than (or, perhaps better, as well as) needing separate treatment, are also, and irremediably, enmeshed with each other, so much so that my numbered list is nearer illusory than illustrative. To give two of the most obvious examples: religious and educational uses of music occur through the entire social gamut, from (almost) the lowest to the highest rungs of society. There are also startling intersections: one of the lowest, most indigent groups, the street musicians, typically used as their repertoire fragments of Italian opera melodies, which occupied the very pinnacle of aristocratic amusement.[24]

How to marshal, to write about this expanded list of activities? There are of course too many to encompass in individual chapters, but I wanted in some way to make their existence felt within the structure of my rapidly changing book. At one point I did indeed imagine a chapter devoted to just one day's music in London: a time-co-ordinated peregrination through London in which all such activities would be encountered. There was also the thought that this aspect might become an ideal place for "musical mapping": for a demonstration of how such activity migrated around the London streets. However, my preferred method has been to present the variety as a series of quotations from journalistic and novelistic sources, with

23 When this paper was first delivered, an interlocutor pointed out that this list of activities could apply to virtually any Western city, the implication (I think) being that such an enlarged inquiry might risk losing any historical specificity. My reply to this perfectly reasonable objection would be that the specificity, in virtually all cases, can be restored (indeed, must be restored) in the particularity of the events in question, each of which will take a different configuration according to the local habitation in which it originated.

24 The literature on London's "street music" debates is now large; for one summing-up, see James Winter, *London's Teeming Streets* (London: Routledge, 1993), 69–79. For a fascinating account of the intersection of high and low culture around this topic, see Mary Ann Smart, "The Traffic in Voices: The Exchange Value of Italian Opera in Giuseppe Mazzini's London," in *London Voices, 1820–1840: Vocal Performers, Practices, Histories*, ed. Roger Parker and Susan Rutherford (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 33–50.

footnotes then supplying the narrative connection: a kind of dual exegesis in which one level (the footnotes) doesn't merely document but actively comments on (and sometimes actively critiques) the other—an experiment famous in fiction from Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Pale Fire*. Again, and to stress: it is worth thinking actively about the gains and losses of alternative methods of presentation. What would "mapping" achieve that my "documentary" approach would not? Geographical specificity, obviously. But what would be the losses?

After that intermediate chapter, my much altered book now contains a selection of topics from the non-elite musical world: the music of a woman called Elisa Flower, part of a dissenting religious group;[25] the sonic traces that remain of the "panorama" craze that gripped London, and contributed so much to the mythology of its self-representation in these years; the sad tale of juvenile "organ boys," many of them trafficked from northern Italy and effectively employed as slave labor on the London streets.[26] A new, much less celebratory picture of "music in London" emerged.

All this might be judged enough for one monograph but, somewhat late in the day, one further aspect impinged, and began to insist on itself as a separate subject of discourse. Perhaps the first inkling of this emerged with the publication in English translation of Jürgen Osterhammel's magnum opus, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, whose chapter on cities the *Music in London* group read closely.[27] This "global" history serves to remind us that many types of city have existed in the world, even in the last 200 years: cities of wood, cities of stone; colonial cities, port cities, imperial cities, pilgrimage cities; there are even examples of "mobile cities" in which vast collections of dependents and infrastructure are permanently on the move as the ruler travels incessantly within his domains. But even among this variety, Osterhammel tells us that during most of the nineteenth century there was just one example of a "globally hegemonic city", and that was London. And the question of *how* such a position had been achieved began to press insistently.

25 Inspiration here came from discussions with Kate Bowan; see also Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, *Sounds of Liberty: Music, Radicalism and Reform in the Anglophone world, 1790–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017); in particular, pages 234–42.

26 As well as those publications mentioned in n. 21 above, see John E. Zucchi, *The Little Slaves of the Harp: Italian Child Street Musicians in Nineteenth-century Paris, London and New York* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999).

27 Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 241–321.

An urban aspect that Osterhammel explores in depth is, very broadly, the idea of *circulation*: a process essential to any city on so many levels. The most obvious of these, often talked about, might be that of infrastructure: how the nineteenth-century city distinguished itself from predecessors in the elaboration of its circulatory infrastructure, its roads, its harbors, its railways, its lighting systems and, increasingly as the century progressed, its network of underground passages, initially for circulation of fresh water and waste water, latterly for storage, travel and the consequential creation of what Osterhammel calls "a mysterious underworld."[28] In all these internal circulatory systems, which were in essence retrospective, in reaction to the crises that unchecked urban expansion caused, London was—often for reasons of governance and political culture—stuttering and belated by comparison with European rivals. But cities also expanded and accumulated wealth and power by means of larger circulatory systems. And in two of these, London, as the capital city of Great Britain, undoubtedly led the world.

The first of these circulatory systems marks the start of the Anthropocene. The presence of an accessible power source in the form of coal, and transport hubs that could make it available, famously fired the industrial revolution that, as well as creating "shock cities" like Manchester in the northern part of the country, assured London its global hegemony. This much is a cliché of urban history, not to mention a cliché of Britain's self-definition as a nation-state. But behind that phenomenon was, of course, another form global circulation. The raw materials that fueled the industrial revolution (especially cotton, but many other substances) were supplied via vast estates in the American South and the Caribbean, estates that were enabled by a circulation in human bodies: London's wealth and prominence was, in this sense, fundamentally enmeshed in the slave trade.[29]

As it happens, the decade of the 1830s was a key moment in this tragic history. In 1807, after many failed attempts, the British parliament passed an Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, but this was (as its title proclaims)

28 Osterhammel, 246. A key text in this matter of urban circulation is Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

29 It is worth stressing that, while many European (and non-European) countries were involved in this trade, Britain's prominence as a naval power granted it a central role and made it a central beneficiary. It has, for example, been estimated at half of all slaves in the eighteenth century were transported by on British ships; see David Olusoga, *Black and British: A Forgotten History*, rev. ed. (London: Picador, 2021), 199.

restricted to *trade* in slavery rather than to slave ownership, which continued to flourish. Perhaps incidentally at first, the 1807 Act also served to improve the country's international trading hegemony. But then in 1833, and in part in reaction to slave rebellions in Jamaica and elsewhere, came the Slavery Abolition Act, which gradually made illegal slave *ownership*. This was fiercely contested and required many compromises, not least a compensation package of some £20 million (40% of the British treasury's annual income). The act was also deeply compromised by the fact that the slaves thus granted their "freedom" remained as (unpaid) "apprentices" for some years after this, and even then often had nowhere else to go and no resources to make choices, so remaining *in situ* (mostly in the Caribbean islands), their state little changed.[30]

One might at first wonder what music might have to do with such dreadful circumstances, but it quickly becomes obvious that music was, in an apt locution, *instrumentalized* frequently in the endless debates that surrounded slavery during this period. We could point to various appropriations that might seem comforting: ones in which anti-slavery poems were aided in their distribution by musical settings, or in which the presence of musical cultures among the enslaved was marshalled as evidence for the inhumanity of their condition.[31] However, it was also at least as ubiquitous for music to be used in the opposite cause. The fact that slaves sang together and sometimes employed musical instruments became, indeed, something of a trope in the pro-slavery argument: used as a demonstration of their contentedness and general advancement.[32] What is more, there is evidence

30 This history has of course been recounted many times. Olusoga, *Black and British*, offers an excellent recent account. For a global perspective on the trade, see C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 402–10.

31 For the former, a notable example is Henry Bishop's "operatic drama" *The Slave*, first performed at London's Covent Garden in 1816, with much-reprinted songs such as "Sons of Freedom hear my story." For the latter, the classic iteration is from Frederick Douglass's autobiography: "I have often been utterly astonished, since I came to the north, to find person who could speak of the singing among slaves, as evidence of their contentment. It is impossible to conceive of a greater mistake. Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy"; see Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave,* 6th ed. (London: Collins, 1851), 20.

32 On 1 July 1830, Henry Brougham spoke in Parliament about various defenders of the condition of slaves, even those on notoriously lethal transport ships. He reports their words thus: "The slaves on board are comfortably lodged … they are amused with instruments of music: [they have] food and raiment for nothing; music to charm the sense." "Proceeding in Parliament of the Subject of Colonial Slavery," *The Anti-Slavery Reporter* 3, no. 16 (1 August 1830): 325.

that some slave owners actually went so far as to give some of their captives a musical education, teaching them instruments and then forming them into *ad hoc* musical bands that could impress visitors in ceremonial and other occasions, thus demonstrating the educational opportunities that slavery could bestow on its supposed victims.[33]

Conclusion

From all this material, there emerged, then, a final chapter of my book about music in London in the 1830s: the hardest to write in many ways, albeit one that returned in some respects to the elite discourse with which I started. The book that I planned all those years ago has been interrupted by many circumstances but is now near its end. To put this another way, my career as one of those *Wandersmänner* is coming to a close: I have strolled enough, taken sufficient turns through the city.

As discussed earlier, there is no doubt that the idea of "music and the urban" presents many new possibilities for the writing of music history. However, amid those celebrations of release it may also be salutary to pause for reflection, in particular to pause and contemplate the constraints that may be brought into being by the embrace of this new category. We will agree, at the least, that presence of a definable material space (as opposed, say, to the imagined community of the nation-state) has its own challenges and commitments. In particular, and as mentioned much earlier, the desire to map, to form an overview, while itself laudable, may be open to critique.[34] To return for a moment to Certeau, one of the questions he asks,

33 As apologist Charles Telfair put it, "Believing in the influence of music in civilizing mankind, a vocal and instrumental band was formed among the Slaves, who, for above three years, learned the principles of this art from the best European masters." See his *Some Account of the State of Slavery at Mauritius since the British Occupation in 1810* (London: James Ridgway, 1830), 64. Later in the book Telfair approvingly quotes a letter from "Quartermaster Kyle," dated Port-Louis, 27 September 1826: "When I was music-master of the 82nd regiment [the slaves] learned music, reading and writing, for upwards of three years, during which time I had many opportunities of hearing them, in their private conversations, hold forth in praise of the kindness of their master and mistress, not only to themselves, but also to the Slaves in general" (p. 183).

34 For a classic instance of this critique, complete with Foucauldian undertext, see J. B. Harley, "Maps, Knowledge and Power," which first appeared in Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, eds., *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 277–312; it

after descending from the skyscraper, has continued to obsess me. He asks, with typical Certeauvian resonance: "To what erotics of knowledge can the ecstasy of reading such a cosmos be connected?"[35] The map, according to this formulation, is a seductive object, one that can give you illusions of possession. The *Wandersmänner*, on the other hand, are resolutely erratic (rather than erotic); their itinerary is haphazard if only because, when they turn a street corner, they are often greeted by different weather.

was then reprinted as the second chapter of Harley's *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 51–82. In the opening paragraph comes the *credo*, the call for a new regime in which: "maps cease to be understood primarily as inert records of morphological landscapes or passive reflections of the world of objects, but are regarded as refracted images contributing to dialogue in a socially constructed world."

35 Certeau, "Walking in the City," p. 101.

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Abstract

After centuries in which music history has been routinely parcelled according to genre and/or national schools, the idea of "urban music," of music in and of the city, has suddenly become a compelling category. The sense of escape, of liberation from previous, constraining terms of reference, whether from ideologies of "the music itself," or from contentious divisions between "popular" and "serious," or from vague sounding-articulations of the nation-state, might seem immediately obvious. Also beckoning are renewed conceptions of what could broadly be called "music and nature": the manner in which music can define itself *vis-à-vis* the material world in which it exists. However, amid such celebrations it may occasionally be salutary to pause for reflection. What constraints are brought into being by the embrace of this new category of "the urban"? In particular, does the presence of a definable material space—as opposed, say, to the imagined community of the nation-state—have its own challenges and commitments? The present reflection addresses these issues with reference to a particular time and space: the case of London at a moment (the 1830s) when it liked to consider itself the pre-eminent "world city."

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ARTICLES

The Streets of Madrid:
Urban and Symbolic Space in a String Quintet by Luigi Boccherini

Matteo Giuggioli

Current Music

At various moments in the history of Western art music, musical works have sought to represent urban space. Especially when a city's soundscape is captured in detail and with a high degree of accuracy, and when the composition highlights particular musical practices within this soundscape, we are dealing with a form of mapping musical life conducted from an unusual angle: rather than being the object of mapping, the musical artwork becomes its subject. This kind of mapping, insofar as it is integrated into the artistic work, may also give rise to symbolic projections. One such case is Luigi Boccherini's (1743–1805) "*quintettino*" for strings in C major, *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid* [*Night Music of the Streets of Madrid*], op. 30, no. 6, G 324.[1] The present article examines how this composition

1 The work is scored for two violins, viola and two cellos. The string quintet with this type of ensemble is the genre Boccherini cultivated most assiduously in his instrumental music, composing more than one hundred such works. For Boccherini's overall musical production and its articulation in different genres, the reference study remains Yves Gérard, *Thematic, Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini*, trans. Andreas Mayor (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). In identifying the compositions by Boccherini, I refer to Gérard's catalogue number (here G 324) and, immediately before, to the opus number (op. 30, no. 6) provided by the catalogue published by Boccherini's great-grandson: Alfredo Boccherini y Calonje, *Luis Boccherini. Apuntes biográficos y catálogo de las obras de este célebre maestro* (Madrid: A. Rodero, 1879). Opus numbering, however, is a complex matter, intertwined with the even more complex and problematic issue of Boccherini's catalogues. On this point, see at least Marco Mangani and Federica Rovelli, "Boccherini's Thematic Catalogues: A Reappraisal," in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, ed. Rudolf Rasch (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2014), 109–28. It is sufficient here to recall that, during his lifetime, Boccherini treated the numbering of his compositions with considerable flexibility. Opus numbers, even when taken from an "authentic" catalogue—that is, one traceable to the composer's intentions, such as the one published by Boccherini y Calonje—

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produces an aestheticized representation of Madrid's musical life in the last decades of the eighteenth century, interpreting the implications and symbolic projections of Boccherini's proposed musical mapping and representation of urban space.

These questions are situated within the broader framework of the relationship between music and space, a topic that has progressively assumed a central position in both music and musicological studies.[2] It is now widely acknowledged that sound and music are fundamentally spatialized experiences: they are not merely situated in space but actively contribute to its construction, both physically and symbolically. In Boccherini's string quintet, these two dimensions—music *in* space and music *as* space—are closely intertwined. Although the present study does not adopt an ethnographic perspective, and although it focuses on a musical work as an artistic mediation of a specific soundscape, its approach to the relationship between music and space aligns with some of the fundamental principles of Steven Feld's acoustemology: an anthropology of sound that integrates *auditory space* (subjective) and *acoustic space* (environmental) in order to "investigate simultaneously the place of sound and the sound of place," conceiving sound not simply as something emitted or perceived within space, but as a "localized mode of existence."[3]

The composition of this string quintet by Boccherini—not confined to a single occasion but extending over several years against the backdrop of

cannot be considered in Boccherini's case a faithful and progressive chronological trace of his work. As for the term *quintettino*, in Boccherini's vocabulary it denotes a quintet conceived as an "opera piccola." The composer distinguished between "*opere grandi*" and "*opere piccole*" based on the number of movements. The *opere grandi* usually consisted of four movements (and in any case always more than two), while the *opere piccole* of two movements at most. Boccherini explains this distinction in a letter to Carlo Emanuele Andreoli, mediator of the music publisher Artaria, dated September 22, 1780. See Luigi Boccherini, *Epistolario*, estudio preliminar por Remigio Coli, edición y notas por Marco Mangani (Madrid–Sant Cugat: Asociación Luigi Boccherini–Editorial Arpegio, 2019), 21–7, 160–1. *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid* is an exception: Boccherini considers it a *quintettino*, even though it is in five movements; each movement, however, is short, and the whole piece does not exceed the usual duration of an *opera piccola*.

2 For a concise overview, see Andrew Kania, "Space," in *The Oxford Handbook of Western Music and Philosophy*, ed. Tomás McAuley, Nanette Nielsen, Jerrold Levinson, and Ariana Phillips-Hutton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 878–93.

3 Steven Feld, "Acustemologia," in *Spazi sonori della musica*, ed. Giovanni Giuriati and Laura Tedeschini Lalli (Palermo: L'Epos, 2010), 36. Feld's seminal study on acoustemology is *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).

decisive changes in Western history, foremost among them the French Revolution—makes the interpretative path particularly intriguing. The musical sources of *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid* transmit two versions of the piece, developed by the composer under different biographical and professional circumstances and separated by a considerable number of years: no fewer than ten years, according to what can be reconstructed from relevant documents and from data drawn from the sources themselves. Each version survives in a manuscript of some authorial status.[4]

The first version is preserved in a non-autograph score, presumably produced under Boccherini's supervision, now preserved in the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. It belongs to a group of compositions that Boccherini sent from Arenas de San Pedro, while still in the service of the Infante Don Luis de Borbón, to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who would later become King Frederick William II and Boccherini's patron.[5] The *quintettino* G 324 is the sixth of a set of six compositions. From the title page of the first *quintettino* of the same opus, G 319, whose manuscript score, together with the others belonging to the group (G 319–24), is preserved in Berlin, we derive the date of composition: 1780.[6] The annotation "opera 1a," found on all six scores, refers to an additional contractual con-

4 For an overview of the quintet's sources see Gérard, *Thematic, Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue*, 365–7. On Boccherini's biography: Jaime Tortella, *Boccherini. Un músico italiano en la España ilustrada* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Musicología, 2002); Remigio Coli, *Luigi Boccherini. La vita e le opere* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 2005); Marco Mangani, *Luigi Boccherini* (Palermo: L'Epos, 2005).

5 The source is digitized and available online: *Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz*, KHM 498, accessed May 28, 2026, https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?lang=de&PPN=PPN781633729. On the characteristics of this source, within the context of the last group of pieces written by Boccherini for the Infante Don Luis, see Rudolf Rasch, "Boccherini's Manuscripts: A Typology," in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, 9–14. The copyist who wrote the score has been identified as Francisco Font, a member of the family of musicians who served the Infante Don Luis and with whom Boccherini established a close collaboration. See Loukia Drosopoulou, *Dynamic, Articulation and Special-Effect Markings in Manuscript Sources of Luigi Boccherini's String Quintets* (PhD Diss., University of York, 2008), 22–33; also, Loukia Drosopoulou, "Boccherini and the Copyists from His Immediate Circle," in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, 77–80.

6 This dating has not been refuted by studies that have reopened the question of the chronology of Boccherini's works and begun to shed light on such a complicated aspect of his artistic activity. See Germán Labrador López de Azcona, "Towards a Revised Chronology of Boccherini's Works," in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, 31–66; Germán Labrador López de Azcona, "Luigi Boccherini's Lost Music and a New Chronology for His Works: An Unknown Inventory from 1785," *Philomusica on-line* 15, no. 2 (2016): 102–25.

dition governing Boccherini's service to the Infante Don Luis, which the composer explains in the aforementioned letter to Andreoli.[7] Boccherini was required to write three "opere" each year, that is, three collections of six pieces each, belonging to various instrumental genres.

Another reliable copy, dating from the first half of the nineteenth century, transmits the second version of the quintet.[8] It consists of a set of separate parts copied from the autograph parts that Boccherini had sent in 1797 to the Austrian publisher Ignace Pleyel, who at the time was active in Paris.[9] The copy was made by Louis Picquot, a great admirer and collector of Boccherini's music, as well as a scholar and biographer of the composer.[10] The fact that the principal surviving sources of the string quintet G 324 are held in Berlin and Paris, within the richest collections of Boccherini sources, suggests that the cultural reach of this piece extends far beyond both Madrid, the city it represents, and Spain.

Today, the *Musica notturna* is a well-known composition, perhaps Boccherini's best-known work together with his *Fandango*.[11] Why? One reason certainly lies in what Giorgio Pestelli calls its "overtly contemporary" [*scopertamente attuale*] gesture, through which Boccherini reproduces Spanish folk music.[12] From our perspective, nearly 250 years after the probable date of composition, we can understand Boccherini's "actualist attitude" in a twofold sense, corresponding to two forms of historical contemporaneity. On the one hand, there is the present of Boccherini's Spain, connected to the figures and environments of Madrid that the composer encountered in his everyday life. From 1768, the year in which he settled permanently in Spain, Madrid was the place where Boccherini spent most

7 See note 1.

8 *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, Rés. F. 1191, accessed May 28, 2026, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b74001392/f17.item.r=Boccherini%20G%20324. See Gérard, *Thematic, Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue*, 366.

9 On the commercial negotiations between Boccherini and Pleyel see Mangani, *Luigi Boccherini*, 138–75.

10 Louis Picquot, *Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Luigi Boccherini, suivi du catalogue raisonné des toutes ses œuvres, tant publiées qu'inédites* (Paris: Philipp, 1851).

11 It is the first movement of the string quintet with two cellos op. 40, no. 2, G 341. Boccherini later transcribed it as a quintet for strings and guitar, G 448.

12 However, this interpretation emerges within a portrait of Boccherini that, while benevolent, tends to present him primarily as a skilled craftsman whose musical output is marked by "zones of quiet conservative mentality," rather than as a "modern" artist in the sense in which Franz Joseph Haydn, for example, may be considered modern. See Giorgio Pestelli, *L'età di Mozart e di Beethoven* (Torino: EDT, 1991), 145.

of his time. It is therefore first and foremost through the Spanish folk music practiced in Madrid that he captures a vivid "sonic image" of the world that surrounded him.

On the other hand, there is our own present (and recent past), that of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Within this second historical framework, oral and functional music—the categories evoked by the *Musica notturna*—have come to the fore both in artistic practice and in scholarly studies. The musical city portrait has likewise enjoyed renewed prominence. This is due to several factors, from a general fascination with the city as the emblematic space of modern life to a more specific interest, linked to sound and media, in environments rich in sounds and music and serving as a crossroad of communication in all its forms. Suffice it to mention two significant and very different works: the instrumental composition *Central Park in the Dark* (1906) by Charles Ives and the radio work *Ritratto di città* (1955) by Luciano Berio, Bruno Maderna, and Roberto Leydi, dedicated respectively to New York and Milan. Compared with these twentieth-century works, Boccherini's *Musica notturna* may be regarded as a pioneering musical experiment, one that may now find fertile ground for renewed appreciation. It is no coincidence that Berio drew on the last movement of this quintet—in the various authorial transcriptions made, as we shall see, by Boccherini himself—as the material for one of his own compositions, *Quattro versioni originali della "Ritirata Notturna di Madrid" di L. Boccherini* (1975).

Berio states that "this is evidently a piece that enjoyed great favor with the public, and the composer transcribed it several times for various chamber ensembles."[13] In acknowledging the public's appreciation of the piece, he undoubtedly reflects a widespread view in our own time, in which, as we have seen, ideal conditions have emerged for appreciating Boccherini's *Musica notturna*.[14] Regarding the success of this composition in Boccherini's own

13 "Si tratta evidentemente di un pezzo che godeva di grande favore presso il pubblico, e il compositore lo ha trascritto parecchie volte per diverse formazioni da camera." See "Quattro versioni originali della Ritirata Notturna di Madrid di L. Boccherini," *Centro Studi Luciano Berio*, accessed May 28, 2026, https://www.lucianoberio.org/nota-di-programma-op/quattro-versioni-originali-della-ritirata-notturna-di-madrid-di-l-boccherini-testo-1/.

14 The enthusiasm of our time for the *Musica notturna* can be seen, for example, in a very well-informed and richly illustrated article addressed to a general audience: Pablo Jesús Aguilera Concepción, "*La música nocturna de las calles de Madrid*, de Boccherini," *La Gatera de la Villa*, February 26, 2021, https://www.gateravilla.es/musica-nocturna-de-las-calles-de-madrid/.

time (as a whole, and not merely in its last movement), we must, however, ask further questions. First, we must understand the place occupied by folk and descriptive music within Boccherini's artistic imagination. Elisabeth Le Guin offers a nuanced reflection on this aspect, with which I largely agree, observing that references to Spanish folk music, as well as descriptive compositions more generally, play only a marginal role in Boccherini's output:

> One might assume … that, for all that he could write a rousing *fandango*, Boccherini was somewhat alienated from the musical culture of the country in which he lived for over half his life. Yet I doubt that Boccherini was alienated. It is simplistic to assume that he remained an outsider to Spanish music all his life; to do so is to locate that musical culture exclusively in its more highly marked indigenous practices, to fall into the trap of equating authenticity with folk music … At their most truly enlightened, the thinkers and the artists of the *Ilustración*—among whom I would count Boccherini—avoided this trap by freely importing and developing influences from outside the Iberian Peninsula that seemed beneficial, profitable, or beautiful, confident that their adoption into Spanish culture was in itself enough to eventually ensure Spanishness even as it redefined it.[15]

This subtle process of defining and representing, through musical language, a mixed cultural identity—a process that reaches an extreme form in the *Musica notturna* and remains foreign to nineteenth-century folklorism—required an audience prepared to receive and decipher it.[16]

It is therefore legitimate to ask whether the documentary character displayed by the *Musica notturna* should be regarded as exceptional within Boccherini's instrumental music. This question applies not only to his other descriptive compositions, but also to non-descriptive works in which stylistic elements derived from pre-existing functional music, especially Spanish folk music, are assimilated. The question also extends to other eighteenth-century composers, such as Domenico Scarlatti and Franz Joseph

15 Elisabeth Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 101.

16 As Le Guin further observes, folklorism, laden with nationalistic implications, "constitutes a Romantic project with serious consequences for the reception of Boccherini's music." See Elisabeth Le Guin, "Algunos aspectos de la recepción de Boccherini," in *Luigi Boccherini: Estudios sobre fuentes, recepción e historiografía*, eds. Marco Mangani, Elisabeth Le Guin and Jaime Tortella (Madrid: Biblioteca Regional de Madrid 'Joaquin Leguina', 2006), 129.

Haydn, who, no less than Boccherini, absorbed the musical worlds they encountered into their instrumental works.

The *Musica notturna* is unique within all these contexts, although certain distinctions must be made. Within Boccherini's chamber music, it is unique because the composer extends his adherence to musical reality to an unusual degree, compared with his standards in other works in which Spanish music appears either as a topic or a more fully descriptive element.[17] In comparison with the works of other composers, the uniqueness of this piece lies in the difficulty of finding, in the eighteenth century, musicians as willing as Boccherini to subordinate the primarily formal logic of their compositions to the sonic characteristics of the individual episodes they contain.[18] A connective and transformative logic—and, with it, a high degree of authorial mediation of what is represented—is always discernible in Scarlatti's harpsichord sonatas, even in those that take the form of a "long story rich in digressions and twists," perhaps precisely because they are dominated by references to the Spanish musical world.[19] Such logic is, moreover, widely recognized as one of the cornerstones of Viennese Classicism, even in works that most explicitly absorb or depict musical reality.[20] In the *Musica notturna*, more vehemently than in his other descriptive compositions of documentary character, Boccherini does not renounce the authorial transformation of the material; rather, he shifts this action to a level different from that of musical form, namely one in which gesture becomes the central element, as we shall see in the fourth section of this article.

As for the exportability of this music beyond its place of origin and its capacity to traverse historical time without losing its communicative power, Boccherini himself, as we'll see, appears skeptical. I think this skepticism concerns not only the subject matter of the music and its stylistic uniqueness, but also, and above all, the way in which it seeks to represent not merely certain musical practices, but also the space—an urban space—animating

17 According to Leonard Ratner's formulation, which opened the way to topic theory, topics are characteristic figures developed in eighteenth-century music through the contacts with situations in the external world. See Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 9.

18 See Marco Mangani, "'La verità della cosa che si va a rappresentare': Boccherini e la musica 'altra'." *Per archi* 12 (2024): 46.

19 Enrico Baiano and Marco Moiraghi, *Le Sonate di Domenico Scarlatti. Contesto, testo, interpretazione* (Lucca: LIM, 2014), 99–100.

20 See for example the case of Mozart's *Ein musikalischer Spaß* KV 522, compared with Boccherini's *Musica notturna* in Mangani, "'La verità della cosa che si va a rappresentare'," 46–9.

them. Boccherini's doubt also concerns the mediation involved in representation, which is itself both spatial and temporal. In this process of mediation, which also includes Boccherini's revision of the piece through a striking modification of its final movement, urban and symbolic space are invariably and inextricably intertwined, and in original and compelling ways. In the following sections, I will examine this intriguing network more closely.

Music and the Map, Music as Map

Let us begin with the subject of Boccherini's piece, *what* the piece represents; let us therefore start with urban space. "This *quintettino* represents the music that passes at night through the streets of Madrid, beginning with the tolling of the Ave Maria and ending with the Ritirata."[21] It is Boccherini who, in the first part of the note written on the title page, explains the descriptive program of his quintet: an excerpt from Madrid's lively nightlife is represented in five musical episodes, proceeding from the tolling of the Ave Maria on the parish bells to the passage of the soldiers' patrol signaling the military curfew. More specifically, the five short scenes (corresponding to the five movements of the composition) are: 1) *Ave Maria delle Parrocchie/ Ave Maria del Quartiere*; 2) *Minuetto dei ciechi*; 3) *Rosario*; 4) *Passa Calle (Los Manolos)*; 5) *Ritirata*.

The route unfolds through the Madrid of Carlos III, passing through at least three of the eight *quarteles* into which the city was then divided.[22] It is worth noting how Boccherini's musical mapping intersects with the institutional mapping promoted by the Spanish monarchy. Madrid was a growing city at the time, and between the reigns of Fernando VI and Carlos III the process known as the *Planimetría de Madrid*—a mapping of the city for fiscal purposes, involving the rational organization of its different areas and the assignment of house numbers to buildings—was being completed for the first time.[23] The route traced by the *Musica notturna* appears to move, after an initial "panoramic" sonic call (*Ave Maria delle Parrocchie*),

21 "Questo quintettino rappresenta la musica che passa di notte per le strade di Madrid, cominciando dal tocco dell'Ave Maria, sino alla Ritirata." See notes 5 and 8.

22 Each *quartel* was divided into eight *barrios*, each *barrio* into eight *ministros*. See Juan Francisco González, *Madrid dividido en ocho quarteles con otros tantos barrios cada uno* (Madrid: Oficina de Miguel Escribano, 1770).

23 See "Madrid" in Jaime Tortella, *Luigi Boccherini. Diccionario de Términos, Lugares y Personas* (Madrid: Asociación Luigi Boccherini, 2008), 277–80.

from west to southeast, from the area of the royal palace, corresponding to the *quartel de Palacio*, to the *quartel de Lavapiés*, where the *manolos* entertained, passing through the central *quartel de la Plaza*.[24]

Let's now examine the movements of the quintet more closely. The opening movement, *Ave Maria delle Parrocchie/Ave Maria del Quartiere*, is built upon two sound effects that refer directly to the real situation the music seeks to depict.[25] This piece functions as a kind of introduction to the entire quintet. Whereas in the later movements the imitation of characteristic sound elements complements—through a strong referential power—the descriptive level established by the structural elements of the composition (melody, harmony, rhythm, and form), in this first movement it fulfils all functions on its own. In the first section of the movement, Boccherini has all the instruments except the first violin imitate "the tolling of the bells when they play the Ave Maria" ["il tocco delle campane quando suonan l'Ave Maria"] by playing pizzicato double stops on the highest open strings. The first cello anticipates the double stop, as if imitating the strike of the bell. In the second section, the four instruments fall silent and the first violin enters. Playing as forcefully as possible, it imitates "the drum of the soldiers' quarter" ["il tamburo del quartier dei soldati"].

The first scene presenting characters, the *Minuetto dei ciechi*, features blind musicians: professional beggars, often organized into guilds recognized by the public authorities, who played entertaining tunes on guitar, flute, and *viella de rueda* (hurdy-gurdy), or performed songs and declamations on the latest political and social news, functioning as "street gazettes" and often mocking powerful figures of the day. Blind musicians are recurring figures in the Spanish short theater of the period, where examples of their minuets may also be found.[26] As regards musical form, Boccherini

24 A schematic map of Madrid at the time of Carlos III, divided into the eight *quarteles*, can be found in Tortella, 278. Maps of Madrid made in the eighteenth century, around the time of the *Planimetría*, can be found at the following link: *Catálogo de la cartoteca – Instituto Geográfico Nacional*, accessed May 28, 2026, https://www.ign.es/web/catalogo-cartoteca/apibadasid/cartoteca/searchComplex/@nih&@nih&@nih&@nih&@nih&1701,1800. I wish to thank Sara Navarro Lalanda for bringing this resource to my attention.

25 I deliberately refrain from providing transcribed musical examples to support the analytical description of the individual movements of *Musica notturna*. Instead, readers are invited to digitally consult the manuscript sources in Berlin and Paris (links are provided in notes 5 and 8), as well as the excerpts from the sources reproduced and discussed in Aguilera Concepción, "*La música nocturna de las calles de Madrid*, de Boccherini."

26 For example, in *El Prado por la Noche*, a *sainete* by Ramón de la Cruz. See Ramón de

reduces the minuet model he usually employs. He omits both the trio and the final reprise of the first section, replacing the latter with a rather unusual passage in which the succession of accompaniment chords played by the two cellos in the second section is repeated, but without the first bar. The *Minuetto dei ciechi* possesses a rustic character, conveyed by the "alla zoppa" profile of the melody and by the accompaniment provided by the cellos, roughly held and played like guitars.[27]

The quintet continues with the *Rosario*. The practice of the rosary as a form of street singing was widespread in eighteenth-century Spain. Groups of singers, known as "rosary singers," circulated through the streets of Madrid; consisting mostly of nuns, monks, and priests accompanied by instrumentalists (the bassoon is specifically mentioned in the quintet), they moved through the city in small processions that could be heard both at night and during the day.[28] The expressive power of this movement lies in the contrast between its two sections, evoking the responsorial structure of the original functional music. The opposition between *Lento assai* and *Allegro* is reinforced by the contrast between the duple meter of section A (2/2) and the triple meter of section B (3/4), as well as by the dynamic range between the *piano* of the first section (not stated in the score, but clearly implied by the instruction "dolcissimo e con grazia") and the *forte* of the second. The fundamental difference between the two sections, however, lies in the texture. In the first juxtaposition, the change in texture (two voices at varying distances in A against five compact voices in B) creates the perception of a gap between two sound masses, evoking the asymmetry of two opposed vocal groups. In the subsequent alternations (A' B A' B), the textural contrast becomes even more radical through the contrapuntal entrance of the cello, imitating the bassoon. In order to characterize the two sections, Boccherini draws on stylistic solutions that recur throughout his output, here used for descriptive purposes. In section A, the melody of the first cello is doubled by the first violin: the pairing of these two instruments, although usually with the roles reversed, is a distinctive feature of Boccherini's quintets. The octave doubling of the parts, employed in section B to create a compact and powerful sound, is instead one of the techniques the composer de-

la Cruz, *Sainetes*, ed. John Dowling, vol. 1 (Madrid: Castalia, 1987), 92.

27 On 'alla zoppa' rhythmic gesture see Ratner, *Classic Music*, 85.

28 Mary Neal Hamilton, *Music in Eighteenth-Century Spain* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1937), 179–80.

rives from symphonic language and uses to emphasize episodes through abrupt contrasts between sound masses.[29] Thus, in the third movement as well, all the formal and stylistic elements—together with the sound of a "campanello," imitated by the second violin in A and by the viola in A'—contribute remarkably to the rendering of a functional music drawn from reality: the responsorial form of the processional song, reproduced in the contrast between sections A and B. Boccherini offers a compelling scenic representation of a moment of popular religiosity.

The fourth movement is a *Passa Calle*. The composer, in the note preceding the music, briefly explains the meaning of the term and illustrates its character and function: "a manner of playing and singing called by the Spaniards *Passa Calle*, that is, *Passa Strada*, with which, or with something only slightly different, they amuse themselves at night by singing and playing."[30] The subtitle *Los Manolos. Chanteurs des rues*, found in the principal source of the second version of the quintet, informs us who these "Spaniards" actually are, identifying them as the exuberant young people of the Lavapiés neighborhood. The *manolo* was a younger variant of the *majo*, the commoner who proudly displayed his Iberian temperament. With the title *Passa Calle*, Boccherini refers to the popular practice of the *passacaglia*, which had remained alive in Spain in the form of an instrumental refrain played on guitar between the verses of a song. This refrain consisted of a short cadential succession of chords developed from a bass pattern. The structure of the *passacaglia* performed by the *manolos* is built precisely upon the alternation between an instrumental refrain, melodic sections referring to the verses of a song, and a third episode that functions as a variant of the refrain. In this third episode, the texture becomes lighter, with the second violin left alone to perform, in rapid sixteenth-note arpeggios, the chordal succession of the refrain.

Finally, after a short introduction recalling the soldiers' drum already heard in the second section of the first movement (*Ave Maria del Quartiere*), the last scene opens: the *Ritirata*, which represents the passage of the night patrol of soldiers signaling, by means of a march, that it is time for the

29 See Guido Salvetti, "Camerismo sinfonico e sinfonismo cameristico: alla ricerca di un approccio analitico pertinente," in *Luigi Boccherini e la musica strumentale dei maestri italiani in Europa tra Sette e Ottocento, Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Siena 29–31 luglio 1993*, eds. Francesco Degrada and Ludwig Finscher, *Chigiana* 43, nuova serie no. 23 (1993): 341.

30 "Modo di suono e canto chiamato dagli Spagnoli *Passa Calle*, cioè *Passa Strada*, con il quale, o con altro poco differente, si divertono la notte cantando e suonando."

troops to return to headquarters.[31] The main difference between the first and second versions of the *Musica notturna* lies in the reworking of this final movement.

The first version of this movement is divided into four sections, in which the theme of the *Ritirata* undergoes no melodic variation. Changes in texture and dynamics distinguish the sections, imparting a sense of movement to the composition and thereby effectively conveying the impression of a march progressing through urban space. The basic "pipes and drums" module, together with the obsessive articulation of the martial theme, remains unchanged throughout the different sections. The theme of the *Ritirata* has been identified: it derives from an official collection of music for the military band of the Spanish court.[32] The identification of the theme gives us a measure of the actual contemporaneity and realism of Boccherini's musical representation.[33]

From Sketch to Scene: The Ritirata with Variations

In the second version of the quintet's final movement, Boccherini follows the theme of the *Ritirata* with a series of eleven variations. The theme-and-variations form is nevertheless placed at the service of the music's representational function. Through form and dynamics, Boccherini introduces into the scene the spatial element of the soldiers' patrol as it gradually approaches and then recedes from a point of observation and listening.[34] With re-

31 The function of the retreat, as a nighttime call for soldiers lingering in the city to return to their base is indicated in the *Ordenanzas* of Carlos III. See Aguilera Concepción, "*La música nocturna de las calles de Madrid*, de Boccherini."

32 *Libro de la ordenanza de los toques de pifanos y tambores que se tocan nuovamente en la ynfanta [infantería] española*, 1761, manuscript, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, M/2791. The author of these *toques* is Manuel Espinosa de los Monteros, who was among the chamber musicians of Carlos III.

33 For a comparison between the *toque de retreta* and the theme of Boccherini's *Ritirata* see again Aguilera Concepción, "*La música nocturna de las calles de Madrid*, de Boccherini," which includes images of the sources of both pieces.

34 Boccherini later made several transcriptions of the *Ritirata* with variations. It became the third movement of the piano quintet op. 57, no. 6, G 418 and of the quintet with two violas G 390, itself a transcription of the piano quintet G 418, and an independent piece for guitar quintet. On the status of the two viola quintets within Boccherini's instrumental production and on the question of their authenticity see Loukia Drosopoulou, "Luigi Boccherini's String Quintets with Two Violas Opp. 60 and 62 (G 391–402): A Re-Examination of Their Origin," *Boccherini Studies* 3 (2011): 169–96. The transcription for guitar quintet of the *Ritirata* with

gard to form, the impression of semicircular movement through space is achieved through the arched arrangement of the variations. Variations 1–10 are divided into three groups (1–3, 4–7, and 8–10) characterized by the return in the third group of the first three variations, with perfect mirroring contradicted only by the inversion of the second and third variations in nos. 8–9. Variation 11, entirely new, functions as a coda. On the level of dynamics, the general effect the composer intends to achieve is explained in the note preceding the music: "it is imagined that the *Ritirata* begins to be heard from a very great distance; therefore it must be played softly, so that it is barely audible at first, while the *crescendo* and *diminuendo* should proceed according to the way it is perceived."[35] This effect is achieved through the gradual increase and decrease of dynamics, distributed so as to reach their peak of intensity—coinciding with the structural climax—in variation 6.

This structure and dynamic design seem to enhance the piece's representational power, understood as music's capacity to describe and stage reality, when compared with the first version. At the same time, however, Boccherini seems to distance himself slightly from the strict adherence to sonic reality that had characterized the first version of the *Ritirata*. He now resorts to a more elaborate style of writing, one that has no direct counterpart in the actual military retreat. Especially in the first three variations, the movement departs from the complete mimesis of real sound elements, returning instead to the musical style more commonly found in Boccherini's chamber compositions without an explicitly descriptive character. This aspect is less evident in the central variations, where a more descriptive musical language is employed, similar to that of the first version. To summarize, in the *Musica notturna delle strade di Madrid*:

> The bells announce the end of the day, the blind musicians sing their *coplas* while asking for alms, the prayers of the rosary can be heard, the young men of the *barrio* Lavapiés, known as *Los Manolos*, go out to dance in the streets

variations had been published by Heinrich Albert in 1920 as the fourth and final movement of the quintet that Gérard would later number as G 453. New sources discovered in recent years have shown that this movement was instead an autonomous piece. See Rudolf Rasch, "François de Fossa, Louis Picquot and the Transmission of Luigi Boccherini's Guitar Quintets," *Early Music* 50, n. 1 (2022): 77–96.

35 "Si figura che la *Ritirata* cominci a farsi sentire di lontano assai, perciò dovrà suonarsi con piano, che appena si senta, il crescendo e il mancando sarà poi conforme si andrà avvertendo."

> and squares, and the evening ends with the retreat, performed by the patrol troops of the royal guard, which signals that they should return to headquarters: it can be heard from afar, passes close to the listener, and then disappears into the darkness.[36]

This is how Jaime Tortella sums up the representational content of Boccherini's quintet, effectively conveying, through his verbalization, the rapid succession of images and—as we would call it today—the immersive character of this music. One is almost led to wonder whether Boccherini was imagining an instant captured from multiple points of observation and listening, rather than a succession of moments. The note written by Boccherini at the beginning of the piece specifies "beginning with the tolling of the Ave Maria, until the *Ritirata*," leading us to imagine the composition as unfolding chronologically and moving forward. Some elements of the quintet, however, introduce a fragmentary and circular temporality, almost as if we were not moving forward, but rather being offered fragments of music and sonic events occurring more or less simultaneously.

This sense of fragmentariness arises from the character of each movement as a brief descriptive sketch. It disappears only in the second version of the *Ritirata*, a piece with a clearer beginning and ending, although both are softened by the gradual dynamic attenuation of the sound. Circularity is introduced into the quintet through the return of the military drum, first heard near the opening in the *Ave Maria del Quartiere* and then reintroduced in the final *Ritirata*. The reprise of introductory material from the first movement in the final movement is one of Boccherini's cyclical strategies.[37] Here, combined with the circular motion of the *Ritirata* itself—albeit in different forms in the two versions of the piece—it contributes to softening the perception of linear temporality in favor of a temporality that turns back upon itself: static and self-enclosed, as though we were confronted with a single instant of reality that the music allows us to experience from multiple angles.[38]

36 "*La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid*," in Tortella, *Luigi Boccherini. Diccionario de Términos, Lugares y Personas*, 257. By the same author, see also the section dedicated to the *Musica notturna* in "La música descriptiva o argumental en el catálogo de Luigi Boccherini," *Nassarre. Revista Aragonesa de Musicología* 20 (2004): 193–220.

37 On cyclical forms in Boccherini's music see Marco Mangani, "Tipologia delle forme cicliche nella musica di Boccherini," *Codice 602*, nuova serie 1 (2010): 58–72.

38 On the relationship between temporal circularity and immersion in sonic space in another descriptive composition by Boccherini, the quintet with two cellos op. 11, no. 6 *L'uc-*

How and Why Does Boccherini Represent Madrid in Music?

These considerations lead us from the question of *what* is represented in the quintet to the questions of *how* representation is achieved, and *why* it was sought in the first place. The task now is to understand how urban space operates as symbolic space. Let us begin with the question of *how*. Boccherini opts for a form of meta-musical descriptivism in which musical language, in order to represent external reality, refers back to itself in the form in which it is necessarily bound to that very reality. Beyond this initial relationship, representation is articulated on two interconnected levels. The first may be defined as the level of *expression*, on which musical topics primarily operate.[39] In the *Musica notturna*, topics may be identified without much difficulty thanks to the functional nature—and therefore the strongly typified stylistic character—of the quintet's movements. One might say that the *Musica notturna* is an instrumental work that playfully stages an overexposure of topics. These are then anchored, through programmatic titles, to a precise musical reality.[40] Particularly eloquent in this regard is the second part of Boccherini's note on the title page of the Berlin score: "everything that does not conform to the rules of composition must be condoned by the truth of what is being represented."[41]

The second level of representation is that of *action*, through which the piece evokes the moments described in physical terms and stages the scenes in a theatrical sense. Each sonic element, by referring to its counterpart in the functional practice from which it derives, implicitly evokes the presence of the person or persons who actually produce it. Gestural imitation, accompanying sonic imitation, contributes to making the characters' stage presence perceptible. One may recall the aforementioned cellists who become guitarists in the *Minuetto dei ciechi*: "cellists will place the instrument across their knees and pluck with the nails of the entire hand turned backwards, like playing a guitar."[42] Le Guin has emphasized how a form of

celliera (G 276), see Matteo Giuggioli, "Le voliere di don Luis. Modi e significati della rappresentazione nel Quintetto op. 11, No. 6 *L'uccelliera* di Luigi Boccherini," *Estudios musicales del clasicismo* 3 (2016): 155–96.

39 See Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form and Style*.

40 On the agency of topics in the *Musica notturna* see Mangani, "'La verità della cosa che si va a rappresentare.'"

41 "Tutto ciò che non è conforme alle regole della composizione, deve condonarsi alla verità della cosa che si va a rappresentare."

42 "I violoncelli si metteranno l'istrumento attraversato sulle ginocchia, e pizzicaranno

theatricality, in which the performer actively contributes through gesture to the production of the music's affective meanings, is a constant feature of Boccherini's chamber compositions. The instrumentalist, like the actor or pantomime dancer of the time, is thus confronted with the problem of identifying with a specific role.[43]

What, then, might be the reasons behind such a radical musical representation? From this perspective as well, the relationship between music and space is far from secondary. Boccherini composed his quintet far from Madrid, in Arenas de San Pedro, in the district of Ávila. In 1776 he had followed the Infante Don Luis to this place, where the Infante chose to spend the period of exile from the capital and from the royal court of his brother Carlos III, to which he had been condemned.

One fact that should not be underestimated is the considerable familiarity Boccherini must already have had at the time with Madrid's urban and cultural space. Before following Don Luis into exile, Boccherini had lived in Madrid for eight years (1768–1776). He maintained his residence there even after entering the service of the Infante in 1770, although Don Luis preferred to live outside the city, in his palace at Boadilla del Monte. In the years before his move to Arenas, Boccherini changed residence twice, living first in the *quartel de Afligidos*, in the northwest of the city, and then in Calle de Atocha, in the very center of Madrid. After the nine years he spent in Arenas, Boccherini returned to settle permanently in Madrid. He changed residence at least four more times, once again moving between different areas of the city. The home in which he lived longest, for fifteen years, was located in the northern part of Madrid, in Calle de la Madera Alta, in the *barrio* of San Ildefonso, within the *quartel de las Maravillas*.[44] Even considering the solid and well-established bond with the city that Boccherini already had at the time he composed the *Musica notturna*, one possible hypothesis is that the composer may have been prompted to conceive such a singular work by nostalgia for his life in Madrid—a feeling experienced not only by Boccherini, but all the members of the Infante Don Luis's private court, who had found

con le ugnie di tutta la mano posta al rovescio, come chi suona una chitarra."

43 See Elisabeth Le Guin, "'One Says That One Weeps, but One Does Not Weep': Sensible, Grotesque, and Mechanical Embodiments in Boccherini's Chamber Music," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55, no. 2 (2002): 207–54; Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body*.

44 The map of Boccherini's homes in Madrid can be reconstructed through the entries devoted to the different areas of the city where the composer lived, in Tortella, *Luigi Boccherini. Diccionario de Términos, Lugares y Personas*.

themselves following him to Arenas, an isolated place far removed from the dynamism of the city.

Nostalgia, however, can at most be regarded as an occasional motive behind the conception of the *Musica notturna*. A more substantial reason is probably to be found in the connections between the work's particular descriptive character—grounded in the reality of everyday life rather than in the conventional subjects more commonly cultivated in descriptive compositions of the period—and the contemporary Iberian artistic and cultural panorama. In particular, the *Musica notturna* reveals a close connection with *madrileñismo*, that is, the aesthetic and stylistic tendency, dominant at the time in Spanish visual and literary art, to depict scenes of popular life—above all in Madrid—in a sketch-like manner. In visual art, this tendency is exemplified by the cycles of preparatory cartoons for the tapestries designed for the royal residences of El Escorial and El Pardo, which Francisco Goya produced on several occasions. Boccherini, moreover, had the opportunity to meet Goya personally during the years in Arenas.[45] In literature, by contrast, *madrileñismo* is associated above all with the *sainete* and its most celebrated author, the Madrid playwright Ramón de la Cruz. Together with the *zarzuela* (Spanish comic opera), the *sainete* formed the essential nucleus of the *género chico* of Spanish theater. It consisted of a single act of variable length, though generally not exceeding twenty-five minutes, and featured characters drawn exclusively from Madrid's popular life. The poetics of Cruz—who states in the prologue to the edition of his works, published between 1786 and 1791, that the *sainete* is an "exact painting of the civil life and customs of the Spaniards"—closely resembles the mimetic purpose of the *Musica notturna*, in which Boccherini proves willing to sacrifice "the rules of composition" in favor of the "truth of what is being represented." Boccherini also had direct contact with Cruz: he had most likely already met him during his first stay in Madrid, before the Infante Don Luis's exile to Arenas, and he certainly encountered him again in 1786, when he composed the music for the *zarzuela La Clementina*, for which the playwright had written the text. The *Musica notturna* may therefore be understood as a peculiar kind of *sainete* made entirely of music.[46]

45 However, he composed the *Musica notturna* before meeting him, as Goya first arrived in Arenas in 1783.

46 The connection between Boccherini's chamber music and the forms of Spanish short theater, in particular with Cruz's *sainete*, goes beyond the affinity found in the *Musica notturna*, as Marco Mangani has shown in "'El sainete interrumpido': il metalinguaggio di Boccherini e l'estetica dell'Illuminismo," in *Centros de poder italianos en la monarquía hispánica*

Symbolizing Urban Space

This adherence to specifically Iberian models, not only in content but also in forms of representation, may have been the principal reason for Boccherini's doubts when attempting to sell a piece such as the *Musica notturna* to Pleyel. In a letter to the publisher of July 10, 1797, he wrote: "in Opus 30, the *quintettini*, you will find one titled *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid*. This piece is totally useless, and even ridiculous, outside Spain, since listeners can never understand its meaning, nor can performers play it as it ought to be played."[47] It is important to emphasize that, although Spain was often exoticized within the broader discourse of the so-called "Black Legend," Boccherini is not engaging with that discourse, which is fundamentally foreign both to him and his music.[48] As I have already noted, drawing on Le Guin's observations, Boccherini may instead be regarded as an artist and intellectual deeply aligned with the Spanish *Ilustración*. His words here seem almost intended to make precisely this point. There is no exoticizing intention in these remarks, nor in his music, and still less any racist undertone.

In presenting the case of the *Musica notturna* to Pleyel, Boccherini instead emphasizes the uniqueness of the Spanish musical and cultural context, as though this music were difficult to understand precisely because of its intrinsic and distinctive density of meaning. This aspect—which was evidently crucial to the question of the *Musica notturna*'s marketability outside Spain—seems to point to a deeper level of meaning, connected to a further dimension of the symbolic representation of Madrid's urban space in this composition.

In the 1780s, Boccherini seems to have had no difficulty allowing the quintet to circulate outside Spain. The principal Berlin source is, indeed, one of the scores that he sent to Prince Frederick William of Prussia for

(siglos XV–XVIII), vol. 3, eds. J. Martínez Millán and M. Rivero Rodriguez (Madrid: Polifemo, 2010), 2219–40; see also Marco Mangani, "El concepto de metalenguaje como metáfora del estilo boccheriniano," *Estudios musicales del clasicismo* 3 (2016): 13–37.

47 "Nell'Opera 30, quintettini, troverete che uno ha per titolo *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid*. Questo pezzo è totalmente inutile, ed anche ridicolo fuori di Spagna, poiché non possono gli uditori giammai comprenderne il significato, né gli esecutori sonarlo come deve essere suonato." See Boccherini, *Epistolario*, 164. To compensate for this quintet, which he considered unpublishable, Boccherini sent to Pleyel the symphony op. 37, no. 1, G 515.

48 See Ruth MacKay, *"Lazy, Improvident People": Myth and Reality in the Writing of Spanish History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

self-promotional purposes; in this score, far from treating the musical representation as incomprehensible, the composer explains the rules of his game in great detail through performance directions. However, Pleyel did not contradict Boccherini's impression: he did not publish the *Musica notturna*. Further confirmation that Boccherini's doubts were well founded may be found in the poor reception of the *Musica notturna* during the *séances* organized in Paris in the first half of the nineteenth century by violinist Pierre Baillot. In these public concerts, Baillot—a great violinist as well as an admirer and connoisseur of Boccherini's music—regularly performed chamber works, especially Boccherini's quintets. The *Musica notturna* was included only once, in the first year of Baillot's *séances*, on February 27, 1815, and was never performed again.[49]

What, then, had changed on the European scene between 1780 and 1797? Why was a piece of music entirely focused on the representation of a geographically specific musical space—in this case, the city of Madrid—intelligible outside its original context at the earlier date, but apparently no longer so at the later one? Different frameworks of musical appreciation in these two contexts of reception certainly played a role, beyond mere chronological distance. Le Guin has emphasized that Boccherini's music, written for cultivated patrons and musical connoisseurs—among whom Prince Frederick William of Prussia, himself a skilled musician, stands out—was not only of high quality but also open to a certain degree of experimentalism.[50] This is evident in the *Musica notturna*. Through the publishing market, however, Boccherini's music increasingly came into contact with a broader and less homogeneous audience, a process that intensified toward the end of the eighteenth century. In this respect, his major commercial negotiation with Pleyel represents a crucial moment. On the one hand, this music "formed" its new audience; on the other, the composer understood that he had to establish a compromise with it. Boccherini's doubts concerning the *Musica notturna* offer eloquent testimony to this awareness.

To attempt a deeper answer to the question of the changing conditions that affected the comprehensibility of the *Musica notturna* between the 1780s and the end of the century, we may also turn to a study by the iconologist Victor Stoichita and the art historian Anna Maria Coderch, which, I

49 Marco Mangani, "La música de Boccherini en las sesiones de Pierre Baillot (1814–1840)," *Estudios musicales del clasicismo* 6 (2022): 68.

50 Le Guin, "Algunos aspectos de la recepción de Boccherini," 123.

think, offers a fruitful perspective on Boccherini's music as well.[51] At the center of Stoichita and Coderch's study is the thesis that, with the French Revolution, the logic of reversal that had constituted the essence of carnival became reality.[52] The spirit of carnival was thus exhausted, since carnival had become a profoundly serious key to modernity. It remained confined to the realm of spectacle; in practice, it became a simulacrum of itself, stripped of the subversive and playful force it had possessed within *ancien-régime* society.[53] As Stoichita and Coderch demonstrate, Goya was a highly sensitive and experimental pictorial interpreter of the carnivalesque dynamics that reflected these historical transformations.

That the Infante Don Luis's private court during the exile at Arenas—where the *Musica notturna* was composed—provided fertile ground for the development of this mode of thought and artistic representation is demonstrated, for example, by the large portrait of the Infante and his family painted by Goya at Arenas between 1783 and 1784.[54] As is well known, the painting probably also includes a portrait of Boccherini himself, depicted among the members of Don Luis's innermost circle. If so, this would constitute evidence of direct contact between the painter and the composer, traces of which continued to emerge in Madrid in the following years. Stoichita and Coderch interpret the portrait of the Infante's family as a complex and experimental metalinguistic construction centered on the staging of portraiture itself, in which the physical and psychological traits of the depicted figures are explored through the principles of physiognomy in a kind of role-playing performance. The paint-

51 Victor I. Stoichita and Anna Maria Coderch, *Goya: The Last Carnival* (Islington: Reaktion Books, 1999).

52 On the carnivalesque as a cultural and aesthetic category, the primary reference remains Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Sergeiy Sandler (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2025). Bakhtin's study was first published in Russian in 1965.

53 In Spain, and particularly in the Madrid of Kings Carlos III and Carlos IV, carnival, although it remained a deeply felt social ritual throughout the eighteenth century, bore the marks of this process of transformation. This was evident in the declining tendency toward the mingling of aristocracy and common people, as well as in the progressive restrictions imposed by the Bourbon monarchy on its more subversive and violent popular manifestations. See Julio Caro Baroja. *El Carnaval. Análisis histórico-cultural* (Madrid: Taurus, 1965); María José Del Río Barredo, "Burlas y violencia en el Carnaval madrileño de los siglos XVII y XVIII," *Revista de Filología Románica* 3 (2002): 111–27.

54 Francisco Goya, *The Family of the Infante Don Luis*, oil on canvas, cm 248x330, 1783–1784, Mamiano di Traversetolo, Fondazione Magnani Rocca, accessed May 28, 2026, https://www.magnanirocca.it/goya-la-famiglia-dell-infante-don-luis/.

ing is moreover laden with more or less explicit symbolic allusions to pressing contemporary questions concerning the aristocratic legitimacy of María Teresa de Vallabriga y Rozas—the morganatic wife of the Infante Don Luis—and the claims of the Infante and his descendants as potential successors to the Spanish crown.[55]

Boccherini's *Musica notturna* proposes an intellectual as well as musical game based on continuous disguises and on the radical interchange between truth and falsehood. The highest degree of truth is represented through the highest degree of falsehood, with the instruments continually called upon to pretend to be something other than what they actually are. Boccherini's quintet is thus a clear manifestation of the carnivalesque in music and, in its own modest way, an emblematic one.

In the doubt Boccherini expressed to Pleyel at the end of the century concerning the comprehensibility of his experimental quintet outside Spain, one may perhaps glimpse precisely a perception of the changed horizon of the carnivalesque and, with it, an awareness of a change in historical epoch. By sending the *Ritirata* with variations to the publisher—that is, by attempting at least partially to normalize the game enacted in the quintet, which now becomes more conventionally representative in relation to the modes of descriptive music of the period—Boccherini changes strategy not only in shaping his representation of Madrid's urban space, but also in projecting symbolic meaning through it. With no less force than Goya, Boccherini stages, in this passage, the end of carnival.

55 See Stoichita and Coderch, "Royal Games," chap. 7 in *Goya*, 219–63.

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Abstract

In the string quintet in C major *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid*, op. 30, no. 6, G 324 (1780) by Luigi Boccherini a tendency toward musical mimesis reaches its fullest expression. Through the ensemble of two violins, viola, and two cellos, the quintet depicts five episodes of Madrid's nocturnal life in a sophisticated play of musical "disguises." Yet the work's evident playful character should not obscure the complexity of its representational strategy. The selection of musical materials, the formal design, and the interplay among different sonic realities all contribute to the construction of a highly elaborate expressive device. At the same time, the quintet develops an original symbolic representation of the urban space of late eighteenth-century Madrid, in which broader aesthetic and cultural concerns converge. These range from the portrayal of Iberian cultural identity during a period of profound historical change to an ingenious artistic reflection on the relationship between reality and fiction, conceived in fundamentally theatrical terms yet realized entirely through the resources of instrumental music. By considering these interrelated dimensions, this paper reconstructs what appears at first to be a miniature genre piece but ultimately emerges as a rich, multifaceted, and highly distinctive portrait of a city.

Keywords: Luigi Boccherini, La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid, Madrid, symbolic space, carnivalesque

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ARTICLES

Musical Sociability in the Parisian Chaussée d'Antin District (1830–1850)

Louise Bernard de Raymond

The nineteenth century marked a time when the Parisian bourgeoisie retreated into the intimacy of the private sphere. This used to be a commonplace of literary history.[1] Indeed, work in material history has shown how the search for comfort in Parisian apartments involved the gradual adoption of technical devices allowing for "a break from the outside world … the muffling of sounds and the obscuring of views."[2] Nevertheless, as Sharon Marcus has shown in *Apartment Stories*, nineteenth-century bourgeois buildings in Paris were not "enclosed cells, sealed off from urban streets, markets, and labor," but rather "fluid spaces perceived to be happily or dangerously communicating with more overtly public terrain." [3] However, although Marcus's brilliant work is centered on an analysis of two apartment-house novels in which music plays an important role (Balzac's *Le Cousin Pons* and Zola's *Pot-Bouille*), musical matters are surprisingly little considered.[4] Yet not only does music have the ability to pass through doors, windows, and walls; beyond sound, musicians and their practices circulate between the home and the street. This ability to blur the boundaries between these places makes music a privileged phenomenon, particularly so if one wishes to rethink the interdependent relationship between domestic and urban life.[5]

1 Michelle Perrot, ed., *Histoire de la vie privée*, vol. 4, *De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Seuil, 1987).

2 Manuel Charpy, *Le Théâtre des objets. Espaces privés, culture matérielle et identité bourgeoise. Paris, 1830–1914* (PhD diss., Université de Tours, 2010), 24.

3 Sharon Marcus, *Apartment Stories: City and Home in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 2–3.

4 Marcus, 74–6, 178–80.

5 Raising similar questions about the circulation of sound between private and public spaces, Jacek Blaszkiewicz examines the institution of the café-concert and the sonic impact of street music in *Fanfare for a City: Music and the Urban Imagination in Haussmann's Paris* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2024).

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A photograph of rue Saint-Lazare, taken by Charles Marville in the mid-1860s, illustrates this tension between the desire for withdrawal and the porosity of domestic space (*see* Fig. 1).

Fig. 1 – Charles Marville, *Photographie de la rue Saint-Lazare depuis la rue Taitbout*, Paris, Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris, fonds Charles Marville, ca. 1868.

On the surface, the photograph gives an impression of silence: it seems to reveal a hermetic boundary between the buildings and the street. The street, in the Parisian district of Chaussée d'Antin, seems deserted: no pedestrians, beggars, street vendors, street singers, vehicles, or buses disturb the tranquility of the inhabitants, who are hidden behind high facades with closed shutters. Yet this impression is above all a product of the technical constraints of photographic practice in the 1850s and 1860s. The long exposure times required by the process made it impossible to capture movement, thus contributing to the pervasive image of a deserted Paris conveyed by Marville's photographs of this period—a closer look at the sidewalks in this photograph reveals elongated shadows, which in fact correspond to passing pedestrians.[6] Indeed, it is likely that, as he walked the street, Charles Marville heard a universe of sounds that escaped the photograph: a peal of bells from the Trinité Church (seen in the background); or piano music emerging from one of the apartments that line the street. One thing is certain: if the photographer had walked the route two decades earlier, he would have heard instrumental music coming from the apartment on the second floor of the second building on the left.[7] This apartment was then occupied by an amateur musician, Louis-Philippe Girod de Vienney, Baron de Trémont, who organized regular chamber music meetings (so-called *séances*) between 1839 and 1848.[8] A few yards away, another amateur from the same circle, the pharmacist Paul-Antoine Gratacap (known as Cap), held similar meetings for many years in his home at 9 rue des Trois-frères.[9] The apartments of these two close friends were centers of musical sociability in an artistic neighborhood then undergoing a renaissance. According to a tradition inherited from the *ancien régime*, professionals and amateurs from the Chaussée d'Antin mingled every winter, on Friday evenings at Cap's house, on Sunday afternoons at Trémont's, to play instrumental music together (*see* Fig. 2).

6 Patrice de Moncan, *Charles Marvilles. Paris photographié au temps d'Haussmann* (Paris: Éditions du Mécène, 2009), 15.

7 But not the bells of the Trinité, conceived by the architect Théodore Ballu, between 1861 and 1867.

8 Between 1819 and 1838, Trémont hosted such meetings in the apartment he was renting on rue Neuve-Saint-Augustin, in the same district as the Chaussée d'Antin.

9 The sources do not allow us to determine the precise period of Cap's meetings. His correspondence confirms that they were held for sure in the 1830s and 1840s but possibly even before. On the organization of Trémont's *séances*, see Louise Bernard de Raymond, "La galerie du baron de Trémont, lieu de musique sous la monarchie de Juillet. Espace domestique, pratiques musicales et identité nobiliaire," *Revue de musicologie* 110, nos. 1–2 (2024): 43–72.

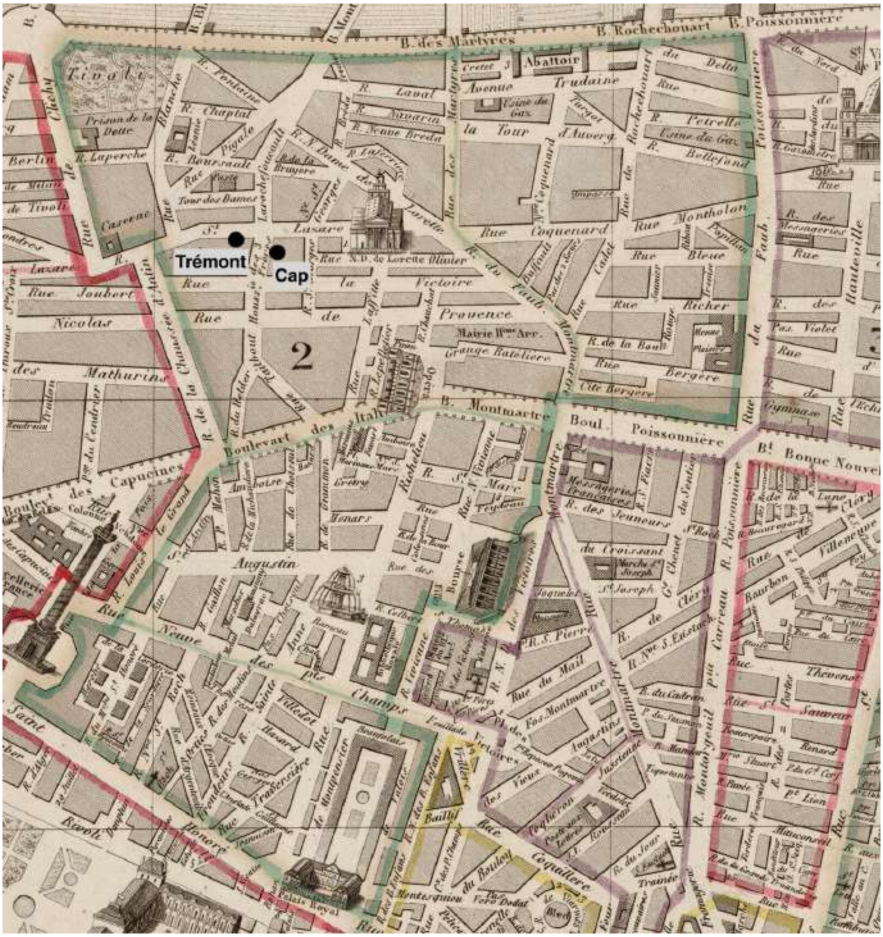

Fig. 2 – The homes of Trémont and Cap, 1830–1850. Charles Dyonnet, *Nouveau plan ou guide de l'étranger dans Paris* (Paris: Logerot, 1841). BnF, Gallica.

Although these meetings took place in private homes, with listeners invited by the hosts, they operated on the same organizational and seasonal principles as the public concerts with which they were somehow in competition. The Cap and Trémont *séances* took place approximately every two weeks during the Parisian concert season (from November to April) and were based on programs that were partly known in advance. The amateurs and professionals, both performers and listeners, were the same as those who made up the orchestra and the audience of the Société des concerts du Conservatoire or the Paris Opéra. Cap and Trémont thus had to coordinate with numerous musical events in the neighborhood, if only to ensure that their guests were

not already booked. Even if little information circulated in the press about these meetings,[10] they were fully engaged with public musical life.

This article will thus not treat these *séances* as isolated phenomena. Rather, my aim will be to understand the extent to which they contributed to shaping the neighborhood's musical life in the second quarter of the nineteenth century; and, conversely, how the rapidly changing musical life shaped forms of sociability between amateurs and professionals. Indeed, if, as Sharon Marcus has stated, "like the city … the apartment house provides a unifying frame for heterogeneity" in Parisian society,[11] conversely the neighborhood can be regarded by its inhabitants as "a vast domestic space, a large family house with adjoining rooms," as Rémy Campos has shown in his article on the Parisian *quartier de la chanson* at the end of the nineteenth century.[12] I will therefore examine two interdependent spaces: the Cap and Trémont apartments on the one hand; and the Chaussée d'Antin neighborhood on the other.

The first part of this article will seek to understand the spatial inscription of these apartments within the musical topography of the Chaussée d'Antin in the 1830s and 1840s. This neighborhood, more than any other, was the site of a transformation of musical life in the wake of the French Revolution. The few streets on the right bank of the Seine—between the Boulevard des Italiens and the Boulevard Montmartre to the south, the Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière to the east, the Boulevard des Martyrs to the north, and the Rue de Clichy and the Chaussée d'Antin to the west—as well as a few neighboring streets, formed a dense web of public institutions and businesses linked to this new musical life.[13] I will first present a map highlighting the

10 I have found only one mention of the Trémont meetings in the press and none about Cap; by comparison, the salon of pianist Pierre-Joseph-Guillaume Zimmerman, also located on rue Saint-Lazare, was the subject of very regular articles. A search in Gallica and Retronews has allowed me to identify nearly 90 articles devoted to the Zimmermann salon (announcements of meetings or reports) between 1833 and 1845 in *Revue musicale de Paris, Gazette musicale de Paris* (later *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*), *Vert-vert, Le Journal de Paris, Le Ménestrel, La France musicale*, and *La Sylphide*.

11 Marcus, *Apartment Stories*, 12.

12 Rémy Campos, "Le quartier parisien de la chanson de la fin du XIXe siècle aux années 1930," *Histoire urbaine* 26, no. 3 (2009): 85. The *quartier de la chanson*, as its contemporaries called it, brought together a group of streets located in Paris's 10th arrondissement. At the end of his article, Campos suggested that the complex of *Nouvelle Athènes*, located on the Chaussée d'Antin, was "the model of the modern art district" in the 1830s and 1840s.

13 This perimeter corresponds to the division officially established during the Directory and the Consulate. Paris was then divided into 12 arrondissements and 48 neighborhoods.

density of musical institutions, professions, professionals, and amateurs in the district: a design that is based on recent work on concert venues and instrument makers, as well as on musical diaries from the 1830s. The remainder of the article will attempt to access the professionals and amateurs in their own words: beyond its topographical reality, the Chaussée d'Antin district was, above all, a space, understood as a "practiced place," to use Michel de Certeau's celebrated formula.[14] In this framework, the Chaussée d'Antin as geometrically defined by urban planning constitutes a place; but as experienced and practiced by its musicians—through their daily movements, encounters, and sociabilities—it becomes a space. My aim is to highlight the way in which these musicians understood the articulation between domestic and public musical spaces. This form of research relies on the triangulation of sources of a varied nature, necessitated by the fact that such private chamber music meetings left, by definition, few traces. In addition to unpublished sources on contemporary musicians, written by Trémont to complete his collection of autograph letters,[15] I will make use of Trémont's and Cap's correspondence with the musicians in their circle,[16] their journals and memoirs,[17] their musical scores, and also archival

It was not until 1860 that Paris was redrawn into the 20 arrondissements it has today; see Philippe Vigier, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris. Paris pendant la monarchie de Juillet (1830–1848)* (Paris: Hachette, 1991), 233.

14 Throughout this article, I will continue to use the terms "space" and "place" as defined by Michel de Certeau in *L'invention du quotidien*, vol. 1, *Arts de faire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 172–4. The notion of "lived space" (*espace vécu*) has been mobilized in French urban history to describe the ways in which inhabitants collectively experience and appropriate a neighborhood. In this tradition, "lived space" refers less to Lefebvre's concept—implying resistance to dominant spatial order—than to the collective daily practices through which inhabitants invest a given urban territory with social meaning —a usage closer to De Certeau's "practiced place." See Alain Cabantous, "Le quartier, espace vécu à l'époque moderne: ambiguïtés et perspective d'une histoire," *Histoire, économie et société* 13, no. 3 (1994): 427–39; see also Campos, "Le quartier parisien de la chanson;" Mélanie Traversier, "Le quartier artistique, un objet pour l'histoire urbaine," *Histoire urbaine* 26, no. 3 (2009): 17.

15 Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits, Français 1256–12761, *Collection de lettres autographes de personnages célèbres des XVIIe et XIXe siècles du baron de Trémont*, 6 vols. This source has been discussed in detail in Bernard de Raymond, "La galerie du baron de Trémont."

16 These unpublished letters are mainly preserved in the Music Department of the BnF, but also in the Municipal Archives of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, at the Institut de France and in the collection of Trémont's autograph letters. Mentions of Cap's and Trémont's meetings are also found in the correspondence of Felix Mendelssohn, George Onslow, Hector Berlioz, Frédéric Chopin, and Charles Dancla.

17 The diary kept by the Polish composer Józef Brzowski during his stay in Paris in

sources that provide information on the materiality of the homes of these two amateurs: inventories made after death, wills,[18] auction catalogs of their collections of autographs.[19] The objective is twofold. First, I aim to show how the spatial proximity of musicians and music professions at the Chaussée d'Antin favored forms of sociability that took shape in and around Cap's and Trémont's domestic meetings.[20] Second, I seek to highlight how the "gift economy"[21] at work in these domestic gatherings helps explain how professionals and amateurs relied on such events to further their careers, musical lives, and the construction of symbolic capital.

A District for New Musical Professions

In the first half of the nineteenth century, profound changes in Parisian musical life left their mark on the urban planning, architecture, and demographics of the Chaussée d'Antin (*see* Fig. 3). The district had long been home to troupes from the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique, and the Théâtre-Italien. During the July Monarchy, the Opéra was located on rue Le Peletier (inaugurated in 1821), the Théâtre-Italien occupied the Théâtre Favart (until it burned down in 1838), then the Salle Ventadour after a three-year exile at the Théâtre de l'Odéon on the left bank of the Seine. The Opéra-Comique occupied the Salle Ventadour (until 1832), then the Théâtre des Nouveautés

1836–1837; the memoirs of Eugène Sauzay, already cited: Eugène Sauzay, *Les Quatre âges de la vie, tapuscrit des mémoires du violoniste établi par son descendant Norbert Ricard*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département de la musique (VM FONDS 192 BAS-boîte 5).

18 Archives nationales (AN), MC/ET/XXVI/1163, *Inventaire après décès du baron de Trémont*, August 2, 1852; Archives nationales (AN), MC/ET/XXVI/1162, Testament du baron de Trémont; Archives nationales (AN), MC/ET/CVII/1006, Testament de Paul-Antoine Gratacap, February 6, 1876.

19 *Catalogue d'une collection de belles estampes anciennes et modernes … dont la vente se fera pour cause du décès de M. le baron de Trémont …* (Paris: Maulde et Renou, 1852); *Notice des ouvrages de musique, partitions, collections, recueils, méthodes, etc. provenant de la bibliothèque de feu M. le baron de Trémont, dont la vente aura lieu les jeudi 23 et vendredi 24 décembre 1852 […]* (Paris: Imprimerie Bonaventure et Ducessois, 1852); *Catalogue d'une intéressante collection de lettres autographes provenant d'un cabinet connu [Cap]* (Paris: Charavay Frères, 1878); BnF, Département de la musique, CV-4775.

20 Pilar González Bernaldo de Quirós, "Sociabilité urbaine," *Hypothèses* 12, no. 1 (2009): 296.

21 Rémy Campos, "Donner un concert. Les formes de la libéralité dans les salons parisiens (1870–1914)," in *Financing Music in Europe*, ed. Etienne Jardin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), 79–108.

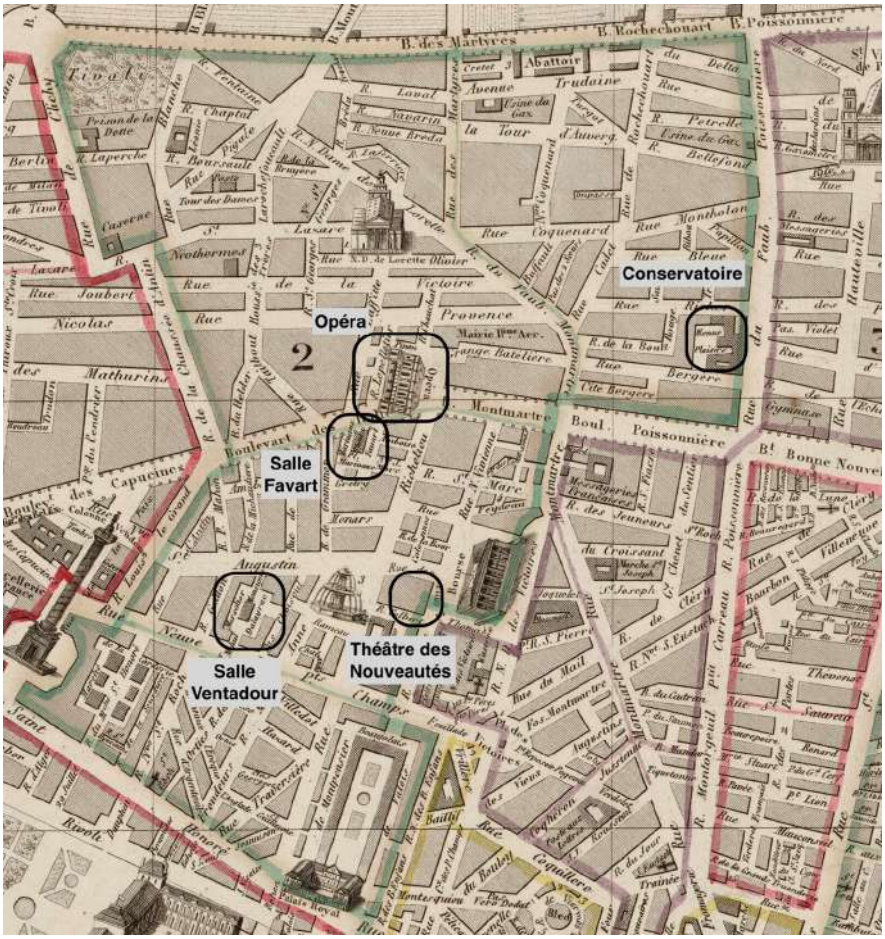

Fig. 3 – Musical institutions at the Chaussée d'Antin.

(until 1840), and finally the "second" Salle Favart. Founded in 1795 in the wake of the French Revolution, the Paris Conservatoire—which profoundly transformed musical life by centralizing the training of professional musicians and composers—was established on rue Bergère.

It was around this institutional center that the Chaussée d'Antin began to welcome new venues, professions, and people linked to the growth of musical life. From 1830, music publishers, whose trade had gradually emerged since the mid-eighteenth century in the Halle au blé and Saint-Eustache districts, migrated to the second *arrondissement ancien* (which roughly corresponds to the current ninth arrondissement), where the Chaussée

d'Antin district is located.[22] This area also ranks second in the concentration of instrument makers, particularly piano makers. Beyond the best known (Erard, Pleyel, Herz, and Pape), 42 makers opened their workshops and stores there. The unprecedented growth of public concerts also resulted in a concentration of concert halls in its immediate surroundings. The 68 Parisian halls that most frequently featured public concerts between 1822 and 1848 were thus concentrated in an area roughly corresponding to that district.[23] Among them, those built by piano makers at the end of the 1830s would play a key role in the development of Parisian public concerts.[24] This is particularly the case with the Salle Herz (built in 1838 at 48 rue de la Victoire), the Salle Pleyel (built in 1839 on 22–34 rue de Rochechouart), and the Salle Erard (built in the late 1850s on 13 rue du Mail). But the most prestigious musical venue in the neighborhood—and arguably in Paris as a whole—was the Salle du Conservatoire, home to the renowned Société des Concerts du Conservatoire founded in 1828. Finally, among the multitude of musical periodicals that emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century, many settled on the Chaussée d'Antin.[25]

The neighborhood's musical geography was also a social geography.[26] The old second arrondissement was one of those whose population grew the most between 1801 and 1846: the Chaussée d'Antin became the district

22 This is particularly the case for Brandus, Troupenas, Richault, Schlesinger, and Sieber, to name only the most well-known publishing houses; see Annick Devriès and François Lesure, *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français*, vol. 2, *1820–1914* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1988), 16–7.

23 This perimeter runs from rues Rivoli and Grenelle-Saint-Honoré (to the south), to rue Montorgueil (to the east), to rues Castiglione and Chaussée d'Antin (to the west), to rues Saint-Lazare and de la Tour d'Auvergne (to the north); see Etienne Jardin, "Les concerts parisiens de 1822 à 1848 d'après les archives du droit des pauvres," in *Archives du concert. La vie musicale française à la lumière de sources inédites (XVIIIe-XIXe siècles)*, eds. Étienne Jardin and Patrick Taïeb (Arles–Paris: Actes Sud–Palazzetto Bru-Zane, 2015), 105–16.

24 Laure Schnapper, "Le rôle des facteurs de piano dans le développement du concert public à Paris," in *Organisateurs et formes d'organisation du concert en Europe, 1700–1920. Institutionnalisation et pratiques*, eds. Hans Erich Bödeker, Patrick Veit, and Michael Werner (Berlin: BWV Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2008), 237–55.

25 Notably the *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris*, *L'Abeille musicale*, and *La Danse. Journal des bals et des salons* in rue de Richelieu, while *Le Ménestrel* in rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs.

26 Hans Erich Bödeker, Patrick Veit and Michael Werner, "Espaces et lieux de concerts: Les contours d'un champ de recherche," in *Espaces et lieux de concerts en Europe, 1700–1920. Architecture, musique, société*, eds Hans Erich Bödeker, Patrick Veit and Michael Werner (Berlin: BWV Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2008), 8.

of bankers and businessmen (the Paris Bourse was also located there),[27] but also of musicians, artists, and men of letters. The former, who belonged to the well-to-do—even wealthy—bourgeoisie, assiduously frequented the neighborhood's many cultural, musical, and entertainment venues and were the main customers of piano companies and publishing houses.[28] The latter were drawn to this new cultural center. The district also saw extensive private building work at the end of the Restoration, attracting both the rising bourgeoisie and artists. The Church of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette and the urban complex of Nouvelle Athènes are the most notable achievements. The Square d'Orléans—a group of neoclassical buildings built in 1830 within the area of the Nouvelle Athènes—has remained famous for hosting a phalanx of well-known artists.[29] Pianists Pierre-Joseph-Guillaume Zimmermann, Jean-François Marmontel, Frédéric Chopin, Charles-Valentin Alkan, Friedrich Kalkbrenner, Clara Loveday, the sculptor Dantan jeune, the writers Alexandre Dumas père, George Sand, and the singer Pauline García-Viardot all lived, at least for a time, in this luxurious complex in the 1830s and 1840s.[30] Beyond the Square d'Orléans the list of Chaussée d'Antin musicians in the 1830s is long: Luigi Cherubini, Adolphe Adam, Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, Hector Berlioz, Gilbert-Louis Duprez, François-Antoine Habeneck, Fromental Halévy, George Onslow, and Antoine Reicha; those passing through included Franz Liszt, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Felix Mendelssohn, Gioachino Rossini, and Giuseppe Verdi, who all benefited from the immediate proximity of the Conservatoire and the Opéra.[31]

27 From 1801 to 1846 the population of Paris's second arrondissement experienced an overall increase of 164% (just below the first arrondissement at 177%), a process that intensified during the July Monarchy; see Vigier, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris*, 235 and 356–8.

28 The Chaussée d'Antin is one of the four Parisian districts in which the turnover of piano makers exceeded one million francs between 1830 and 1850; see Malou Haine, *Les Facteurs d'instruments de musique au 19e siècle. Des artisans face à l'industrialisation* (Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1985), 74, 77.

29 Constance Himelfarb, "La 'Nouvelle Athènes': une colonie d'artistes à Paris sous le duc d'Orléans," *Espaces et lieux de concerts en Europe*, 79–100.

30 Bruno Centorame, "Le square d'Orléans," in *La Nouvelle Athènes. Haut lieu du Romantisme*, eds. Bruno Centorame, Valérie Chiche, and Georgina Letourmy-Bordier (Paris: Action artistique de la Ville de Paris, 2001), 80–3.

31 Hugh Macdonald, "De l'Opéra au Conservatoire: la géographie musicale de Paris sous la Monarchie de Juillet et le Second Empire," in *La maison d'artiste. Construction d'un espace de représentations entre réalité et imaginaire XVIIe–XXe siècles*, eds. Jean Gribenski, Véronique Meyer, and Solange Vernois (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 165–9.

This list of major institutions, entrepreneurs, famous composers and instrumentalists attests to the importance of the Chaussée d'Antin in Parisian musical life in the 1830s and 1840s; but it falls far short of capturing the extraordinary concentration of musicians (professionals and amateurs) in the neighborhood. With this in mind, I intend to focus on the daily reality of a community of musicians rather than on exceptional individuals. The map below (which samples the 1837 edition of Planque's *Agenda musical*) will help to illustrate this concentration (*see* Fig. 4). Planque presented a list of

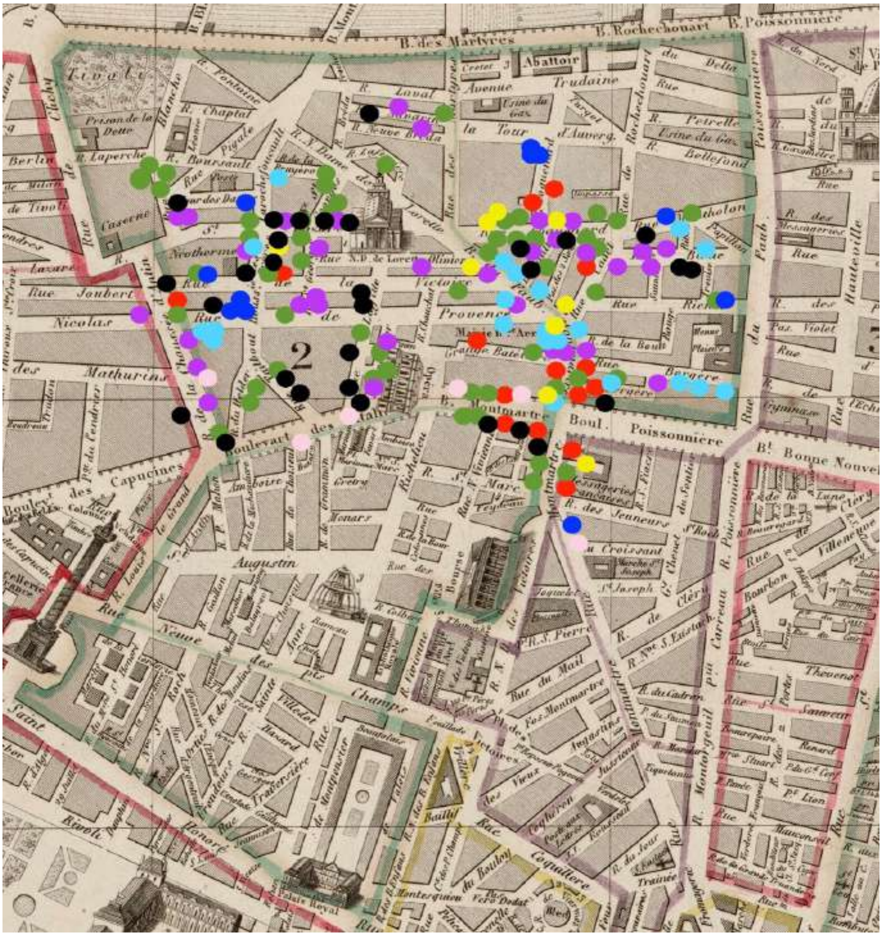

Fig. 4 – Map of professional and amateur musicians in the Chaussée d'Antin. Purple: members of the Opéra, Opéra-Comique, and Conservatoire orchestras, and Conservatoire teachers; red: piano makers and tuners, string sellers; pink: engravers, copyists, and publishers; green: professional performers; black: composers, both men and women; light blue: teachers; yellow: performers at balls and parties; blue: amateurs.

Parisian musicians, amateurs, and music merchants, all classified by occupational category, along with their addresses.[32] On this basis, I have systematically listed all musicians and music-related occupations in some thirty streets in the neighborhood. Planque is incomplete insofar as his names relied on a subscription model: to appear in his *Agenda*, one had to apply and pay. Moreover, my survey of a single year and only a few streets obscures migrations of businesses and people over time. Despite these reservations, Planque's *Agenda* offers a snapshot of the neighborhood's social and spatial musical geography. The map reveals, for example, that publishers and piano makers attracted around them the trades essential to their businesses: engravers, copyists and printers, tuners and string merchants were grouped in the streets adjacent to the workshops. Unsurprisingly, a large number of instrumentalists settled on the Chaussée d'Antin who taught at the Conservatoire and/or belonged to the orchestras of the Société des concerts du Conservatoire, the Opéra, the Théâtre-Italien, or the Opéra-Comique. The neighborhood was also the home of many musicians, both men and women, who gave private lessons (in singing, piano, harp, guitar, music theory, harmony, composition); and also composers, both men and women, and "artists for balls and evenings." On the few streets documented, there were also more than 75 instrumentalists (strings, woodwind, brass, piano, guitar) who declared neither affiliation with an orchestra or institution, nor any particular profession. Finally, the *Agenda* reports around thirty musical amateurs in the area. The figure rises to 114 if we consider the second arrondissement as a whole, making it the arrondissement most densely populated by amateurs (more than a third of Parisian amateurs), at least according to Planque.

This assembled information allows us to begin thinking about the neighborhood not only in its topographical materiality, but as a practiced place. The *Agenda*, for example, highlights figures such as the Carnauds, father and son, who appear together in several sections: as violinists, instrument dealers, teachers of accordion, flute, flageolet, cornet, guitar and violin, conductors, instrumentalists for balls and evenings, as well as copyists (in the father's case). The example of Henri Herz is even more striking, in that the professions he pursued (pianist, professor at the Conservatoire, composer, piano maker, concert-hall owner) spanned art, pedagogy, and entrepreneurship.[33]

32 Planque, *Agenda musical contenant les noms et demeures de tous les artistes et commerçants en musique*, vol. 3, (Paris: Collinet, 1837).

33 Laure Schnapper, *Henri Herz, magnat du piano. La vie musicale en France au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions EHESS, 2011).

Thus, despite its limitations, the map allows us to understand that the simultaneous exercise of such varied activities was made possible by geographical proximity.[34] To put this another way, the concentration of shops, theatres, concert halls, and music-related businesses on the Chaussée d'Antin enabled the musicians of the district to become less dependent on other forms of patronage.

Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that, long before it became a source for twenty-first-century musicologists, Planque's *Agenda* was a tool designed to encourage contact between musicians. Indicating one's profession and address was obviously a way to build a clientele in a bourgeois district where the piano was part of the education of young girls and where public, private, or charity balls were numerous during the winter season.[35] The *Agenda* also highlights a significant number of musicians who did not report any institutional affiliation. Clearly, for these aspiring instrumentalists or composers, the environment of the Chaussée d'Antin provided a network likely to lead to stable employment in an orchestra or to pursue several careers simultaneously. The journal of the Polish composer Józef Brzowski (1805–1888), visiting Paris during the winter of 1836–1837 (the year used here for data collection from Planque's *Agenda*), allows us to understand how the neighborhood's music sociability could be approached.[36] Brzowski arrived in November 1836 and settled in a hotel frequented by other Polish musicians, on rue Bergère next to the Conservatoire. He hardly left the Chaussée d'Antin during his entire stay, his discovery of Parisian musical life taking place almost exclusively within the neighborhood. The bulk of his journal recounts evenings in the theaters, concert halls, and private musical gatherings, as well as his visits to Chopin. But a significant

34 Campos makes the same claim for the "quartier de la chanson" at the end of the 19th century. The international dominance of Parisian song was then, paradoxically, based on local musical practices. The topography of this district in the northeast of Paris—which brought together in a circumscribed space all the essential trades for the song industry—made it possible to articulate the uses of space, sociability, and the music economy. See Campos, "Le quartier parisien de la chanson," 82–6.

35 In his "revue de Paris" which appeared twice a month in the newspaper *Le Siècle*, Pierre Durand gave detailed accounts of the *saison des bals* that took place in Paris every year from November to April. (This chronicle has been systematically investigated for the period 1837–1848).

36 Long extracts from the journal are published in Marie-Paule Rambeau and Ewa Talma-Davous, "Józef Brzowski. Un musicista polacco nella Parigi musicale della Monarchia di luglio," in *Chopin e il suono di Pleyel. Arte e musica nella Parigi romantica*, ed. Florence Gétreau (Briosco: Villa Medici Giulini, 2010), 82–157.

part describes in detail his wanderings, which were often the occasion for unexpected encounters. On March 7, 1837, for example:

> Passing the Palais Royal around noon, I met Chopin, with whom I returned while chatting, and I walked along the Rue de Rivoli. […] In the evening, returning from a visit, I accompanied an Englishwoman; along the way, we spoke at length about music and artists.[37]

On several occasions, an impromptu meeting in the street or in an apartment offered Brzowski the opportunity to go to a concert or meet a new musician. On December 16, 1836, for example, Brzowski was invited by the cellist Louis Norblin, whom he had met some time earlier, to a musical *séance* at Cherubini's house. It was on this occasion that he met the conductor François-Antoine Habeneck, who invited him to a dress rehearsal of the orchestra of the Société des concerts du Conservatoire—a venue for which tickets were extremely difficult to obtain. [38] Indeed, Brzowski's account of his time in Paris offers a striking illustration of what Certeau describes as the practice of the urban walker.[39] The walker does not simply move through a geometrically defined place; he transforms it into space through his random wanderings, making use of the venues and occasions that the neighborhood offers: the street, the apartment of an acquaintance, the salon of an amateur. In this sense, Brzowski's wanderings are not merely biographical detail but a concrete embodiment of the porosity between domestic and urban musical space to which we should now turn.

Playing Music "As Neighbors": Sociabilities in the Amateur Home

The spontaneous nature of musical sociability in the Chaussée d'Antin, so tellingly reflected in Brzowski's journal, explains why artists and amateurs practiced music together in domestic settings. Given the exceptional concentration of musicians in the neighborhood, music was—quite simply—a neighborhood practice, a diversion that could serve as a pretext for getting to know one another. As if to demonstrate this, Planque's *Agenda* shows

37 Rambeau and Talma-Davous, 143.

38 "I received this invitation with all the more pleasure since access to these rehearsals was forbidden to listeners who were not members of the orchestra." Rambeau and Talma-Davous, 141.

39 Certeau, "Marches dans la ville," chap. 7 in *L'invention du quotidien*, 139–64.

that some buildings were inhabited by a multitude of musicians. 7 rue Saint-Lazare, in 1837, housed a flautist from the Opéra, another from the Théâtre-Italien, and the violin conductor of the Théâtre des Variétés. At 12 rue Blanche were five clarinetists and a flageolet player. Amateurs and professionals mixed freely: on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Lazare alone, between numbers 7 and 17, there were a double-bass player, two violinists, a clarinetist, a trombonist, a pianist, and two amateur pianists. The cases of Cap and Trémont offer a further striking illustration of the phenomenon of the integration of amateurs into the spontaneous musical sociability of the neighborhood. The composer Henri Jean Rigel, for example, sent this letter to Cap (between 1829 and 1839 according to the latter's address):

> Dear Sir,
> As I did not have the honor of finding you at home, I would like to make a perhaps indiscreet request. This evening, […] I would like to play spontaneously a few pieces of ensemble music, and I should be most flattered if you had nothing better to do than to come over this Saturday evening at 8 o'clock and help us with your generous talent on the cello. *As a neighbor, and wishing to make your acquaintance more fully* [emphasis mine], I have reason to hope that you will be good enough not to refuse.[40]

The inventory taken after Trémont's death in 1852 shows that his apartment was designed to facilitate musical gatherings. The latter were held in the exhibition gallery of his home, which also displayed part of his print collection.[41] The room was furnished with a piano stool (the piano itself was probably rented in the neighborhood when needed), four mahogany music stands, and about fifteen stools (pieces of furniture that could easily be

40 Letter from Henri Jean Rigel to Cap, n.d., Paris, BnF, Département de la musique, LA-RIGEL HENRI JEAN-21. "Cher Monsieur, n'ayant pu avoir l'honneur de vous trouver chez vous, je désirerais vous faire une demande peut être indiscrète. Ce soir, […] je désire faire quelques morceaux de musique d'ensemble improvisés, et j'aurais été très flatté si vous vous [sic] n'aviez rien de mieux à faire que de venir ce soir samedi à 8 h nous aider de votre aimable talent sur le violoncelle. Comme voisin et désirant faire plus amplement votre connaissance j'ai lieu d'espérer que vous serez assez bon pour ne pas me refuser." Rigel later lived at 82, rue Saint-Lazare, not far from Cap's home.

41 On this gallery as a music venue, see Bernard de Raymond, "La galerie du baron de Trémont." On the material reality of Parisian musical salons in the later period of the Second Empire, and in particular the question of multiple reception rooms and their configuration for musical performance, see Nicole Vilkner, "Structuring Audiences and Music at Parisian Receptions," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 147, no. 1 (2022): 221–48.

moved around depending on the configuration of the players). Trémont, himself a viola and double-bass player, also owned a large collection of string instruments. Three violins (including a Stradivarius[42] and a Vuillaume), two violas (including a Lupot), three cellos, two double basses (including a Vuillaume), together with seven violin bows and three cello bows (including some by Tourte[43]), were stored in a cabinet adjoining the gallery.[44] As confirmed by a letter to Cap from the bookseller Casimir Gide, the presence of instruments in amateur apartments allowed musicians to avoid transporting their own equipment around the neighborhood and to the upper floors of buildings: "I still count on your presence this Sunday at two o'clock [for our grand musical *matinée*]. You shall find at my home a cello most eager to resonate under your fingers."[45]

Among the hundreds of musicians living or staying at the Chaussée d'Antin, who precisely attended the chamber music *séances* organized by Cap and Trémont? The sources are much richer for Trémont but, given his geographical and especially emotional proximity to Cap, we can assume that their circles overlapped, at least in part.[46] By cross-referencing around fifty letters with musicians' memoirs and unpublished notes by Trémont preserved in his collection of autographs,[47] I have been able to compile a list—undoubtedly far from exhaustive—of the musicians and amateurs who attended his salon at least once between 1819 and 1848 (*see* Tables 1 and 2).

42 The Stradivarius was purchased from General Lamorlière in autumn 1818. Trémont then had Baillot try out the instrument, as evidenced by two letters from the latter dated October 25 and November 2, 1818. (BnF, Département de la musique, LA-BAILLOT PIERRE MARIE FRANCOIS DE SALLES-69).

43 The inconographic documents in the fonds Albert Pomme de Mirimonde of the BNF's Département de la musique contains photographs of the violin bows made by François Tourte in the years 1780–1790, PHOT MIRI-21 (319).

44 Archives nationales (AN), MC/ET/XXVI/1163, *Inventaire après décès du baron de Trémont*; Archives nationales (AN), MC/ET/XXVI/1162, Testament du baron de Trémont. The instrument collection was sold at auction after Trémont's death.

45 Letter from Casimir Gide to Cap, February 15, 1850, Paris, BnF, Département de la musique, LA-GIDE CASIMIR-12. "Je compte toujours sur vous dimanche à 2 heures [pour notre grande matinée musicale]; vous trouverez chez moi un violoncelle qui sera bien heureux de resonner [sic] sous vos doigts."

46 Their correspondence is abundant and testifies to a long-standing friendship that went beyond the musical sphere. Cap was also one of the executors of Trémont's will. (See MC/ET/XXVI/1162, *Testament du baron de Trémont*.)

47 See notes 13-17.

Amateurs

NAME	PROFESSION	INSTRUMENT(S)
Louis-Léopold Boilly	painter	piano
Auguste de la Croix de Chevrières, comte de Sayve	pensioner	violin
Gaspard Augustin Ernouf (baron)	pensioner	cello
Paul-Antoine Gratacap	pharmacist	cello
Claude-Ignace Louvrier de Lajolais	pensioner	violin
Marie Martin Marcel, Vicomte de Marin	pensioner	harp, violin
Charles Paillet	expert at the Royal Louvre Museum	viola
Baron de Trémont	pensioner	viola, double bass

Professionals

INSTRUMENT	NAME
violin	Delphin Alard, Pierre Baillot, Charles de Bériot, Charles Dancla, Charles-Philippe Lafont, Lambert Massart, Pierre Rode, Jean-Jacques Vidal, Henri Vieuxtemps
cello	Auguste Franchomme, Louis Norblin, Olive-Charlier Vaslin
double bass	Achille Gouffé
piano	Frédéric Chopin, Friedrich Kalkbrenner, Arthur Kalkbrenner, Honorine Lambert, Franz Liszt, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdi, Camille Pleyel [born Moke], Sigismund Thalberg

Table 1 – Instrumentalists at the Trémont *séances*.

Performers and their wives		
Other musicians and composers	Regular listeners	Daniel-François-Esprit Auber
		Pauline Duchambge
		George Onslow
	One-off listeners	Antoine Reicha (1798–1800)
		Hélène de Montgeroult (1819)
		Sigismund Neukomm (1825)
		Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdi (1825)
		Hector Berlioz (1829)
		Gioachino Rossini (1829)
		Maria Malibran (from 1829)
		Frédéric Chopin (1837)
		Joseph Brzowski (1837)
		Giacomo Meyerbeer (1837–1838)
		Johan Peter Pixis (1844)

Table 2 – Attendees at the Trémont *séances*.

Many of the string players who performed at the Trémont meetings were members of the Société des concerts du Conservatoire and had founded or belonged to chamber music ensembles that also gave public concerts.[48] Among the pianists—in addition to Chopin, Liszt, Thalberg, and Honorine Lambert, who seem to have come occasionally—regulars included Camille Pleyel (born Moke) and Friedrich Kalkbrenner. These renowned instrumentalists mixed with members of the nobility and other people of means, such as the Viscount de Marin, the Count of Sayve, Claude-Ignace Louvrier de Lajolais, and Baron Ernouf; members of the upper middle class, including Cap and the art dealer and expert at the Musée royal du Louvre Charles Paillet, uncle of the violinist Eugène Sauzay; and painters, notably Boilly. This circle of mainly male musicians was surrounded during the Sunday sessions by a small committee of equally prestigious male and female listeners. In addition to the performers and their wives, numerous musicians

48 Most violinists have a connection to Pierre Baillot, either as his students or members of his quartet. Baillot was the founder in 1814 of the first string quartet composed entirely of professional musicians to perform publicly in Paris.

and composers attended. Alongside regulars such as Onslow, Auber, Pauline Duchambge, and Malibran, there were more occasional visitors such as Reicha, Hélène de Montgeroult, Berlioz, Meyerbeer, Neukomm, Rossini, Brzowski, Mendelssohn, and Pixis.

Each year, from November to April, this social and artistic elite gathered every two weeks to play and listen to instrumental music. From 1819 to 1829 the sessions were held at 3 rue Neuve-Saint-Augustin. They paused with Trémont's appointment to the Prefecture of Côte-d'Or in 1831 and do not seem to have resumed until 1837.[49] From January 1839, they took place at his last residence, 45 rue Saint-Lazare.[50] During these two periods, the repertoire ranged from duets to sextets for solo strings, strings and piano, or wind instruments. The presence of Liszt, Thalberg, and Chopin in Paris also provided an occasional opportunity to perform sonatas, concertos, or fantasies for solo piano. Vocal music seems to have been excluded, even though the friendship between song composer Pauline Duchambge and Maria Malibran suggests that voices may have resonated in the apartment on rue Saint-Lazare. Amateurs, including Trémont, frequently mingled with local artists.

In their programs, these musical *séances* were similar in some respects to *ancien régime* salons, which Trémont knew well, having frequented them in his youth. They took place at his home, establishing a pattern that allowed for the formation of a group of regulars and with sociability based on rules of civility and politeness.[51] But the meetings differed from salons and other social gatherings in one essential aspect: music, far from being just another form of entertainment, seemed to be the key reason for the gatherings.[52]

49 This chronology was reconstructed from musicians' correspondence addressed to or mentioning Trémont, held in the Music Department of the BnF and in Trémont's collection of autograph letters, as well as from Brzowski's journal and Mendelssohn's letter to his brother and sister, dated March 1, 1825.

50 As we learn from the inventory after his death. The 1848 Revolution and Trémont's declining health seem to have put a stop to his musical activities (see letter from Jean-Jacques Vidal to Trémont, November 29, 1848, cited in *Catalogue de la belle collection de lettres autographes de feu M. le baron de Trémont*, article 1446, 217: "Les joies de la république viendraient-elles jeter une crêpe funèbre sur nos réunions musicales! J'espère que non."

51 In this, they meet a good part of the "set of criteria" established by Antoine Lilti to define the elusive object of the salon; see Lilti, *Le Monde des salons. Sociabilité et mondanité à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), 75. In his entries, Trémont always evaluates the musicians he met from the point of view of their urbanity: Auber, Cherubini, Grétry, Meyerbeer, and Rossini are particularly praised in this regard; see Jérôme Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult. La marquise et la marseillaise* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2006), 239.

52 See James Deaville, "The Well Mannered Auditor: Zones of Attention and the Imposition of Silence in the Salon of the Nineteenth Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music*

Although the works performed were obviously the subject of discussion, as we shall see later, nothing in the accounts consulted suggests that games were played or that a meal was served.[53]

Entry into the circle was gained through a network of acquaintances within the neighborhood. It was Chopin, for example, who invited Brzowski to attend a musical meeting at Trémont's house on April 30, 1837.[54] Brzowski's journal account of the event suggests that the home of the amateurs on the Chaussée d'Antin was a space of emulation, even solidarity, between artists. Liszt played Chopin's C-minor Étude in the composer's presence, Brzowski describing the scene vividly:

> We watched … Liszt approach the piano; he was undoubtedly stimulated by all the talent on show because he had Chopin at his side. [It wouldn't be] far from the truth to say that Liszt was more inspired than ever. As he raised his hands to tame the sublime instrument under his fingers, Chopin sat close to the piano and listened to his *Étude in C minor*, which in Liszt's left hand was like a storm, while the more expressive right hand communicated pain and despair. Liszt's face was ablaze with the fire of inspiration, and Chopin's features were pale, with the power of the performance returning him to thoughts of the work he had created, like a child being fed returns to its mother's breast.[55]

Listening in the 19th and 20th Centuries, eds. Christian Thorau and Hansjacob Ziemer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 55–76. See also Campos, "Donner un concert," Lilti, *Le monde des salons*, 62–65 and Himelfarb, "Un salon de la Nouvelle-Athènes en 1839-1840," 34.

53 According to his posthumous inventory, there were few obvious sources of entertainment: a mahogany checkerboard in a living-room cupboard and a card table in the library.

54 Brzowski's Journal, April 24, 1837, 144–5: "J'ai fait remarquer [à Chopin] que je n'avais pas encore entendu Kalkbrenner [...]. Il m'a promis de me donner l'occasion d'entendre ce pianiste dimanche prochain à une matinée musicale chez un amateur connu [chez Trémont], M. Fromont [sic], qui a l'habitude presque chaque dimanche de faire des réunions chez lui où se produisent des artistes, et justement Kalkbrenner doit y jouer ce jour-là."

55 Cited in Rambeau and Talma-Davous, "Józef Brzowski," 145–6. "On regarda ensuite Liszt s'avancer vers le piano; il s'avançait sans doute stimulé par toutes les ressources du talent car il avait à ses côtés Chopin qu'il estimait, aimait et dont il appréciait le génie. […] Et je ne m'écarterai pas non plus de la vérité, si je dis que Liszt était plus inspiré que jamais. Quand il leva les mains pour dompter l'instrument sublime sous ses doigts, Chopin s'assit tout près du piano puis il écouta son *Étude* en *ut* mineur qui, sous la main gauche de Liszt, était comparable à une tempête, pendant que la droite, plus expressive, exprime la douleur et le désespoir. Le visage de Liszt était enflammé par le feu de l'inspiration et les traits de Chopin étaient pâles, devant la puissance de l'exécution qui retournait à la pensée de l'œuvre qu'il avait créée, comme un enfant qu'on nourrit retourne au sein de sa mère."

Brzowski's testimony shows that the Trémont performance space seems to have fostered an intimacy conducive to intense sharing between listeners and performers. Trémont offers a further anecdote in which the physical proximity between Maria Malibran and the violinist Charles de Bériot led to emotions of great intensity:

> [Maria Malibran's] deep sensitivity for music was not cooled down like that of most of those who profess it. Having come to my house to hear pieces by Fesca that Bériot played to perfection, when he came to the Adagio of the Quintet in D major, she left her place, stood behind Bériot's chair, and followed the music with her eyes, shedding tears.[56]

Of course, Malibran, like Liszt and Chopin, may well have performed during these musical gatherings; perhaps Trémont and Brzowski idealize their accounts, however other sources indicate that the works played at the amateur's home were listened to with "genuine interest."[57] Thus, if the spatial proximity of the musicians at the Chaussée d'Antin favored unexpected musical experiences, it also led, in the case of the Cap and Trémont séances, to musical practices with a strong ritual element surrounding a repertoire (chamber music) and a core of musicians accustomed to playing together regularly. This form of sociability seems to have encouraged a feeling of common identity among these musicians,[58] one that went beyond simple neighborly relations.

Shaping Music and Careers from Home: Gift Economy

> Apart from enforced absences from Paris, I held musical gatherings at my home for 50 years (from 1798 to 1849), ones at which all the famous musicians, French and foreign, agreed to be heard. As it would have required a huge fortune to finance such occasions, I was all the more flattered by their selfless and benevolent support.[59]

56 BnF, Département des manuscrits, Français 12759, notice inédite "Maria Malibran," 542.

57 According to George Onslow: "Ce sera donc *under my own patronage* que mes nouveaux quintettes seront entendus pour la première fois et je désire ardemment que ce soit chez celui qui est la véritable source de l'intérêt avec lequel ils seront écoutés." Letter from Onslow to Trémont, August 31, 1828, cited in Viviane Niaux, *George Onslow, Gentleman compositeur* (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2003), 289–90.

58 González Bernaldo de Quirós, "Sociabilité urbaine," 298.

59 BnF, Département des manuscrits, Français 12756, "Biographie de Mr de T****** [Trémont]," folio 34.

According to Trémont, the participation of professional musicians at his *séances* always took place outside any financial or contractual agreement. But can it be described, as he does, as "selfless"? Certainly a sense of local solidarity probably encouraged these gatherings, but the correspondence between Cap, Trémont, and the artists of the Chaussée d'Antin highlights some sort of economy at work: an economy of gift culture. According to Rémy Campos, this was at the heart of Parisian social practices at the end of the nineteenth century: "musical performance presented as a gift rather than a contractual obligation was less a paid transaction than an exchange of goods."[60] The gift of music had to respond to a set of counterparts, a cycle of reciprocal debt that was sometimes endless.[61] Such forms of politeness, which might seem to belong to the *ancien régime*, were defined by the Comtesse de Bassanville in her *Guide des gens du monde*:

> A hostess owes courtesy to anyone who has agreed to participate in a concert given by her; and she repays this courtesy with a dinner, a box, and even a small gift, if she is wealthy and the person she has invited is much less so; but this gift must be offered with great delicacy so as not to appear as payment.[62]

The Comtesse refers here to social gatherings in which music is just one event among others: alongside a meal, games, theater, reading, and even mere conversation. In the case of Cap and Trémont, this gift economy—the moral obligation to give back—is also at work, but is exercised differently, since music is the main reason for their meetings. The correspondence used in writing this article allows us to clarify the modalities and nature of the reciprocities at work and how they affected communal musical life. By participating in the neighborhood's amateur musical performances, the professional "offered himself,"[63] which put him in a position to expect

60 Campos, "Donner un concert," 97. Indeed, a gift economy does not mean that no financial transactions have taken place.

61 *Ibidem*. Campos's understanding of the concept follows Marcel Mauss' *Essai sur le don* (1925). From this anthropological perspective, the gift is part of a social system based on a triple obligation: the obligation to give, the obligation to receive and the obligation to return. Jacques Derrida (*Donner le temps I. La fausse monnaie*, 1991) opposed this view, arguing that the gift escapes the order of calculation and economy and is an impossibility, an *aporia*. See François Nault, "La grâce du don ou l'horizon théologique de la déconstruction (Mauss, Derrida, Hénaff)," *Études théologiques & religieuses* 85, no. 3 (2010): 299–321.

62 Anaïs de Bassanville, *Guide des gens du monde dans toutes les circonstances de la vie* (Paris: Lebigre-Duquesne Frères, 1867), 255.

63 Jacques T. Godbout, "Recevoir, c'est donner," *Communications* 65 (1997): 42; cited in

something back from his hosts. These reciprocal exchanges were conducted with varying degrees of grace, as demonstrated by this letter to Cap from the bookseller and composer Casimir Gide:

> I am sorry I was unable to attend yesterday to see and hear the interesting music of Mr. Blanc.[64] I had to go to a concert given by Madame Sabatier[65] and Lafont,[66] two artists who sang at my house this winter and to whom I have contracted the painful obligation of buying nine tickets. That's the other side of the coin.[67]

This sense of reciprocity perhaps explains why, even with a finger injury, cellist Franchomme maintained his commitment in a concert given by Trémont:

> I am once more obliged to ask you to postpone to another of your meetings the solo I was to play tomorrow at your house, having been clumsy enough yesterday to cut one of the fingers of my left hand. However, you can count on me to play the bass in your quartets, but that is all I can hope to be able to do tomorrow.[68]

By contributing his unwavering commitment to the two amateurs' sessions, Auguste Franchomme opened up a cycle of compensation. In 1835, the 27-year-old was already principal cello of the Théâtre-Italien orchestra, but he was just beginning his career as a composer. In the process of publishing his *Caprices pour deux violoncelles*, he relied on Cap, whose teacher he was, to access the advice of a seasoned composer, George Onslow:

Campos, "Donner un concert," 99–100.

64 The composer Adolphe Blanc, Cap's stepson.

65 Undoubtedly the singer Émilie-Perrine-Suzanne Sabatier (born Bénazet), who performed in numerous Parisian salons in the 1840s.

66 The cellist Charles Philippe Lafont, who belonged to Trémont's circle and doubtless also to Cap's.

67 Letter from Casimir Gide to Cap, April 18, 1856; Paris, BnF, Département de la musique, LA-GIDE-CASIMIR-14. "Je suis désolé de ne pas avoir pu aller hier venir voir et entendre l'intéressante musique de Mr Blanc. J'ai dû aller hier au concert de Mad^e Sabatier et de Lafont, deux artistes qui ont chanté chez moi cet hiver et envers lesquels j'ai contracté la douloureuse obligation de prendre 9 billets. C'est le revers de la médaille."

68 Letter from Franchomme to Trémont [n.d., but between 1839 and 1852 according to Trémont's address on the envelope], Paris, BnF, Département de la musique, LA-FRANCHOMME AUGUSTE-4.

> It would be necessary … for us to rehearse my *Caprices* before giving them to Mr. Onslow […]. If you wish us to postpone the performance until Wednesday at noon (at your home), we shall have a little more time to work on them.[69]

The original edition of this work, published that same year by Janet et Cotelle as Op. 7, bears a dedication not to Onslow but to Cap (*see* Fig. 5). The practice of dedication is associated with the *ancien régime* and a rhetoric of flattery towards powerful patrons, but indeed "as the patronage system began to give way in the later eighteenth century to a more capitalist economy, and composers gradually sought financial support from the growing publishing industry … composers and publishers honored new sorts of individuals in this prominent position on the title page"[70]—in this case, an amateur.[71]

Emily Green has recently analyzed dedications as a "type of interaction between actors [composers, dedicatees, publishers, buyers]" representative of the "transitioning economy of the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries."[72] According to this perspective, the title page of Franchomme's *Caprices* op. 7 can be seen as a public window onto a private sociability: it signals to buyers that Cap played a role in the conception of the work. But the meanings of a dedication may well be multiple. Was Cap's name mentioned for commercial reasons, signaling that the work was aimed at an amateur audience? This is doubtful, because the generic title "caprice" and the indication of Franchomme's professional position ("*violoncelle solo à l'Opéra Italien*") indicate a technically demanding work—and, as a matter of fact, even the "*violoncelle accompagnant*" played by Cap is quite difficult. As Green has shown, drawing specifically on the work of the anthropologist

69 Letter from Franchomme to Cap, May 3, 1835; Paris, BnF, Département de la musique, LA-FRANCHOMME AUGUSTE-9. "Il faudrait … que nous répétions mes caprices avant de les faire entendre à Monsieur Onslow […]. Si vous vouliez que nous en remettions l'exécution à Mercredi à midi (chez vous) nous aurions alors un peu plus de tems pour les travailler."

70 Emily Green, "A Patron among Peers: Dedications to Haydn and the Economy of Celebrity," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 8, no. 2 (2011): 216.

71 Beyond this example, many works are dedicated to amateurs in the neighborhood. Notably: Onslow's Quartet op. 53, the first Quintet with two violas by Adolphe Blanc, dedicated to Cap; Onslows Quintet op. 18 and Kalkbrenner's Fourth Piano Trio op. 84, dedicated to Trémont. The list of dedicatees of Onslow's works is particularly revealing in this context. Of the 88 dedications noted on his works published between 1806 and 1864, more than a third (30) are to amateurs; see the catalog of Onslow's works in Niaux, *George Onslow*, 259–73.

72 Emily Green, *Dedicating Music, 1785–1850* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2019), 2.

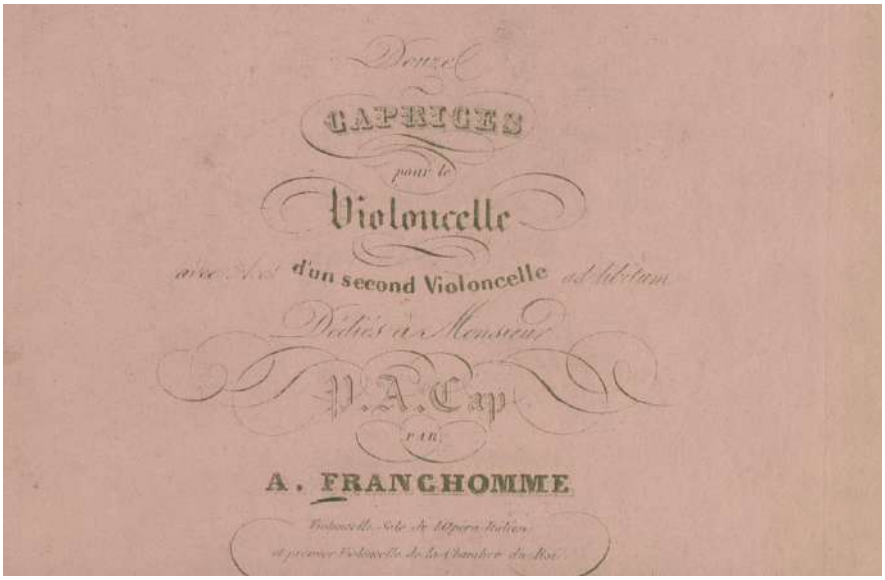

Fig. 5 – Title page of the original Janet & Cotelle edition of Franchomme's *Caprices* op. 7 (1835).

Marcel Mauss, dedications are also part of the gift economy, insofar as they reciprocally increase the "symbolic capital" of both parties, in Bourdieu's sense.[73] By dedicating his *Caprices* to Cap, Franchomme linked his name to the elite musical gatherings of a well-known amateur of the Chaussée d'Antin. This may have been meant to lend the work a form of legitimacy, a guarantee of seriousness: its title, *Caprice*, evoked, after Paganini, a world of extravagant virtuosity. In return, the dedication cast Cap as an excellent cellist, capable of playing the second cello part in a very demanding work, something that placed him in a class of his own as an amateur. Indeed, the term "amateur" acquired a hackneyed connotation in the second quarter of the 19th century. The Comtesse de Bassanville, for example, instructed those organizing social gatherings not to "tire guests with amateur music in the desire to make the daughter or brother of a friend shine."[74] As a matter of fact, in the correspondence of the professionals who attended their

73 Green, 42–3, 66–70.

74 Bassanville, *Guide des gens du monde*, 78. In his *Art de briller en société*, Bescherelle advised similarly: "Amateur de tout genre, faites de la musique chez vous, à huis clos; mais ne cédez jamais aux instances que l'on emploiera pour vous engager à vous faire entendre dans un salon: songez qu'il y a dans cette prière beaucoup plus de politesse que de désirs." See Louis Nicolas Bescherelle, "Concert," in *L'Art de briller en société et de se conduire dans toutes les circonstances de la vie* (Paris: Maresq et Compagnie–Gustave Havard, 1851), 20.

gatherings, as in the press, Cap and Trémont were placed in a separate, superior category, that of "distinguished amateur."[75]

Beyond the moral obligation of politeness and the construction of symbolic capital, Franchomme's dedication to Cap can also be read for its traces of "multiple authorship."[76] As his letter of May 1835 shows, the cellist worked on his *Caprices* with Cap and probably played them with him. We can thus imagine that the chosen instrumentation was linked to Cap's meetings: the latter's desire to perform in his own home. In addition, writing of the second cello part probably took into account his student's abilities. But Cap's role may not have stopped there: amateur salons were also venues where musical opinions were exchanged. Neither Cap nor Trémont left a journal that might allow us to find details of the conversations held during their *séances*, but their correspondence suggests that their opinion was actively sought by musicians. For example, in a letter dated February 25, 1835, the tenor Adolphe Nourrit thanked Trémont for his advice given after the premiere of Halévy's *La Juive*.[77] As the singer made clear: "will try to follow the advice [Trémont] has been so kind as to give him, and he hopes he shall succeed more easily, as he made the mistake, [which the amateur] so rightly pointed out to him, only as a consequence of a change that the author thought he must make in the outcome of his play."[78] Because they fostered shared musical practices over a long period, as well as the expression of taste among participants—especially the hosts—the salons of Cap and Trémont were probably conducive to this sense of "multiple authorship."[79] Even if it is difficult to measure precisely the role played by Cap in the composition of Franchomme's *Caprices* Op. 7, the example allows us to grasp how the gift economy of such domestic musical gatherings was not limited to polite exchanges,

75 "Nouvelles," *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* 19, no. 27 (July 4, 1852): 223. "L'art musical vient de perdre un de ses amateurs les plus distingués. M. le baron de Trémont est mort presque subitement dans la 73e année. […] Les matinées musicales qu'il donnait chez lui, et dans lesquelles il faisait sa partie, ont été longtemps célèbres."

76 Green, *Dedicating Music*, 148–66.

77 The work was premiered at the Paris Opera two days earlier, on February 23, 1835.

78 Letter from Nourrit to Trémont, February 25, 1835. Cited in *Lettres autographes de feu M. le baron de Trémont* (Paris: Laverdet, 1852), 163.

79 Rebecca Cypess shows how the instruments available at eighteenth-century *salonnières* explain the instrumentation of works published by those in their circle. She also develops the question of Green's multiple authorship in the case of Boccherini's Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord, Op. 5, dedicated to Madame de Brillon; see Cypess, *Women and Musical Salons in the Enlightenment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022), 132–49.

but had clear repercussions on the compositions themselves, as well as on musical life. The regular participation of certain musicians in Cap's and Trémont's gatherings allowed them, in turn, to use these meetings to their own advantage. The amateur home was a place where composers could test out their latest works before publishing them or hearing them performed in a public concert. According to letters and memoirs, such exchanges were common during this period: many musicians regularly asked Cap or Trémont if they could try out a work they had just finished.[80] The violinist Hubert Léonard took advantage of his participation in a musical *séance* at Cap's house in January 1844 to ask him for a read through of his latest composition:[81]

> Would you be kind enough to allow me (next Friday) to try out with the quartet a small piece that I have just finished. I would be very happy to hear it and at the same time to receive your good opinions. I will come to your house early so that I can say it before your company arrives.[82]

Musicians could also make use of musical gatherings at the home of one of the two amateurs to request that a particular work be performed. Salons thus became places to discover new works in a privileged setting. For example, Léonard asked Cap: "Since the quartet is to meet [at your home this evening], could you not rehearse Mr. Onslow's unpublished quintet [...]?"[83] For Onslow, every quartet or quintet was played at a Cap or Trémont *séance* before being published. One of the reasons seems to be that it was only in this intimate setting that Onslow felt he could supervise the performance and ensure that his thoughts were well respected. As he wrote to Trémont in August 1828:

> I promise to see you during February. I will arrive in Paris with three quintets [probably op. 33, 34, 35, published in 1829] [...]. I will not send you my latest productions, my good friend, for the reason that, since nobody wants to make use of that excellent invention the metronome is, most of the movements are taken at the wrong tempo, which completely distorts the composer's thoughts.

80 Especially the pianist Kalkbrenner, the violinists Lafont and Dancla, Franchomme and Onslow.

81 Perhaps this was the *Souvenir d'Haydn. Fantaisie sur l'air* Gott erhatte Franz der Kaiser *pour le violon avec accompagnement de quatuor*, published by Richault as Op. 2 in 1845.

82 Letter from Hubert Léonard to Cap, Paris, January 16, 1844, LA-LEONARD HUBERT-1.

83 Letter from Hubert Léonard to Cap, Paris, n.d., LA-LEONARD HUBERT-3.

> It is therefore *under my own patronage* [in English] that my new quintets will be heard for the first time, and I fervently hope that it will be at the home of the person who is the true reason for the interest with which they will be listened to.[84]

Finally, amateurs could be encouraged to support the careers of professional musicians in their circle in various ways. While the latter were not paid for participation, Cap and Trémont certainly provided them with financial support in other ways. We have seen that the pharmacist took cello lessons with Franchomme, but also Louis Norblin; his daughter learned the piano with composer Louise Farrenc.[85] As for Trémont, he took double-bass lessons with Achille Gouffé.[86] They could also take part in subscriptions for the publication of a work or subscribe to a series of public concerts. Trémont, for example, appears in the list of subscribers for César Franck's *Trios* op. 1,[87] and as one of the main subscribers to Pierre Baillot's public quartet concerts.[88] As we saw in the case of Casimir Gide, a musician playing in an amateur's house had the right to expect in return that his host would buy tickets for his public concerts. But musicians were also careful to offer tickets to the amateurs, thus ensuring the presence of a large and committed audience that the press would subsequently be able to highlight in its review.[89]

84 Cited in Viviane Niaux, *George Onslow*, 289–90. "Je me promets de vous voir dans le cours de février. J'arriverai à Paris escorté de trois Quintettes. […] Je ne vous enverrai pas mes dernières productions mon bon ami, par la raison que personne ne voulant s'astreindre à profiter de l'excellente invention du métronome, la plupart des mouvements sont pris à faux et dénaturent entièrement la pensée du compositeur. Ce sera donc *under my own patronage* que mes nouveaux quintettes seront entendus pour la première fois et je désire ardemment que ce soit chez celui qui est la véritable source de l'intérêt avec lequel ils seront écoutés."

85 Letters from Louis-Pierre-Martin Norblin to Cap, Monday, September 17 and April 13, 1829, LA-NORBLIN MONSIEUR-4 et 5; letter from Franchomme to Cap, "Wednesday evening," n.d., LA-FRANCHOMME AUGUSTE-23; letter from Louise Farrenc to Madame Cap, "Tuesday," n.d., LA-FARRENC LOUISE-13.

86 In a letter dated April 30, 1841, the double bass player Achille Gouffé offered him advice on how to fix a buzzing string and also gave him an appointment in November for the resumption of lessons after the summer season, LA-GOUFFE ACHILLE-5.

87 Léon Vallas, *César Franck*, trans. Hubert Foss (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1951), 49.

88 Paris, Bru Zane Mediabase, fonds Baillot, "Principaux souscripteurs pour les séances de quatuor de Pierre Baillot," in "Documents relatifs aux séances de musique de chambre (Baillot)," accessed July 1, 2026, https://www.bruzanemediabase.com/node/1551.

89 Letter from Franchomme to Cap, n.d., LA-FRANCHOMME AUGUSTE-23: "Je prie Monsieur Cap d'avoir la bonté de me faire savoir ce soir ou demain matin s'il veut un 2d billet de parterre pour le Concert de Dimanche, parce que je suis prévenu que plus tard ou en aurait

Amateurs could help musicians in less visible but equally important ways. For many musicians working in Paris at the time, institutional recognition played an important role in the shaping of their public identity: educational qualifications, job titles, affiliations, or awards facilitated upward social mobility.[90] But the quality of the compositions was generally not enough to gain this institutional recognition. Musicians needed the support of their peers and, at times, that of amateurs with particularly important networks. Various letters capture composer George Onslow in the process of shaping his public identity. After Boieldieu died in 1834, Onslow tried to get elected at his place at the Institut de France; and he turned to Trémont for help in this venture, asking him to secure Auber's support (Trémont was a close friend of Auber, who lived in the same street).[91] In addition to being one of the most successful opera composers of his time, Auber had been a member of the Institut de France since 1829, and was thus one of those who voted in the election of new academicians. As Onslow wrote to Trémont:

> The death of poor Boieldieu … leaves a vacancy at the Institut; I have long regarded my admission as *the most flattering reward* [emphasis mine] for my musical work. […] I beg you, dear Trémont, to consult [Auber] on this topic, to remind him of his feelings towards me […]. Please be so good as to let me know what he tells you. My dear friend, I can count on no one more than you to support me, and I thank you in advance for everything you will do in my interest.
>
> Please send me what you learn on this subject: the names of the candidates, their greater or lesser chances of success… and, dear Trémont, accept the expression of all my friendship.[92]

disposé [sic]." Letter from Louise Farrenc to Cap, n.d., "Dans le cas où vous n'auriez pas pu avoir de billets pour le concert de demain, je pourrais vous céder *un* ou *deux* parterre; veuillez me faire savoir si cela vous serait agréable et agréez, je vous prie, mes compliments empressés." LA-FARRENC LOUISE-11.

90 Louise Bernard de Raymond and Fabio Morabito, "The Composer as Process," in *Antoine Reicha and the Making of the Nineteenth-Century Composer*, eds Fabio Morabito, Louise Bernard de Raymond (Bologne: Ut Orpheus, 2021), pp. xvii-xviii.

Laure Schnapper, "Le rôle des facteurs de piano dans le développement du concert public à Paris," in *Organisateurs et formes d'organisation du concert en Europe, 1700-1920. Institutionnalisation et pratiques*, eds Hans Erich Bödeker, Patrick Veit and Michael Werner (Berlin: BWV Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2008), pp. 237-255.

91 Onslow failed in 1829, but succeeded in 1842 after three attempts.

92 Letter to Trémont dated October 16, 1834, cited in Niaux, *George Onslow*, 318. "La mort du pauvre Boieldieu … laisse une place vacante à l'Institut; il y a longtemps que j'y regarde

This letter, and more broadly this article, may point to an unresolved tension: between, on the one hand, the feelings of solidarity, community, and sometimes friendship that formed among the musicians of the Chaussée d'Antin and, on the other, exchanges of goodwill that seem to have been shaped more by obligation and personal interest. However, the fact that professionals and amateurs were able to use the musical meetings at Cap and Trémont to obtain favors—which were granted with varying degrees of goodwill—did not prevent them from the sincere pleasure of playing music together. Beyond personal interests, the intimacy between participants could lead to intense musical experiences.[93] Indeed, the gift economy at work in Cap and Trémont's séances contributed above all to the creation of lasting social bonds.[94] From impromptu sessions between neighbors to meetings that approached the concert format, amateurs and professionals from the neighborhood developed, year after year, a network that they used to shape their careers and the public musical life of the Chaussée d'Antin. Every sector of the broader musical economy—and every facet of the musician's profession—was thus affected: composition, publishing, public concerts, and even institutions were all influenced by the ties established in these domestic spaces.

mon admission comme la récompense la plus flatteuse que puissent obtenir mes travaux en musique. […] Plus de soixante morceaux complets, […] deux opéras […] me donnent, ce me semble, quelques droits à me présenter; j'en parlais l'hiver dernier à Auber et Cherubini et l'un et l'autre me répondirent fort obligeamment. Je vous prie, mon cher Trémont de voir le premier à ce sujet, de lui rappeler ses bonnes dispositions à mon égard et lui dire que je lui écrirai bientôt. Soyez assez bon pour me transmettre ce qu'il vous aura dit. […] Je ne puis, mon cher ami, compter sur personne plus que sur vous pour m'épauler et vous remercie d'avance de tout ce que vous voudrez bien faire dans mon intérêt. Veuillez me mander le résultat de vos informations à ce sujet, le nom des candidats, leur plus ou moins de chances de réussite…; Et recevez, cher Trémont, l'expression de toute mon amitié."

93 We might then conclude with James Davies that what is at work in Cap and Trémont's sessions "lies somewhere between the 'hard' and 'soft' views of gift exchange [Mauss *versus* Derrida]," see James Davies, "Julia's Gift: The Social Life of Scores, c. 1830," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131, no. 2 (2006): 304.

94 Alain Caillé, *Don, intérêt et désintéressement. Bourdieu, Mauss, Platon et quelques autres* (Paris: La Découverte, 1994), 94; cited in Campos, "Donner un concert," 92.

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Abstract

This article reconsiders, through the lens of musical sociability, the relationship between domestic and urban spaces in the Chaussée-d'Antin district in Paris between the 1830s and the 1850s. It investigates the Chaussée-d'Antin both as a musical topography (a remarkable concentration of musical venues, businesses, and homes) and as shaped by the physical and social mobility of its inhabitants. Drawing on a wide range of sources (including newspapers, correspondence, memoirs, notarial records, and musical scores), the article reconstructs the chamber music gatherings hosted in the homes of the baron de Trémont and the pharmacist Antoine Gratacap. The social interactions fostered by these gatherings shaped careers, artistic production, and the symbolic capital of both amateur musicians and professional artists. In this light, the musical life of the district is shown to emerge at the intersection of domestic interiors permeable—both physically and symbolically—to the surrounding public sphere.

Keywords: musical sociability, Chaussée-d'Antin, chamber music salons, gift economy, urban music life

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ARTICLES

Reshaping Secular Music Spaces in Pius IX Rome

Alessandro Maras

The two decades of Roman history that marked the end of the Church State (1850–1870) have been often viewed by traditional music scholarship as a period of obscurity.[1] Such a view has been partly conditioned by old Risorgimento or anti-papal readings that viewed Rome as a victim of the conservative and obscurantist policies of Pope Pius IX Mastai-Ferretti (1792–1878) and, at the same time, as the principal antagonist to the inevitable fulfilment of liberal, modern and progressive dreams of the Italian Unification.[2] It is, of course, not possible to refute these views in their entirety. Even without making comparisons between Rome and larger or more active capitals (e.g., Paris or Vienna), or between this period and brighter epochs (e.g., Rossini's Rome), it is well known, for example, that "the city's opera scene was extremely unstable, full of uncertainties due to the ups and downs of the impresario system fortunes."[3] It is necessary to take into account also

1 Giuseppe Prospero Zuliani, *Roma musicale. Appunti, osservazioni, notizie* (Rome: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1878); Giuseppe Radiciotti, "Teatro e musica in Roma nel secondo quarto del secolo XIX," in *Atti del congresso internazionale di scienze storiche VIII* (Rome: Accademia dei Lincei, 1905); Alberto De Angelis, *La musica a Roma nel secolo XIX* (Rome: Bardi, 1944). See also Raoul Meloncelli, "Sul rinnovamento della vita musicale romana," in *La musica italiana del primo Novecento. La generazione dell'80*, ed. Fiamma Nicolodi (Florence: Olschki, 1981), 219–60.

2 See, for example, Nicola Nisco, *Roma prima e dopo del 1870* (Rome: Tipografia Barbera, 1878); Giuseppe Leti, *Roma e lo Stato Pontificio dal 1849 al 1870. Note di storia politica* (Ascoli Piceno: G. Cesari, 1911); Carl Thomas McIntire, *England Against the Papacy, 1858–1861. Tories, Liberals, and the Overthrow of Papal Temporal Power during the Italian Risorgimento* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

3 "La vita operistica della città [era] estremamente instabile, piena di incertezze, dovute agli alti e bassi delle fortune impresariali." Arrigo Quattrocchi, "La vita operistica a Roma nell'Ottocento," in *Musikstadt Rom. Geschichte – Forschung – Perspektiven*, ed. Markus Engelhardt, *Analecta musicologica* 45 (2011): 362.

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the Church's idea of culture in this period, which dismissed all modernity[4] (and thus one of its most powerful symbols, opera) firmly relying on the teachings and precepts of Catholic orthodoxy, both in the socio-cultural and political spheres.[5] Methods of control and inhibition took the form of censorship, or the widespread control of all musical activity by both the Papal State bodies and the French occupation corps, which protected Rome from the Risorgimento uprisings throughout these two decades.[6] The study of instrumental music was not encouraged—there was a lack of both a musical conservatory and professional orchestras—nor, paradoxically, was the performance of sacred music promoted: famous and major chapels were experiencing a steep decline, lagging far behind the international progress in musical composition.[7]

However, archival research has sought to highlight how the Rome of Pius IX had more composite characters than what the older historiography era had established. The citizenry was curious about cultural and musical novelties that went beyond the interests of the papal government. In the field of chamber music, for example, there were many ensembles and musical events independently organized by local musicians even outside officially established cultural organizations—such as theaters or pontifical academies—which promoted and performed contemporary music.[8] In this respect, we also cannot underestimate the impulse of the many foreigners

4 Philippe Boutry, "Papauté et culture au XIXe siècle. Magistère, orthodoxie, tradition," *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* 28 (2004): 31–58.

5 Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World. A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 5.

6 Monica Calzolari, "La censura nella Roma pontificia dell'Ottocento. Il ruolo predominante della Direzione Generale di Polizia," in *La musica a Roma attraverso le fonti d'archivio*, ed. Bianca Maria Antolini, Arnaldo Morelli, and Vera Vita Spagnuolo (Lucca: LIM, 1994), 287–97; Ornella Di Tondo, *La censura sui balli teatrali nella Roma dell'Ottocento* (Turin: UTET, 2008); Alessandro Capone, *La protection française des États pontificaux. Occupation militaire et souveraineté partagée dans l'Italie du Risorgimento (1849–1870)*, PhD diss (Institut d'études politiques de Paris – Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, 2019).

7 Giancarlo Rostirolla, *La Cappella Giulia 1513–2013. Cinque secoli di musica sacra in San Pietro*, vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2017); Leopold M. Kantner and Angela Pachovsky, *Storia della Cappella musicale Pontificia*, vol. 6, *L'Ottocento* (Rome: Hortus Musicus, 1998).

8 Cristina Cimagalli and Francesca Vacca, "Attività concertistiche nella Roma preunitaria. Avvio di una cronologia e primi risultati," *Fonti musicali italiane* 11 (2006): 175; Daniela Macchione, "Attività concertistica e musica strumentale da camera a Roma (1856–1870)," *Rivista italiana di musicologia* 37, no. 2 (2002): 265–319; Francesca Vacca, "L'Ottocento musicale romano nelle carte della Polizia Pontificia. I concerti pubblici del ventennio 1850–1870," *Fonti musicali italiane* 19 (2014): 69–109.

(musicians or not) living in the city and somehow superimposing their idea of modernity and modern culture on local conservatism.[9]

Roman citizens in any case did not lack contemporary theatrical music. More than active were the popular theaters that staged both comedies and modest opera productions (such as the Valle after its decline, the Capranica and the Metastasio) and the *teatri dialettali* (Teatro Emiliani, Montanara, Sant'Apollinare) which staged popular theater with actors or puppets, by newcomers or old favorites, in Roman dialect. In these theaters, numerous *azioni in prosa e musica* ("dramas in prose with music," a kind of vaudeville) reached a record number of performances; among them, it is worth mentioning at least *Meo Patacca er greve and Marco Pepe la crapetta* (*Meo patacca the Rude and Marco Pepe the Weak*), a reduction of Giuseppe Berneri's seventeenth-century poem *Meo Patacca* by leading actor Filippo Tacconi, with music by Cesare Galanti.[10] Some sources estimate that, by the end of the century, there had been 1,500 performances of this play.[11]

The world of contemporary opera, staged in the two main theaters, Apollo and Argentina, deserves a separate discussion. Both venues belonged to the extremely wealthy Torlonia family and for about forty years had a single impresario, Vincenzo Jacovacci, a figure repeatedly vituperated by Verdi and his publisher Ricordi for his parsimonious and almost indecent productions.[12] Although censors closely monitored their productions, sometimes to the point of the ridiculous or grotesque—as when they completely changed the plots and titles of many works, including *Rigoletto*, which became *Viscardello*—they did not ban the staging of operas by major composers such as Pacini, Petrella, or Meyerbeer, which were performed regularly. The Teatro Apollo even secured two remarkable exploits, the premieres of *Il trovatore* (1853) and *Un ballo in maschera* (1859): this was due precisely to a broader appetite for contemporary theatrical music—an appetite sustained not only by astute impresarios and the general public, but also by high-ranking prelates.[13]

9 Pierre Musitelli, "Artisti e letterati stranieri a Roma nell'Ottocento. Strutture, pratiche e descrizioni della sociabilità," *Memoria e Ricerca* 46 (2014): 27–44.

10 Filippo Tacconi, *Meo Patacca er greve e Marco Pepe la crapetta. Azione storica in prosa e musica in dialetto romanesco* (Rome: Puccinelli, 1865).

11 Carlo Boschi, "Tosti e la vita musicale romana dall'Unità ai primi del nostro secolo," in *Tosti*, ed. Francesco Sanvitale (Turin: EDT, 1991), 104.

12 Marcello Conati, "Il maestro Verdi e l'impresario Jacovacci," in *Verdi. Interviste e incontri* (Turin: EDT, 2000), 37–42; Marco Marica, "Jacovacci, Vincenzo," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Treccani, 2004).

13 Andreas Giger, "Social Control and the Censorship of Giuseppe Verdi's Operas in Rome (1844–1859)," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9, no. 3 (1999): 233–65; Giger, "Behind the

Examining these dynamics brings into view both Roman conservatism and its openness. Yet even this openness can be understood in two distinct ways. There were those who sought novelty in the dialogue with romantic instrumental music, opening up to international influences, and those who only wanted more enjoyment of theatrical or entertainment music. However, these opposing strains—the popular versus the progressive, the theatrical versus the instrumental, the local versus the international—failed to integrate into a cohesive Roman musical culture. For twenty years, this lack of synthesis hindered the city's ability to mirror the modernising trends characteristic of the European nineteenth century. Where in a city like Paris immigration, state regulation and urban culture were engines of rapid progress, in Rome they had no fruitful outcome except, perhaps, after the fall of the Papal States.[14] It is necessary to understand how and why this interaction did not take place in the Eternal City.

One answer can be found in the urban conformation of Rome and the social dynamics that it both promoted and sanctioned. Drawing on musicological perspectives that focus on music as a primarily social force[15] and on the so-called *spatial turn*,[16] I will attempt to illustrate how society, space and music interacted in a classical environment *par excellence* such as Rome, and how the conformation of this city gave rise to dynamics that are difficult to trace elsewhere. Such an inquiry will be useful not only to gain a more complete understanding of this period's musical society, but also to redefine those resistances and delays attributed to the Roman musical culture after the city became the capital of a national kingdom.

Police Chief's Closed Doors: The Unofficial Censors of Verdi in Rome," *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 7, no. 2 (2010): 63–99.

14 Bianca Maria Antolini, "Roma di fine Ottocento. Una capitale per la musica," *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria* 130 (2007): 29–42; Gesa Zur Nieden, "The Internationalization of Musical Life at the End of the Nineteenth Century in Modernized Paris and Rome," *Urban History* 40, no. 4 (2013): 663–80; Meloncelli, "Sul rinnovamento della vita musicale romana."

15 Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life. The Politics of Participation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Georgina Born, "After Relational Aesthetics: Improvised Music, the Social, and (Re)Theorizing the Aesthetic," in *Improvisation and Social Aesthetics*, eds. Georgina Born, Eric Lewis, and William Straw (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 33–58.

16 From Adam Krims, *Music and Urban Geography* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007) to Jacek Blaszkiewicz, *Fanfare for a City. Music and the Urban Imagination in Haussmann's Paris* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2024). For an up-to-date bibliography on this disciplinary turn see Hubert Knoblauch, and Martina Löw, "The Re-Figuration of Spaces and Refigured Modernity: Concept and Diagnosis," *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* 45, no. 2 (2020): 263–92.

Society and Culture

On a symbolic and imagological level, until the Italian conquest the "official image of Rome in Europe … [was] that of one of the last bastions *against* progress, *against* liberal and democratic society, *against* modernity and modernization. And not only on the terrain of ideologies and worldviews, but also explicitly on that of customs and ways of life."[17] This statement by Vittorio Vidotto sums up the position of Pius IX's Rome on several levels. On a political level, the threat of invasion by the Kingdom of Italy (the so-called *Questione romana*) and the consequent papal opposition to the socio-cultural instances of the Risorgimento (liberalism, progressivism, secularism) had led Pius IX to an increasingly rigid closure towards contemporaneity. This opposition was, however, counterbalanced by the simultaneous exaltation of the values of Christianity in a universal, timeless and a-historical sense.[18] If Pius IX was in danger of losing his earthly throne, he wanted, on the contrary, to consolidate his role as the guide of all Catholics, reaffirming the centrality of worship, corroborating the functions of the pontiff (*Dogma of Infallibility*, 1869–70) and combating immoral anti-Christian principles (*Syllabus of Errors*, 1864). He wanted, in short, to raise his state above any national or international conflict, even in the cultural sphere. This also had decisive effects on Rome's musical society, as the public debate on many aspects of contemporary life, which elsewhere had been conveyed by the local press and publications since the beginning of the century,[19] was reduced to a minimum in the city. The city's main periodical, *Il giornale di Roma*, hardly ever discussed music; *L'osservatore romano* was the only periodical to address it sporadically, but it was only founded in July 1861. Among specialist periodicals, only *L'eptacordo* existed, although it appeared irregularly under oppressive state supervision.[20] This slowed down many of the reforming actions that were taking place in other European cities.[21]

17 Vittorio Vidotto, *Roma contemporanea* (Rome: Laterza, 2001), 3. Emphasis added. Unless otherwise specified, translations from non-English texts are my own.

18 Giacomo Martina, *Il pontificato di Pio IX (1846–1878)*, vol. 2 (Rome: Università Gregoriana Editrice, 1976), 114–5.

19 Emanuele Senici, "Delirious Hopes: Napoleonic Milan and the Rise of Modern Italian Operatic Criticism," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 27, no. 2 (2015): 97–127.

20 Daniela Macchione, "'Ne' latifondi delle lettere, e delle arti belle' sotto l'occhio vigile della censura. Storia dell'*Eptacordo*, periodico romano di metà Ottocento," *Fonti musicali italiane* 13 (2008): 177–95.

21 Roger Magraw, *France 1814–1915: The Bourgeois Century* (Oxford: Fontana Paperbacks, 1983).

Those who might have subverted this order were the industrial and capitalist bourgeoisie, the true agents and catalysts of change in nineteenth-century Europe. Rome, however, lacked such a class: limited industrial development, cautious infrastructural modernization, and reliance on a landowning and manufacturing economy prevented it from flourishing. Demographically, Rome had an almost unique composition. The size of the city was that of a small capital, like Munich or Copenhagen.[22] According to a survey of the time, in 1853 almost 30 percent of the inhabitants belonged to the poorer classes (farmers, laborers, caretakers), while the wealthier groups (including the Roman *generone* and the aristocracy) accounted for 6 percent, and the clergy for about 2 percent.[23] For our purposes, we need to consider the population of resident artists: "of the fine arts workers [just over 1,000] one seventh are foreigners, one quarter Italians from other provinces, and the remainder from Rome and the Papal States."[24] This statistic, however, does not take into account migratory flows, especially seasonal or temporary ones from all over the West. "The number of foreigners who come to Rome from November to almost the whole of April varies from 25,000 to 60,000 … Many of them come for the ceremonies of Christmas, Lent and Easter; but the majority come for pleasure, to admire the treasures of fine art and its stupendous ruins."[25]

Among them were numerous artists (painters, sculptors, writers, musicians) drawn, despite or perhaps because of Pius IX's conservative policies, by the prospect of encountering one of the last oases of genuine antiquity and anti-modernity. In general, it was difficult for them to integrate fully with the local population. The reasons for this incompatibility lay primarily in perceptions of the city itself. In the eyes of foreigners, Romans failed to understand the value of the places they inhabited; for the Romans, by contrast, their city was a capital like any other—poorer, certainly, but worthy of greater consideration only because it was older and more sacred. "For-

22 From 170,000 inhabitants in 1850 to 200,000 twenty years later.

23 Cesare Mazzoni, *Roma. Dati statistici* (Forlì: Luigi Bordandini, 1861), 13–4.

24 "Degli addetti alle belle arti un settimo sono stranieri, un quarto italiani delle altre provincie, e il restante romani e statisti." Mazzoni, 15.

25 "Il numero de' forestieri che dal Novembre a quasi tutto l'Aprile si noverano in Roma varia dai 25.000 ai 60.000 … Parecchi di essi vi si conducono per le cerimonie del Natale, della Quaresima e della Pasqua; ma la maggior parte ci viene a diletto, per ammirarvi i tesori di belle arti e le sue stupende ruine." Mazzoni, 16. I do not take into account here the migratory flows of people from poorer social classes or employed in non-artistic jobs, estimated at almost 100,000. See Massimiliano Crisci, "Migrazioni e trasformazione urbana a Roma dalla metà dell'Ottocento alla fine dell'età liberale (1850–1920)," *Giornale di storia* 35 (2021): 4–8.

eigners take possession of Rome. Only they know the right way to use the eternal city; Romans obscure its clear presence."[26] Herman Melville, who arrived in Rome in 1857, admired the statues of St John Lateran and wrote:

> Standing in every grand or animated attitude, they seem not only to attest that this is the Eternal City, but likewise, at its portal, to offer greetings in the name of that great company of statues which, amid the fluctuations of the human census, abides the *true and undying* population of Rome. It is, indeed, among these mute citizens that the stranger forms his most pleasing and cherished associations, to be remembered when other things in the Imperial City are forgotten.[27]

By contrast, the Roman population displayed an ambiguous attitude: it benefited from the wealth generated by visitors—"With a cigarette or two, one can gain a supporter," Georges Bizet remarked in 1857, referring to a Roman beggar[28]—yet also showed a certain indifference, which at times turned into hostility. This was especially true of the large French community, represented in the city not only by tourists but also by the military contingent first sent by France to restore Pius IX to the throne after the Roman Republic of 1849, and later maintained by Napoleon III to protect Rome from the ambitions of the Kingdom of Italy until 1870.[29] Historian Alberto De Angelis explains that

> Foreign society and Roman society in Rome are two distinct and unmistakable worlds … and since it is evident that, in such a situation, artistic progress could only have taken place in the upper classes of the city, where the ease of life and the easiest contact with culture was possible, it is in the salons and the artistic circles of Rome that we must look for the first signs of an intellectual rebirth and before that in the neutral—"extraterritorial," we might even

26 "Gli stranieri si appropriano di Roma. Solo loro conoscono l'uso giusto della città eterna, i romani ne offuscano la limpida presenza." Elisabeth and Jörg Garms, "Mito e realtà di Roma nella cultura europea. Viaggio e idea, immagine e immaginazione," in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. V, *Il paesaggio*, ed. Cesare De Seta (Turin: Einaudi, 1982), 638. See also Musitelli, "Artisti e letterati stranieri a Roma nell'Ottocento."

27 Herman Melville, "Statues in Rome," in Merton M. Sealts, Jr., *Melville as Lecturer* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), 130. Emphasis added.

28 "Pour une cigarette ou deux on se fait un partisan." Georges Bizet, *Lettres. Impressions de Rome (1857–1860). La Commune (1871)* (Paris: Calmann-Lèvy, 1907), 69.

29 On the French occupation, see Capone, *La protection française des États pontificaux*.

> and not improperly say—areas of the embassies … where cultured or wealthy Romans found … opportunities to approach and mix with cultured foreign elements flowing into or residing in Rome.[30]

Foreigners should in any case be credited with providing the strongest impetus for Rome's opening to European instrumental music, which, until the 1830s, had remained "*lettre close pour les Romains*"—according to a famous expression by Berlioz.

> There is much evidence of this: programs written in French …; an audience of exclusive subscribers, sometimes referred to in the programs themselves; the silence of the city's press; the sessions in honor of foreign performers (for example, in 1863, the one in honor of [Auguste] Franchomme); the collaboration of foreign instrumentalists resident in or visiting Rome, such as the Berlin violist Wilhelm Troschel (who later became Roman by adoption) and the English pianist Walter Bache, who stayed in Rome between 1862 and 1865.[31]

Nor should we underestimate the contribution of the musicians and organizers of the time, for example the German violinist Ludwig Landsberg and the activities of the amateur choir of the Association of German Artists,[32] the Danish composer Niels Ravnkilde, or the members of the Circolo Scandinavo,

30 "Società straniera e società romana in Roma sono due mondi distinti e inconfondibili; E poiché è evidente che, in tale situazione di cose, il progresso artistico non avrebbe potuto verificarsi che nei ceti superiori della città, dove l'agio della vita e il più facile contatto con la cultura era possibile, è nei salotti e negli ambienti artistici romani che dobbiamo ricercare i primi segni di rinascita intellettuale e prima ancora nelle zone neutre extraterritoriali," potremmo addirittura e non impropriamente dire – delle ambasciate …, dove i romani colti o facoltosi trovano … occasione di avvicinare e di mescolarsi con colti elementi stranieri che affluiscono o risiedono in Roma." De Angelis, *La musica a Roma nel secolo XIX*, 11–2.

31 "Varie prove potrebbero addursi al riguardo: i programmi in francese …; il pubblico esclusivo di abbonati, cui talora accennano questi stessi programmi; il silenzio della stampa cittadina; le sedute in onore di esecutori stranieri (vedi, nel 1863, quella in onore di [Auguste] Franchomme); la collaborazione di strumentisti stranieri residenti o di passaggio a Roma come il violista berlinese Wilhelm Troschel (fattosi poi romano d'adozione) e il pianista inglese Walter Bache, a Roma tra il 1862 e il 1865." Claudio Annibaldi, "Beethoven a Roma nell'Ottocento (I)," *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* 5, no. 3 (1971): 377n68.

32 Friedrich Noack, *Das Deutschtum in Rom seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Deutsche Verlag, 1927), 585–87; Bianca Maria Antolini, "Un musicista tedesco nella Roma dell'Ottocento. Ludwig Landsberg," in "*Vanitatis fuga, aeternitatis amor." Wolfgang Witzenmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Sabine Ehrmann-Herfort and Markus Engelhardt (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2005), 465–87.

an association of Nordic artists that attracted, among others, the young Edvard Grieg.[33] Naturally, credit cannot be assigned to foreign contributions alone: the synergy between local actors and external interlocutors proved exceptionally fruitful. Violinists Tullio Ramacciotti and Ettore Pinelli, together with pianist Giovanni Sgambati, for instance, took advantage of the large foreign audience to organize several initiatives (matinées, academies, and full-orchestra concerts) throughout this twenty-year period. Franz Liszt's presence in Rome between 1861 and 1869 was also central to the promotion of these enterprises and to the formation of a new generation of pianists and composers, of whom Sgambati was certainly the main representative.[34]

Music theater did not constitute a true international hub, and only in particular and sporadic events, such as premieres, was it attractive to the elite public of foreigners. Almost twenty years after the fall of the papal kingdom, a municipal official stated that "people accustomed to the performances of the main foreign capitals will not come to Rome to go to the theater, but to see the ancient queen of the world or to study the progress of modern arts."[35] American sculptor William Wetmore Story, who lived in Rome for decades, even implied that the only reason to attend a Roman opera house was its affordability.[36]

The "old and swampy"[37] Teatro Apollo (also known as Tordinona) was the only theater devoted exclusively to musical entertainment. It was frequented mainly by Romans, who occupied both the most prominent boxes and the majority of seats in the other sectors; social distinctions were largely absent inside the theater, emerging only at the ticket counter. Similarly, the authors most frequently performed at the Apollo or the Argentina (the city's second most important theater in terms of both importance and quality), were Italian, with the sole exception of Meyerbeer.[38] It is therefore not possible to identify in the

33 Edvard Grieg, "Diary of 1866," in *Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, eds. Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson (New York: Peer Gynt Press, 2001), 40–41.

34 The bibliography on Liszt in Rome is extensive, I will only mention Nicolas Dufetel, "Liszt e Roma: bilancio e prospettive di ricerca," in *Musikstadt Rom. Geschichte – Forschung – Perspektiven*, ed. Markus Engelhardt, *Analecta musicologica* 45 (2011): 452–77; Elisabeth Reisinger, "Heaven and Hell. Performances of Liszt's Works and their Reception in Rome, 1861–1886," *Studia Musicologica* 60, no. 1–4 (2019): 169–85. On Sgambati, see Bianca Maria Antolini and Annalisa Bini (eds.), *Giovanni Sgambati: musicista dell'avvenire o epigono romantico?* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia, 2018).

35 Quoted in Zur Nieden, "The internationalization of musical life," 667.

36 William Wetmore Story, *Roba di Roma*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1867), 213.

37 "Vecchio e paludoso." Raffaele De Cesare, *Roma e lo Stato del papa. Dal ritorno di Pio IX al 20 settembre*, vol. I, *1850–1860* (Rome: Forzani, 1907), 151.

38 Data retrieved from the *Corago* database, accessed July 7, 2026, corago.unibo.it. One

opera house the mixture and variety of repertoires resulting from transcultural exchange that were more evident in other capitals.[39] Indeed, the opera house was perhaps the place where the preponderance of the local population—its tastes, moods, and network of relationships—could be felt most strongly.[40]

At the same time, the papal government did not prohibit theater attendance, since keeping theaters open allowed it to exercise closer supervision over individual behavior; it recognized "the educational need to direct young people in particular toward a venue more easily subject to supervision than other meeting places: namely, the theater."[41] The theater therefore had to be a popular and attractive venue to the highest degree, and in no way exclusionary. Historian Giuseppe Prospero Zuliani argued that "The [Roman] people have good ears, but are not educated in artistic finesse. Give them an opera that they love, such as *Il trovatore*, and if at least half of the singers possess some voice, they will easily pass over coarse shouting, exaggerations, uncertainties and even out-of-tune singing."[42]

Instead, the places where an effective interaction of the entire population was possible were public spaces: the Corso (which at the end of winter exploded in the festivities of the Roman Carnival), the more central squares (such as Piazza del Popolo or Piazza Colonna) and Villa Borghese, the biggest park in the center of the city. Places of worship did not belong entirely to the same category: foreigners frequented their national churches—such as San Luigi dei Francesi or Santa Maria dell'Anima for German-speaking communities—and often belonged to confessions other than Catholicism.[43] The Christian universality invoked by Pius IX found expression chiefly in the great papal basilicas, which served as major attractions for tourists, destinations for pilgrims, and worldwide symbols of papal power.[44]

work by Gounod and one by von Flotow were also performed over the same twenty-year period.

39 See the example of Paris: Damien Ehrhardt, "Les musiciens étrangers et l'émergence du champ musical," *Hommes & migrations* 1308 (2014): 139–47.

40 See the social composition of Apollo frequenters in De Cesare, *Roma e lo Stato del papa*, 302.

41 Monica Calzolari, "Censura e spirito pubblico. Voci di autori, impresari e spettatori a confronto con la revisione degli spettacoli," in *Gregorio XVI Promotore delle arti e della cultura*, eds. Francesca Longo, Claudia Zaccagnini, and Fabrizio Fabbrini (Pisa: Pacini, 2008), 475.

42 Zuliani, *Roma musicale*, 34.

43 Golo Maurer, *Preußen am Tarpejischen Felsen. Chronik eines absehbaren Sturzes. Die Geschichte des Deutschen Kapitols 1817–1918* (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2005), 51–61; McIntire, *England Against the Papacy*, 40–46.

44 Richard Boursy, "The Mystique of the Sistine Chapel Choir in the Romantic Era," *The*

The Tale of Two Cities

The socio-musical perspectives of Georgina Born and Thomas Turino can be useful in this investigation as they shift the focus from musical products or facts as such to the effects they have on people. Born argues, for instance, that music "produces its own diverse socialities, … has powers to animate imagined communities … refracts wider social relations, from the most concrete to the most abstract of collectivities."[45] In such dynamics, the spatial dimension assumes a pivotal role, insofar as "our bodily practices shape spaces, but the latter in turn contribute to the repetition over time of the former, sending us signals regarding the use of space through bodies."[46] It can therefore be suggested that, even without an actual "musical district" in Rome, socio-musical practices originating from different *habitus* were materially anchored in specific spaces and boundaries. Conservative state policies would merely have favored the realization of such a district, without intervening to curb certain practices—by prohibiting attendance at the most popular theaters, or even demolishing them—or to separate activities, for example, by intentionally "ghettoizing" certain sectors of music production in order to control them more effectively. However, this seems paradoxical at a time when, precisely for socio-political purposes, the papal government was changing the urban structure of Rome, implementing the construction of new housing, manufacturing centers and infrastructures such as bridges and a railway station.[47] Such disinterest in the musical and spectacular sphere can be considered quite antithetical to the interests of other European rulers: just consider, for instance, the contemporary constructions of the Opéra Garnier in Paris (1861–1875) or the Royal Albert Hall in London (1867–1871).

Given Rome's relatively small size and its historical subdivision into *rioni* (Figs. 1 and 2), it is possible to identify on a map the main places where music played a central role: theaters, salons open to the public, outdoor spaces used for musical events, and even music shops. It will be necessary, however, to leave aside those places that contributed little or nothing to the city's social

Journal of Musicology 11, no. 3 (1993): 277–329; Graham O'Reilly, *Allegri's* Miserere *in the Sistine Chapel* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2020), 121–182.

45 Born, "After Relational Aesthetics," 43.

46 Alfredo Agustoni and Serena Sanseviero, "Tempo, spazi, distanze e luoghi," in *Sociologia dello spazio, dell'ambiente e del territorio*, eds. Alfredo Agustoni, Paolo Giuntarelli, and Roberto Veraldi (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2007), 23.

47 Gianfranco Spagnesi, *L'architettura a Roma al tempo di Pio IX (1850–1870)* (Rome: Studium, 2000).

Fig. 1 – Map of Rome in 1862.

discourse, such as private salons or the scriptoria of sacred-music scholars. At stake here is nothing less than what Habermas termed *the public sphere*.[48] Indeed, decisive value cannot be assigned to discourses and practices in the reconfiguration of the urban musical context unless they were reworked through forms of action at least open to the public: public debate in periodicals, academies, or other venues such as cafés—which, actually, exerted no influence on music in Rome and did not host concerts of contemporary music.

The situation was completely different for sacred music, which will not be discussed in this study but should be mentioned for the sake of completeness. The distribution across the city of places devoted to the performance of sacred music—such as churches, basilicas, and convents—was extremely dense. According to an 1849 survey, whose data remained substantially unchanged over the following twenty years, there were 371 churches in which liturgies were at least occasionally set to music, as well as 30 permanent music chapels and 23 *maestri di cappella* serving one or more churches.[49]

48 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991).

49 The survey was carried out by the Cecilian academic Luigi Rossi in the document *Nota*

Fig. 2 – The city's division into *rioni*.

The musical theaters active in this period were the Apollo, Argentina (specialized in opera and ballet), Valle, Metastasio, Capranica (comedy and vaudeville, rarely opera), Emiliani, Montanara (comedy, pantomime and puppets) and Sant'Apollinare (puppets). These were located in the *rioni* Ponte (V), Parione (VI), Regola (VII) and Sant'Eustachio (VIII), with the exception of Capranica and Argentina, which were located a little further away, in the *rioni* Colonna (III) and Pigna (IX), respectively. Mention must also be made, in passing, of the Teatro Alibert (the eighteenth-century Teatro delle Dame), which was renovated around 1848 but destroyed by fire in 1863. In its last fifteen years, it no longer maintained the reputation as an important opera house that it had acquired in the previous century, instead hosting parties and various kinds of performances, including equestrian and dramatic shows.

Chamber music concerts took place mainly in the *rione* Campo Marzio (IV), in music halls located in Vicolo del Vantaggio, Via dei Pontefici, in the Sala dell'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (via di Ripetta), and in Palazzo

de' servizi musicali nelle chiese di Roma (1848), analyzed and published in full in Giancarlo Rostirolla, "Luoghi e protagonisti della musica sacra nella Roma di metà Ottocento," *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* 9, no. 3 (2005): 307–49.

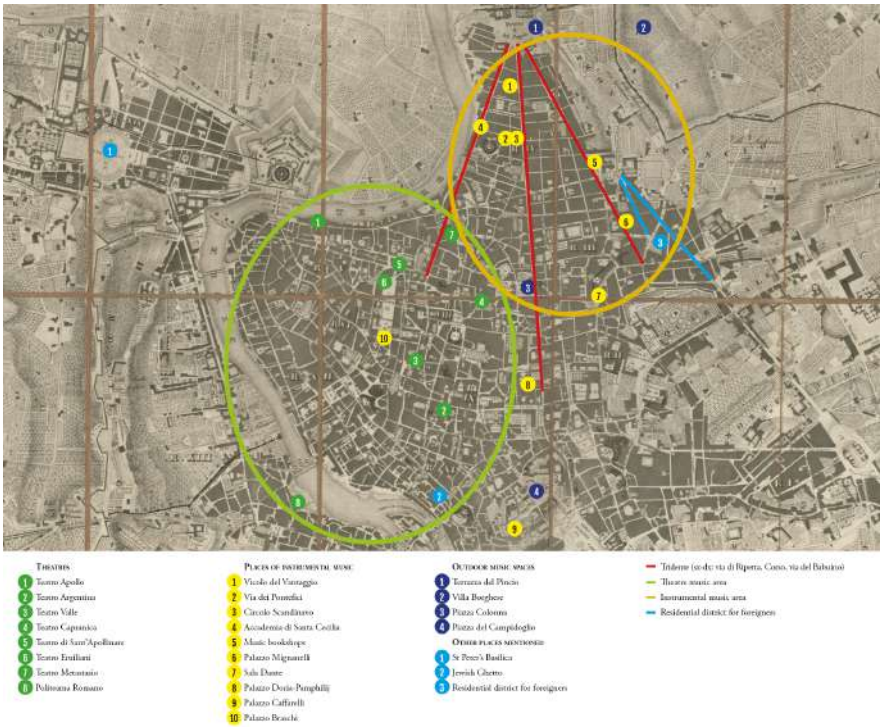


Fig. 3 – A detailed map of Rome.

Mignanelli; another venue was Palazzo Doria Pamphilij (*rione* Pigna, IX).[50] In *rione* Campo Marzio there were also music bookshops owned by Bartolo, Monaldi and Spithover, in Piazza di Spagna. Outside this area were the hall of Palazzo Braschi and the hall of Palazzo Caffarelli, seat of the Prussian embassy. Campo Marzio also shared with *rione* Colonna (III) the main venues for outdoor music, namely the Corso, Piazza Colonna and the Pincio gardens, where, as Nathaniel Hawthorne (a guest of the city at the time) said, "on certain afternoons of the week, a French military band flings out rich music over the poor old city, floating her with strains as loud as those of her own echoless triumphs."[51]

It is interesting to compare these areas with those inhabited by wealthy tourists, who formed the main audience base for many musical events. According to historian Raffaele De Cesare, foreigners rented

50 Cimagalli and Vacca, "Attività concertistiche nella Roma preunitaria"; Vacca, "L'Ottocento musicale romano"; Macchione, "Attività concertistica e musica strumentale."

51 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun* (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin, 1860), 124.

Fig. 4 – Piazza Navona, ca. 1862 (ph. Giorgio Sommer).

> the large flats in Piazza di Spagna, Via Gregoriana, Via Sistina, Via Condotti, Fontanella di Borghese, Quattro Fontane up to Villino Franz, Due Macelli, Ripetta and Babuino, and used to rent quarters in almost all the historical buildings to the richest foreign families. … In the Chigi, Ruspoli, Albani, Mattei, Santacroce, Colonna and Doria palaces, there were always large quarters supplied to foreign families or diplomats.[52]

It is evident that richer social classes tended to congregate in the north-eastern part of the city, the same area that also included the places dedicated to instrumental music performances and at the same time cut off, or only marginally touched, the areas dedicated to theaters. The so-called "English ghetto," i.e. the area around Piazza di Spagna where most of the wealthy English-speakers resided,[53] and the wretched Jewish ghetto, in *rione* Sant'Angelo (XI), where the Jewish community of Rome had been confined since 1555, were at the opposite ends of the spectrum. And yet, according to the maps of the time, it cannot be claimed that the city was divided by census (Fig. 3). On the left side of the Tiber, aristocratic palaces and working-class

52 De Cesare, *Roma e lo Stato del papa*, 79.

53 An expression used since the 1820s. Harry Nelson Gay, "John Keats e gli inglesi a Roma," *Nuova antologia di lettere, scienze ed arti* 160 (1912): 3.

dwellings were seamlessly distributed throughout the territory. The splendor of the palaces of Piazza Navona, for example, coexisted with the daily food market, "cluttered with a layer of rubbish and filth that exhaled pestiferous miasma and on which the donkeys lay down … and the dogs raced to find something to eat" (Fig. 4).[54] Only in Trastevere were aristocratic palaces in the minority, with poor dwellings, workshops, and taverns occupying the rest of the space.

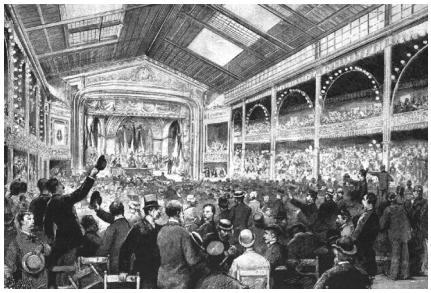
In this context, the inaugurations of a new theater and a new concert hall were emblematic, both for the significance of private initiative and for their symbolic value and location: the Politeama Romano, initially used for performances of various kinds and later established as the city's third opera house in 1865, and the Sala Dante, which was to become the center of Roman symphonic concerts (1866). The former, a large-scale building made of wood and steel (Figs. 5–7), was built on a small beach in *rione* Trastevere (XIII) between Ponte Cestio and Ponte Sisto, probably on the remains of an earlier theater that had already been active for plays between 1860 and 1863.[55] It was designed by Eugenio Venier, chief stagehand of the Teatro Apollo, and managed by Luigi Vannutelli—former municipal secretary and last impresario of the Teatro Alibert[56]—who also became its owner. The foundation of the Politeama can be related to the state-sponsored construction of the workers' quarter known as Quartiere Mastai, whose purpose was to provide affordable housing for the population of Trastevere around the new Manifattura Tabacchi (Tobacco Factory, 1860–63), without, however, providing recreational spaces.[57] The Politeama's purpose was not exclusively musical, but it did lend itself to opera productions, especially in the summer when other theaters were closed. Its importance grew after 1870, when it was able to give, for example, the Roman premiere of Wagner's *Rienzi* (1880); until then, its activities were not noteworthy even for periodicals, and its name never appeared in newspapers. Its location and patrons

54 Ottavio Pio Conti, "Il Circo Agonale e la Fontana dei Calderari," *Roma. Antologia illustrata* 1, no. 28 (1878): 302.

55 Information about this building is scarce and fragmentary. The most documented source is Felice Guglielmi, "Nostalgia di un teatro scomparso. Il Politeama Romano," *La Strenna dei romanisti* 48 (1987): 261–74. See also Alberto Cametti, "Teatro e musica nell'Ottocento romano," *Capitolium* 8, no. 1–2 (1932): 93–4.

56 "Annunzio," *Il buon gusto* 9, no. 36 (1860): 144.

57 Maria Luisa Neri, "Il Quartiere Mastai a Trastevere, un'esemplare cittadella operaia rimasta incompiuta," in *Santa Maria dell'Orto. Il complesso architettonico trasteverino. Studi, progetti, restauri*, eds. Michele Funghi and Williams Troiano (Rome: Dei Merangoli, 2015), 95–124.



Figa. 5–7 – Politeama Romano (1870 ca.): exterior, facade, interiors.

were indeed at the margins of the public narrative and institutional politics: Trastevere itself seemed to bear the image of a *terra incognita* for the entire left-bank Tiber population—poor, violent, dangerous.[58]

After all, both the Politeama and the other theaters frequented by the poorer classes only rarely appeared in publications of that time; for example, to get a description of the Emiliani theater in Piazza Navona or the theaters in Piazza Montanara and Piazza Sant'Apollinare it is necessary to follow the gaze of curious foreigners, such as that of the sculptor William Wetmore Story[59] or that of the German historian Ferdinand Gregorovius, who, in the first volume of his *Wanderjahre in Italien*, described a *Faust* interpreted by puppets and a parody of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Roman dialect.[60] These were *invisible places*, ignored by the public debate, with no influence on cultured musical activities,

58 See in this regard the narration of a Trastevere exploration recounted by French writer Edmond About in *Rome contemporaine* (Paris: Lévy, 1861), 110–27.

59 Story, *Roba di Roma*, 294–306.

60 Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Wanderjahre in Italien*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1870), 216–28.

from which they themselves drew artistic nourishment. On the stage of these theaters appeared parodied, disguised, and rewritten comedies, such as *Didona* [sic] *abbandonata* (from Metastasio's *Didone abbandonata*, 1838, published 1851) or *Il trovatore* (1854–55), based on Verdi's opera of the same name, which had premiered exactly one year earlier at the Teatro Apollo.[61] Their aim was to entertain the poorer population, not so much by mocking the taste of the richer ones—in the typical dialectic of domination-dominance—but by entering the same aesthetic-productive dynamics of the wealthy class from a side entrance. Such proximity (not only artistic but also geographical) between these *invisible places* and opera houses testifies to their close connection. Moving from one theater to another was not difficult for Roman audiences, even financially. If impresario Jacovacci saved money on operatic productions (Verdi called it "Jacovacci's stinginess" [*la spilorceria di Jacovacci*]),[62] he still managed to have a full theater, as tickets for opera were accessible to various strata of the population. At the Teatro Apollo, "there were no admission tickets, indeed it is recalled that when the 1859 contract notice stated that the price per seat was raised to sixty *baiocchi* … people protested and called poor Jacovacci a thief."[63] Because of the popular character of its productions and affordable tickets, at the Apollo one could see as many clerks, merchants, *mercanti di campagna* (country merchants), even priests in bourgeois dress, as the richest Roman aristocracy of the Torlonia, Orsini and Colonna families. At the same time, the presence of foreigners was minimal.[64]

The situation was not so different in the very popular puppet theater in Piazza Sant'Apollinare, where tickets cost 5 baiocchi. "The spectators belong to the middle class," Gregorovius recounted, "and also to the distin-

61 Jean-François Lattarico, "Réécritures métastasiennes. Notes sur la *Didone abbandonata* en *romanesco*," *Cahiers d'études romanes* 20 (2009): 299–320; Giulio Vaccaro, "*Cummedie nove, falsette e pantomimme*. Il teatro nella Roma dell'Ottocento dai burattini alla Compagnia Tacconi," *Il 996. Rivista del centro studi Giuseppe Gioachino Belli* 25, no. 2 (2017): 59–74.

62 Giuseppe Verdi, *I copialettere*, eds. Gaetano Cesari and Alessandro Luzio (Milan: Ceretti, 1913), 570. See also John Rosselli, *The Opera Industry in Italy from Cimarosa to Verdi. The Role of the Impresario* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 25.

63 De Cesare, *Roma e lo Stato del papa*, 303. It should be noted that at that time there was a distinction between admission tickets (*biglietto d'ingresso*) and seat tickets (*biglietto di posto*). The former, as in this case, could be free, but did not entitle the holder to a seat. "The holder of a seat ticket is not permitted to enter the theater to occupy their assigned seat without first purchasing an admission ticket." Nicola Tabanelli, "I diritti e gli obblighi degli spettatori riguardo al posto," *Rivista musicale italiana* 6 (1899): 802. See also Rosselli, *The Opera Industry in Italy*, 67–70.

64 De Cesare, *Roma e lo Stato del papa*, 302.

guished class, who do not shy away from the occasional pleasure of a puppet show."[65] Jacovacci himself came from the *teatri dialettali*. He had begun by managing the Fiano, a puppet theater that had closed in the mid-century, then moved on to the Alibert and also to the Amphitheatre Corea, an open-air venue mostly dedicated to comedies or equestrian games.[66] To this experience, Jacovacci added a mercantile mentality,[67] arguably derived from his family's business in the fish-selling sector; this was compounded by the chronic lack of public funds for adequate opera productions.[68] The results of his operations were thus closer to popular entertainment than to the glittering stagings found in many other European capitals.

The demands of the instrumental-music audience—not necessarily wealthier than the theater-going public, but certainly more culturally open—were of an entirely different kind. From the early 1850s, building on tentative ventures that had begun some twenty years earlier, a number of Roman musicians began to organize chamber-music concerts, especially in the *rione* Campo Marzio (IV). These were not official or academic initiatives—although there was an obligation to request authorization from state institutions[69]—but rather spontaneous expressions of a perceived need to fill the gaps in a musical landscape that was not opening up to contemporary international currents. However, this did not concern the two Roman music academies, Santa Cecilia and the Filarmonica: the former was engaged almost exclusively in concerts of Italian vocal music, while the latter was only active for a four-year period (1856–60) and hardly ever opened to non-academics.

Between the 1850s and the 1860s, Tullio Ramacciotti, his nephew Ettore Pinelli, and Giovanni Sgambati performed several chamber-music concerts in a hall at Vicolo del Vantaggio 1 and another at Via dei Pontefici 50, near Via di Ripetta. Their programs consisted of works from the previous fifty years by, among many others, Weber, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Schumann.[70] Beginning in December 1864, Sgambati and Pinelli also orga-

65 Gregorovius, *Wanderjahre in Italien*, 207.

66 Regarding the puppet theaters, see Davide Marzattinocci, *Cassandrino al Teatro Fiano. Il teatro delle marionette a Roma nella prima metà dell'Ottocento* (Azzano San Paolo: Junior, 2006).

67 Rosselli, *The Opera Industry in Italy*, 24.

68 The situation was very similar in the state's second city, Bologna. See Cormac Newark, "'In Italy We Don't Have the Means for Illusion': Grand Opéra in Nineteenth-Century Bologna," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 19, no. 3 (2007): 199–222.

69 Vacca, "L'Ottocento musicale romano."

70 Cimagalli and Vacca, "Attività concertistiche nella Roma preunitaria." See also Vacca, "L'Ottocento musicale romano" and Macchione, "Attività concertistica e musica strumentale."

Fig. 8 – The Sala Dante.

nized matinées in a large hall rising through two storeys inside Palazzo Poli, the building into whose facade the Trevi Fountain is built. On February 22, 1866, an exhibition of twenty-seven paintings inspired by the six-hundredth anniversary of Dante's birth in 1265 was inaugurated there. Liszt arranged for his *Dante-Symphonie* (1855–56) to be performed at the inaugural event, entrusting the conducting to his pupil Sgambati, who made his debut on the podium. From then on, the hall was renamed first Galleria Dantesca and later Sala Dante, becoming the Roman centre of Romantic instrumental music (Figs. 8 and 9).[71] However, this was not a repertoire specifically intended for those who frequented Roman theaters. The poet Decio Cortesi recounts:

71 On the Sala Dante, see Bianca Maria Antolini, "La musica nelle celebrazioni del sesto centenario dantesco," in *Il mito di Dante nella musica della Nuova Italia (1861–1914)*, ed. Guido Salvetti (Milan: Guerini, 1994), 41–47.

Fig. 9 – Entrance to the Sala Dante today.

> Walking along the Corso, in the company of a poet friend of mine … I was struck by a small poster in which it was announced that a Beethoven Quartet would be performed in the Sala Dante … Then the desire was born in my soul to know what Beethoven and his music was, and I knew that almost 'clandestinely' … egregious artists such as Sgambati and Pinelli, performed before forty or fifty people, *most of them not Roman*, chosen classical music … It was an afternoon, … and the rare audience [was] scattered here and there around the hall. Everyone was attentive: they were all performers and there was no trace of the audience that today crowds theaters and concerts.[72]

In those years, the composition of the audience of the Sala Dante would always be the exact opposite of that of the Roman theaters: a "small number"

72 Quoted in De Angelis, *La musica a Roma nel secolo XIX*, 30. Emphasis added.

of Romans and "various ministers of foreign courts, various ecclesiastical dignitaries, and the flower of the cultured people from beyond the borders of the Alps residing in Rome."[73] Moreover, the Sala Dante's location made it conveniently accessible to the many foreigners who lived between Piazza di Spagna and Piazza Barberini. If the concerts failed to reach the Roman population, the reason did not lie in ticket prices either: although not cheap, they were not particularly high. The average price was 1 scudo (100 baiocchi) per ticket, more than twice the price of one of the cheapest tickets at the Apollo (40 baiocchi). Later, Sgambati and Pinelli also organized so-called "popular concerts" at the Sala Dante (May–December 1866), whose cheaper tickets cost 30 baiocchi, in order to attract precisely—or so we may assume—the Roman audience that frequented the opera and was accustomed to lower ticket prices. The initiative was unsuccessful, however, since the concerts did not attract the local public they had in mind.

Another Rome: Toward a Conclusion

In his global history of the nineteenth century, Jürgen Osterhammel establishes opera as the "characteristic aesthetic form in Europe at the top of the artistic hierarchy."[74] The very building of the opera house constitutes the symbolic center of power and its performance in modern cities: as Ruth Bereson observes, in many cities opera houses "were traditionally placed at significant axes … close to courts or amusement centres of the aristocracy, their location shifting as focal centres of power changed."[75] This was not the case in Rome, where the Apollo, the main opera house, occupied a marginal position overlooking the Tiber, its silhouette indistinguishable from the adjacent buildings (Figs. 10 and 11). Although it was neglected, one cannot go so far as to say that it was an embarrassment for the pope; rather, it was perhaps a necessary evil. Maintaining a theater in which the population could be concentrated—and gathering the theaters themselves within a well-defined area—was useful to the papal regime as a means of containing and controlling, like a *panopticon*, a population not always inclined to follow its directives. Finally, none of the Roman

73 *L'osservatore romano*, 13 december 1866, quoted in Annibaldi, "Beethoven a Roma," 381.

74 Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World*, 5.

75 Ruth Bereson, *The Operatic State. Cultural Policy and Opera Houses* (London: Routledge, 2002), 6.

Fig. 10 – Fishers near the Teatro Apollo (ph. Ettore Roesler Franz).

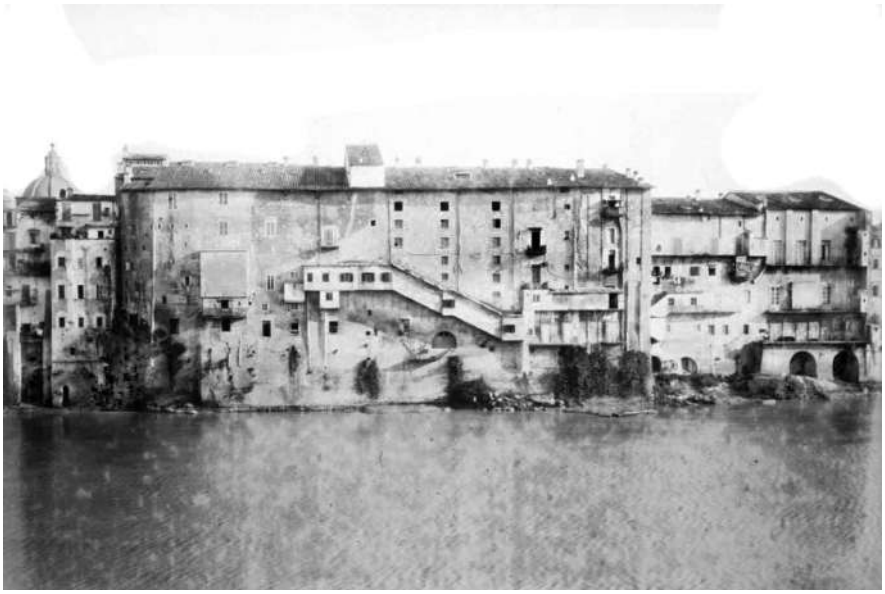


Fig. 11 – Teatro Apollo (ph. Fratelli D'Alessandri).

theaters could boast a significant aesthetic presence that distinguished its social and cultural function within the city, as was the case with the most important Italian theaters. Suffice it to say that the Apollo's facade, still overlooked today, was nothing more than "four doors, under a canopy, [that] opened onto the street."[76] There was no theater that was a symbol of Rome, in the way that La Scala, for example, was an emblem of Milan and a point of reference for its community.

At the same time, it is surprising how music theater did not play a major role in the eyes of the Roman wealthier classes; calls for its reform, refinement and greater centrality in the urban fabric were almost non-existent at this time.[77] Even those who, like the many foreigners in the city, had a broader view of contemporary novelties did not intervene in local theatrical dynamics. Moreover, the cultural solidity represented by theaters, anchored in tradition, customs, politics and city life itself, could not have been easily undermined. *Teatri dialettali* were, indeed, *invisible places* outside the Aurelian Walls, but they were very popular because they were economically accessible and demographically transversal.

The city of Rome, by virtue of its acknowledged classicism and supra-temporality, was also intangible from the point of view of urban planning. Pius IX provided for a peculiar *renovatio urbis* in a more modern sense, without altering the urban morphology but attempting to enlarge the city area (the Quartiere Mastai in Trastevere, Termini Station and the Verano Cemetery next to the Esquiline Hill). However, those who tried to modify it in the following decades would make changes that were never universally accepted.[78]

It can therefore be said that two distinct cities developed within Rome. One was the city of the Romans: a theatrical city, fond of spectacular representations—whether refined or not—and itself a theater, which foreigners wished to admire in rapture. Toward the end of his fellowship at the Villa Medici, Massenet wrote: "I didn't want to leave my window until the setting sun had completely disappeared behind St Peter's. It seemed to me that it was Rome in turn, taking refuge in the shadows, bidding me farewell."[79] The other was the city that imitated

76 De Angelis, *La musica a Roma nel secolo XIX*, 138.

77 Apart from the warnings and demonization of opera itself by certain para-statal apparatuses, such as the Jesuit periodical *La Civiltà cattolica*. See "Del teatro italiano," in *La Civiltà cattolica* 5 (1854), 257–77.

78 Vidotto, *Roma contemporanea*, 63–71.

79 "Je ne voulus pas quitter ma fenêtre avant que le soleil couchant eût complètement dis-

the customs of the great metropolises, but without these customs being rooted in its territory. Outside the theatrical sphere, informal alliances, *microsocialities*,[80] were formed by those who preferred other types of music, especially instrumental music. Urban morphology only facilitated these dynamics: the areas of chamber music were those inhabited by wealthy Romans and foreigners, delimited as the so-called *Tridente*, the three streets branching off from Piazza del Popolo—Via di Ripetta, Corso, and Via del Babuino, the latter continuing further toward Piazza Barberini through Via Sistina.

Three decades would pass before Roman society felt the need for an infusion of the latest European musical innovations. The first step, after Rome's annexation to the Kingdom of Italy, was the establishment of a music lyceum, first located in Via di Ripetta and later in Via Vittoria, inside the Tridente. An attempt was then made to shape a different, more international urban image of the city, including in the field of music.[81] Some theaters were upgraded, such as the Politeama, which became the third opera house in the city until its demolition in 1883. More significantly, new theatrical venues were created and distributed more evenly throughout the city, from the Alhambra (1880), next to Castel Sant'Angelo, to the Rossini (1873), a conversion of an old convent near the Pantheon. The culmination of this process can be seen in the construction of the imposing Teatro Costanzi (1880) in the newly urbanized area around Termini Station, far removed from the eighteenth-century theaters—Valle, Alibert, and Argentina—but also, and above all, from the more recent ones: the Apollo and Emiliani.

From the perspective of the local population, while it was understandable that the most progressive musical institution—the new music lyceum, coordinated by Sgambati—should be located near the Corso, it must have seemed strange that the theaters were placed outside the perimeter to which they had been confined for the previous three quarters of a century. The Kingdom of Italy sought to modernize the city according to its own vision of Rome, following a map that had little meaning for local society. Thongchai Winichakul clearly defines a similar situation, which occurred in his homeland during a period similar to the one under scrutiny here:

paru derrière Saint-Pierre. Il me semblait que c'était Rome, à son tour, se réfugiant dans l'ombre, qui me faisait ses adieux"; Jules Massenet, *Mes souvenirs, 1848–1912* (Paris: Lafitte, 1912), 61.

80 Born, "After Relational Aesthetics," 43.

81 Zur Nieden, "The internationalization of musical life at the end of the nineteenth century."

> Communication theory and common sense alike persuade us that a map is a scientific abstraction of reality. A map merely represents something which already exists objectively. In the history [object of analysis], this relationship was reversed. A map anticipated a spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent. A map was not a transparent medium between human beings and space. It was an active mediator. … Perhaps more than has been realized, the regime of mapping did not passively reflect Siam. Rather, it has actively structured "Siam" in our minds as well as on earth.[82]

Italy, in short, was trying to superimpose its own musical idea of Rome onto a city built on quite different assumptions. In this city, the music of the future was the affair of foreigners, and Vincenzo Jacovacci was not the stingiest of opera impresarios, but the most enlightened among the impresarios of the *teatri dialettali*.

82 Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 130. See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 173–74.

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Abstract

This essay reassesses musical life in Pius IX's Rome (1850–1870), challenging long-held views of the late Papal State as a period of musical obscurity and passive resistance to modernity. Drawing on urban studies and music sociology, the study examines how urban morphology and social relations shaped sonic practices. This reveals the coexistence of "two cities" that never integrated: the theatrical and dialectal pole, rooted in historical districts and functional to papal control, and the chamber music sphere of the *Tridente*. In this latter domain, the contribution of foreign residents (such as Liszt) was decisive; synergizing with local musicians (Sgambati, Pinelli), they imported the European repertoire. This socio-spatial polarization conditioned the post-unification transition: after 1870, the Italian State attempted to superimpose a new urban and institutional map to force a modernization alien to the city's historical roots.

Keywords: urban musicology, Pius IX, Rome, secular music spaces, transnational networks

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ARTICLES

Florence 1875: Musical Spaces at the Michelangelo Festivities

Elena Oliva

In September 1875, ten years after the celebrations marking the six-hundredth anniversary of Dante Alighieri's birth, Florence prepared to consecrate another of its local heroes: Michelangelo Buonarroti. The Michelangelo Festivities (*Feste Michelangiolesche*)—organized to commemorate the fourth centenary of the artist's birth—took place from September 12 to 14, following more than two years of preparation. The program comprised a wide range of events, including art exhibitions, lectures, historical reenactments, and concerts, and reflected a deliberate cultural and political strategy: using the past as a means of legitimizing the present.

Beyond the widespread appeal of the event—evidenced by its extensive coverage in the international press and the presence of visitors and delegations from across Europe—the Michelangelo Festivities figured among the broader commemorative practices that characterized nineteenth-century Europe. As Ronald Quinault has explained, centenaries functioned as sophisticated nation-building devices, designed to provide a public representation of social cohesion and collective well-being.[1] Despite its distinctive traits, the Florentine case adhered to this logic: the initiative was not limited to celebrating Michelangelo's art but also sought to exalt the nation that claimed him as its own, offering the world an image of stability for a country that was still young and politically fragile.

Yet, as Ann Rigney has more recently observed with reference to the centenary of Robert Burns,[2] such events did not serve solely propagandistic purposes. Their profoundly performative nature contributed decisively to the construction of what Benedict Anderson has termed "imagined com-

1 Roland Quinault, "The Cult of the Centenary," *Historical Research* 71, no. 176 (1998): 303–23.

2 Ann Rigney, "Embodied Communities: Commemorating Robert Burns, 1859," *Representations* 115, no. 1 (2011): 71–101.

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munities"—that is, symbolic collectives founded not so much on personal relationships as on a shared sense of belonging.[3] In this sense, the public celebration of emblematic figures from the national cultural tradition acted as a catalyst, offering participants a common horizon onto which they could project both their roots and national aspirations.

While the Dante Celebrations of 1865 have been the subject of numerous studies—particularly in relation to the question of nationalism—the Michelangelo Festivities have received significantly less scholarly attention.[4] As will become clear, the Michelangelo Festivities held a different significance for Florence than the Dante Celebrations had. The latter were planned at a pivotal moment for unified Italy and for Florence, which had only just been named the capital of the Kingdom. On that occasion, the celebrations assumed extraordinary symbolic significance, becoming the first great national festival of the new Italian state. Dante, elected as a symbol of the country's unity and cultural rebirth, was celebrated not only as the supreme poet but also as a secular "patron" of the homeland—a model of cohesion capable, ideally, of linking all Italian cities, overcoming local particularism in service of a unified, national vision.[5]

In Michelangelo's case, however, the construction of a shared imaginary was less straightforward. If the 1865 Celebrations had embodied a moment of national unity while also affirming Florence's position as the epicenter of Italian unification, the Michelangelo Festivities took place in a markedly different context. The city's loss of capital status to Rome in 1871 had weakened its political role, and Florence now found itself needing to reassert its cultural primacy. The

3 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

4 The only existing contributions are Stefano Carta, ed., *Michelangelo nell'Ottocento. Il centenario del 1875* (Milan: Charta, 1994); Simona Troilo, "Miti locali, manie transnazionali. Commemorare Michelangelo nell'Ottocento Borghese," in *Lettere d'artista. Per una storia transnazionale dell'arte (XVIII–XIX secolo)*, ed. Giovanna Capitelli, Maria Pia Donato, Carla Mazzarelli et al. (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2022), 253–65.

5 On the Dante Celebrations and, more broadly, on post-Unification festivities in relation to the construction of national identity, see Ilaria Porciani, *La festa della nazione. Rappresentazione dello Stato e spazi sociali nell'Italia unita* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997); Bruno Tobia, *Una patria per gli Italiani. Spazi, itinerari, monumenti nell'Italia unita (1870–1900)* (Rome: Laterza, 1991); Mahnaz Yousefzadeh, *City and Nation in the Italian Unification: The National Festivals of Dante Alighieri* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Yousefzadeh, "Dante 1865: The Politics and Limits of Aesthetic Education," in *Commemorating Writers in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Nation-Building and Centenary Fever*, ed. Joep Leerssen and Ann Rigney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 102–16.

figure of Michelangelo thus assumed a dual role: a Florentine genius deeply rooted in the city's history, but also a symbol of Italian greatness. This dual affiliation was not without tension: the more he was celebrated as a national hero, the more his ties to Florence risked being diluted in a narrative that relegated the city's role to the background. This dynamic reflected broader anxieties, as the prevailing discourse surrounding the nation and the project of "making Italians" was increasingly perceived by many Italians as troubling. The fear was that this narrative could sacrifice local identities, thus dissolving the network of particularisms which ought to have constituted the very essence of the country. Unsurprisingly, the issue of local self-governance became central in the political debates of those years: many cities, Florence among them, began to vigorously assert their cultural and administrative autonomy.[6]

This localist impulse emerges with particular clarity in the ways in which urban space was reanimated and resemanticized during the Michelangelo Festivities. During those days, Florence was transformed into a city-theater—even more markedly than during the Dante Celebrations—a stage on which music, too, functioned as a means of symbolically appropriating the urban terrain. It is precisely the configuration of this sonic cartography that we will examine in order to explore how music and listening practices helped shape the collective imaginary during the Celebrations.

The Palazzo

If one examines the map of musical events included in the official program of the Festivities (Fig. 1), their distribution across a broad swath of the urban area becomes immediately apparent. The events covered not only the historic center, as had been the case for the Dante Festivities, but also extended into areas of more recent development.[7]

6 On the themes of municipalism and local identity, see Carlotta Sorba, "Identità locali," *Contemporanea* 1, no. 1 (1998): 157–70; Ilaria Porciani, "Identità locale-identità nazionale. La costruzione di una duplice appartenenza," in *Centralismo e federalismo tra Otto e Novecento. Italia e Germania a confronto*, ed. Oliver Janz, Pierangelo Schiera, and Hannes Siegrist (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1998), 141–82; Pietro Finelli, "Municipalismo," in *Atlante culturale del Risorgimento. Lessico del linguaggio politico dal Settecento all'Unità*, ed. Alberto Mario Banti, Antonio Chiavistelli, Luca Mannori, and Marco Meriggi (Rome: Laterza, 2011), 330–42; Axel Körner, *Politics of Culture in Liberal Italy: From Unification to Fascism* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

7 On music at the Dante Celebrations, see Bianca Maria Antolini, "La musica nelle celebrazioni del sesto centenario dantesco," in *Il mito di Dante nella musica della Nuova Italia (1861–1914)*, ed. Guido Salvetti (Milan: Guerini, 1994), 33–51; Francesco Bissoli, "L'orgoglio iden-

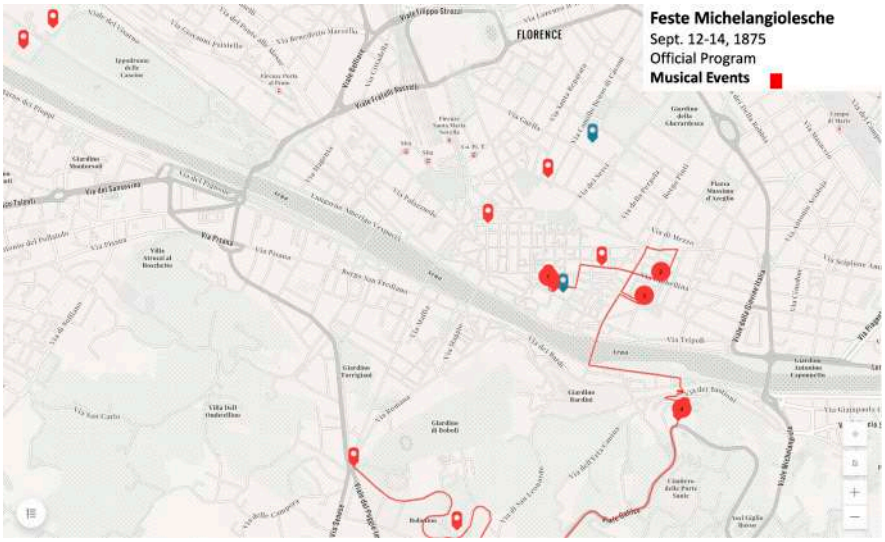

Fig. 1 – Map of the events included in the official program of the Michelangelo Festivities; events featuring music are shown in red.

This becomes evident when the map is compared with that of 1865 (Fig. 2), in which the inaugural cortège followed a more confined route across both banks of the Arno, symbolically connecting the city's popular districts with its institutional heart (Fig. 3). Chronicles of the time mention the presence of numerous bands marking the procession's path toward the epicenter of the festival: Piazza Santa Croce.[8] This ceremony represented the core of the 1865 celebration, allowing for a form of mass participation that indoor events—held at the Teatro Pagliano or the Sala della Società Filarmonica—could not offer. Piazza Santa Croce was transformed into a grand temporary amphitheater with over two thousand seats. There, alongside Rossini's overture to *L'assedio di Corinto* (The Siege of Corinth), a vast choral ensemble of five hundred singers performed the *Inno a Dante* (lyrics by Guido Corsini, music by Carlo Romani).

This moment arguably represents the clearest construction of an imagined community. The choice of Rossini's overture took on a specific meaning: its heroic dimension and association with the struggle against foreign oppression allowed it to function as an allegory of the Risorgimento cam-

titario e lo 'spirito di Dante' nella musica italiana postunitaria," *Dante e l'arte* 2 (2015): 143–60.

8 A detailed account can be found in *Guida officiale per le feste del centenario di Dante Alighieri nei giorni 14, 15 e 16 maggio 1865 in Firenze* (Florence: Cellini, 1865), 20–36.

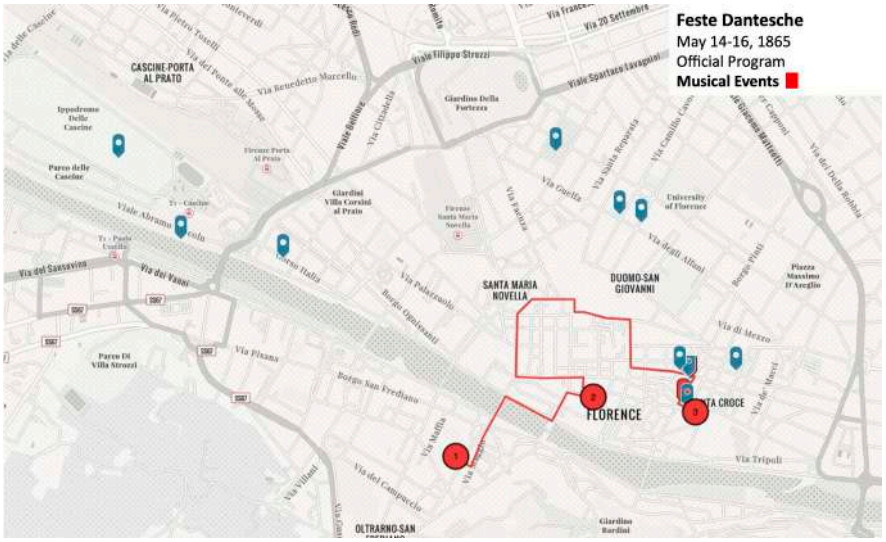

Fig. 2 – Map of the events included in the official program of the Dante Celebrations; events featuring music are shown in red.

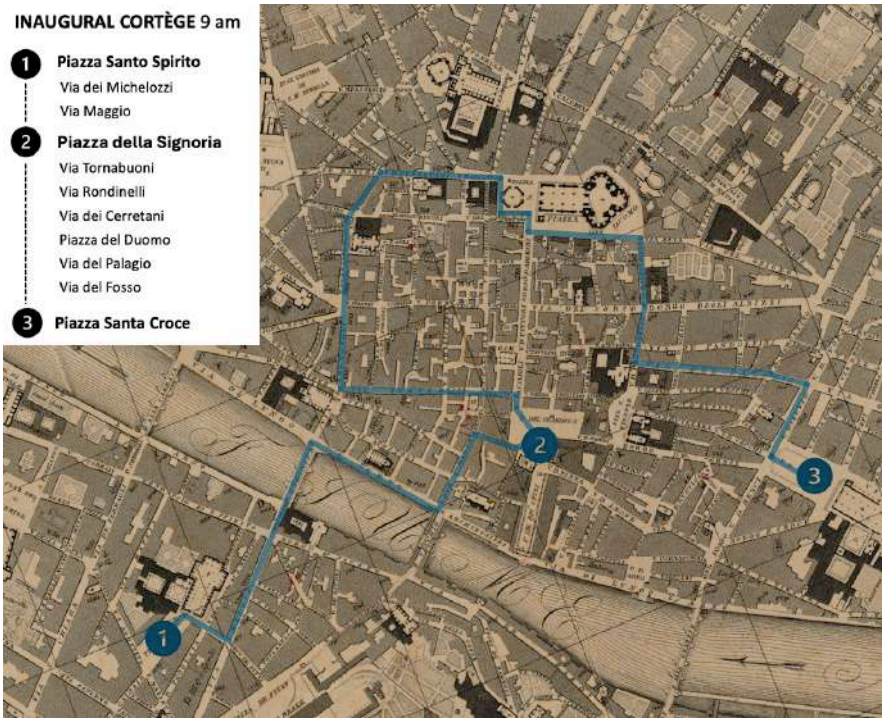

Fig. 3 – Route of the inaugural cortège of the Dante Celebrations.

paigns. In the Florence of 1865, the piece acted as an emotional device, a shared acoustic code that reinforced the experience of a common destiny.

By 1875, however, the spatial reach of the Michelangelo Festivities reflected a profoundly different urban and political reality. While the Dante Celebrations had been concentrated in a single location and aimed at sanctifying a specific national "patron" in a symbolic square, the Michelangelo events extended across multiple parts of the city.

This extensive spatial reach, largely produced by the routes of the cortèges, reflected the city's new urban layout. Indeed, during the years in which Florence served as the capital of the Kingdom (1865–1871), a radical process of urban modernization was launched with the implementation of the Poggi redevelopment plan. The project envisioned the territorial expansion of the city, the renewal of the historic center, and the creation of new neighborhoods through measures that included the demolition of the ancient city walls and the opening of new boulevards modeled on those of Paris. This "Haussmannization" of Florence marked a profound historical break, significantly altering its inhabitants' perception of urban space: until then, they had lived in a city whose medieval and Renaissance fabric had remained largely unchanged.[9]

The Michelangelo Festivities thus served as a symbolic occasion to display the city's new face—its new urban arteries and its potential status as a cultural capital. Yet this movement toward modernity was not unidirectional; rather, it took the form of a continuous dialogue between past and present, a two-way process in which every progressive impulse contained the possibility of reactivating the past.

Music was fully aligned with this movement. While accompanying the city in its self-representation as a modernized space, the music performed during the celebrations moved between old and new—between the celebration of tradition and the pursuit of measured innovation. It emerged from a

9 For an overview of the urban, social, and cultural transformations of the city during the years in which Florence served as capital of the Kingdom—particularly regarding the Poggi plan—see Carlo Cresti, *Firenze, capitale mancata. Architettura e città dal piano Poggi a oggi* (Milan: Electa, 1995); Zeffiro Ciuffoletti, *La città capitale. Firenze prima, durante e dopo* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2014); Attilio Brilli, *Quando Firenze divenne capitale. 1865–1871* (Bologna: Minerva, 2014); Monika Poettinger and Piero Roggi, eds., *Una capitale per l'Italia. Firenze 1865–1871* (Florence: Opificio, 2016); Sandro Rogari, ed., *1865. Questioni nazionali e questioni locali nell'anno di Firenze Capitale* (Florence: Polistampa, 2016); Piero Marchi and Laura Lucchesi, eds., *Una capitale europea. Società, cultura, urbanistica nella Firenze post-unitaria* (Florence: Consiglio regionale della Toscana, 2018).

I. MEYERBEER. Sinfonia dell'opera *Dinorah*.
II. MARIANI. *L'Abbandono*, melodia per violoncello con accompagnamento d'arpa e quartetto, eseguita da 10 violoncellisti, signori: Jandelli, Pontecchi, Mariotti, Castagnoli, Bellenghi, Forti, Pancani, Ruggini Gavilli, Sbolci.
III. MEYERBEER. *Rataplan*, Coro nell'opera *Gli Ugonotti*, eseguito dalla Società corale diretta dal maestro Mauro Giuliani.
IV. LISTZ. Primo concerto in *mi bemolle* con accompagnamento d'orchestra, eseguito dal signor L. Breitner.
V. ARCHADELT. 1. *Deh! dimmi amor*; 2. *Io dico che fra voi*, Madrigali di Michelangiolo (pubblicati in Venezia da Fr. Rampazetto nel 1565).
VI. FACCIO. Marcia funebre nell'opera *Amleto*.
VII. FACCIO. 1. Chopin, Impromptu in *fa maggiore*, signor L. Breitner.
2. Mendelssohn, Preludio in *mi minore*, idem.
3. Gluck, Gavotta, idem.
4. Rubinstein, Valzer, idem.
VIII. GOUNOD. Meditazione sul primo preludio di *Bach* eseguita da tutti gli strumenti ad arco.
IX. ROSSINI. Sinfonia nell'opera *Semiramide*.

Fig. 4 – Program of the inaugural concert (September 12, Salone dei Cinquecento, Palazzo Vecchio).

process of negotiation that presented Florence as a city capable of positioning itself within the framework of European modernity without severing its ties to its historical legacy.

A clear demonstration of this dynamic can be found in the events of the first day (September 12). The Festivities opened with a concert by the Società Orchestrale Fiorentina conducted by Jefte Sbolci—an authoritative figure in the city's musical life, long engaged in the promotion of early and classical repertoire—and by Franco Faccio, a conductor and avant-garde composer of national importance. The event took place in the Salone dei Cinquecento of the Palazzo Vecchio; this was the city's representative hall, the former seat of Parliament during Florence's years as capital, and the space meant to house Michelangelo's fresco *La battaglia di Cascina*—a work, as is well known, never completed.

The concert program (Fig. 4) served as a kind of manifesto of the musical tendencies then prevailing in Florence. Most of the composers featured had enjoyed significant success on the local scene—Rossini and Meyerbeer

foremost among them. Rossini, in particular, was highly appreciated by Florentine audiences and celebrated by local critics as the last great representative of the Italian operatic tradition. He was also held up as a model of formal balance at a time when Italian musical theater appeared to be in decline. It is not surprising, then, that Verdi was absent from the program: his orientation, considered too "progressive," was viewed with suspicion in parts of Florence's cultural milieu.[10]

Meyerbeer, too, was the object of genuine cult admiration: Florence was, in fact, the first city in Italy to welcome his works, regularly featuring them in the programs of its major theaters.[11] The cosmopolitan style of his operas aligned well with the image of a city open to European influences and eager to assert its cultural centrality beyond national borders. The inclusion of Liszt in the festivities' program can be connected to the same tendency—the composer had spent a long period in Florence and actively contributed to its musical life[12]—and the same can be said of Gounod, Mendelssohn, Rubinstein, and Chopin. The presence of Gluck, by contrast, was a symbolic invocation of classicism, while two recently rediscovered madrigals by Arcadelt not only paid homage to Michelangelo the poet but also reinforced the interplay of contrasts between ancient and modern times.[13]

Despite its programmatic intent to evoke the European horizons of Florence's musical life while maintaining close dialogue with the past, the inaugural concert was deemed—at least by certain observers—one of the least successful events of the celebrations: a missed opportunity, all the more conspicuous in light of the symbolic potential of the context. This judge-

10 With regard to the cult of Rossini in Florence and the critical attitude toward Verdi, see Antonella D'Ovidio, "Girolamo Alessandro Biaggi, critico musicale de «La Nazione» negli anni di Firenze Capitale d'Italia," in Marchi and Lucchesi, eds., *Una capitale europea*, 583–606.

11 On the reception of Meyerbeer in Florence, see Fiamma Nicolodi, "Il grand-opéra di Meyerbeer da fenomeno elitario a spettacolo di massa," in *Orizzonti musicali italo-europei 1860–1980*, ed. Fiamma Nicolodi (Rome: Bulzoni, 1990), 43–75; Nicolodi, "Les grands opéras de Meyerbeer en Italie (1840–1890)," in *L'opéra en France et en Italie (1791–1925). Une scène privilégiée d'échanges littéraires et musicaux*, ed. Hervé Lacombe (Paris: Société Française de Musicologie, 2000), 87–115; Francesca Vella, *Networking Operatic Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022).

12 On this topic, see Gregorio Nardi, *Con Liszt a Firenze. Il soggiorno di Franz Liszt e Marie d'Agoult negli anni 1838–1839* (Florence: Logisma, 2014); Mariateresa Storino, ed., *Franz Liszt e Jessie Taylor Laussot Hillebrand. Un capitolo inedito della storia musicale dell'Ottocento* (Lucca: LIM, 2019).

13 The two madrigals were rediscovered during the preparations for the festivities in the library of the Conservatory of Florence and reprinted by the publisher Giovan Gualberto Guidi in 1875.

ment was eloquently expressed by the French painter Jules Salles, in attendance at the event, who in his report underscored the disjunction between the grandeur of the venue and the inadequacy of the musical program:

> Considerable turnout at the Palazzo Vecchio. This immense hall of the fifteen hundreds, with its wooden ceiling and vast flat walls covered with the bombastic paintings of the Vasari school, is an admirable concert hall—above all, an incomparable one in terms of acoustics. With the orchestral forces available, one could have organized a Michelangelesque concert and produced a stunning effect upon the crowd; one could have drawn—and there was no shortage of choices—from the masters' works some of those grand frescoes, such as the finale of Beethoven's Symphony in C minor, the Scythian chorus of Gluck, the Dies Irae of Mozart, or the chorus of the Titans by Rossini—works which, in the power of their execution and the grandeur of their style, would have recalled, and matched, the formidable inventions of the painter of the Sistine Chapel. Instead, we got a fetid stew of modern fantasies, orchestral overtures, and piano pieces. Can you conjure the scene of a gentleman in black evening attire, opening a Pleyel piano and playing—beneath these awe-inspiring vaults, before the great shadow of Michelangelo—a mazurka by Chopin?[14]

Salles's observations diverged from the dominant narrative conveyed by the local press, pointing to the absence of a coherent artistic direction capable of convincingly integrating music with the celebratory space. What had been conceived as an expression of Florence's specific musical identity appeared instead, in his view, as a disjointed and uninspired offering. In a context so charged with historical and political references, one might have expected a program designed to evoke the monumentality and expressive force associated with the figure of Michelangelo. On the contrary, the disproportionate emphasis on a virtually chamber-like dimension produced the opposite effect: rather than amplifying the symbolic impact of the celebration, the music proved unable to engage meaningfully with the space. Nevertheless, if the concert failed to render the dialogue between ancient and modern intelligible, this pairing found a more coherent and recognizable form in the performative practices that took place outdoors. It was in the inaugural centenary cortège and the carriage parade—central events

14 Jules Salles, *Les Fêtes de Florence à l'occasion du IVe centenaire de Michel-Ange* (Nîmes: Typographie Clavel-Ballivet, 1876), 13.

on the day of September 12—that the relationship between past and present assumed a more visible and collectively shared dimension.

The Street

Although they followed distinct routes, the two cortèges were designed to converge both symbolically and physically at Piazzale Michelangelo, the ceremonial endpoint and emblematic site of the city's new monumental layout. The first began in Piazza della Signoria, but, as the official chronicler of the celebrations, Cesare Parrini, noted, movement toward the gathering point had already begun before the formal assembly:

> At exactly two thirty, from various points in the city, twelve musical bands set off, alternating cheerful symphonies, marching at the head of the countless associations participating in the solemn ceremony, and made their way—followed by a vast crowd—toward the Vasari Loggias, commonly known as the Uffizi.[15]

We do not have precise accounts regarding the bands' points of departure (they came from various towns and localities in the environs of Florence), nor of the exact routes they followed to reach the center. However, Parrini's description allows us to hypothesize a radial parade design, intended to spread sound through the streets of the historic center and activate a centripetal movement converging from the periphery and outlying neighborhoods toward the symbolic heart of the city: Piazza della Signoria.

The auditory impact generated by this simultaneous movement must have been far from uniform. Parrini speaks of "cheerful symphonies," but the actual sonic experience of those present was likely far more complex and layered, characterized by a multiplicity of sources, directions, and perceptual levels. Sound thus became a map capable of orienting bodies within urban space and guiding the flow of the crowd toward Piazza della Signoria. From there, at around three in the afternoon, the official cortège set off, comprising the principal civic and institutional representatives at both the local and national levels. Each section was preceded by a band, which set the group's pace and acoustically shaped the cortège's route.

15 Cesare Parrini, *Relazione del centenario di Michelangiolo Buonarroti nel Settembre 1875 in Firenze* (Florence: Civelli, 1876), 35.

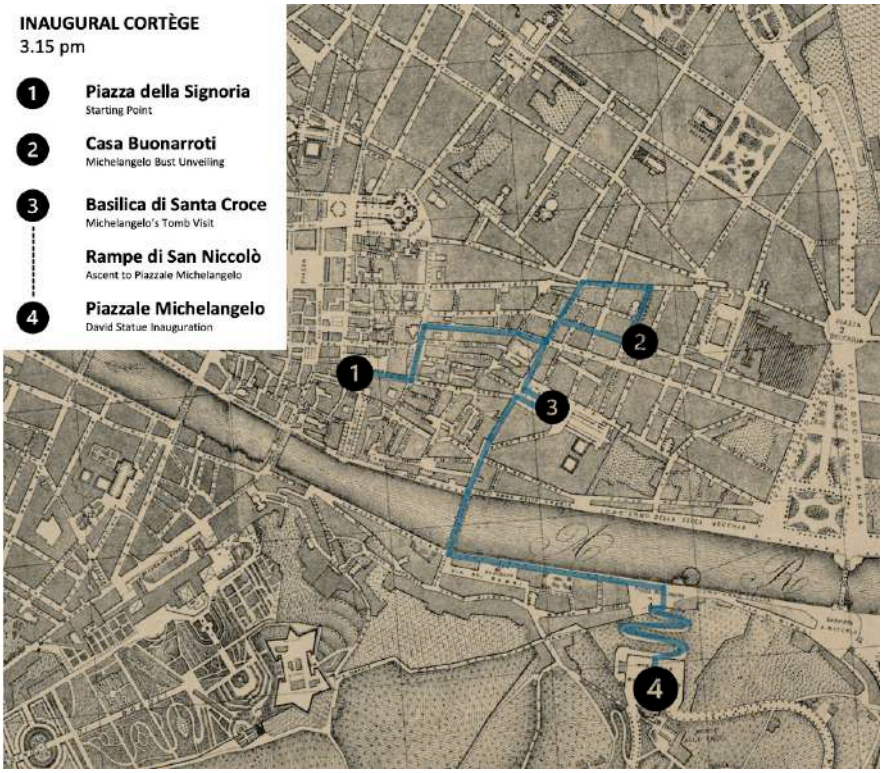

Fig. 5 – Route of the inaugural cortège of the Michelangelo Festivities.

The route comprised several symbolically significant stops, forming a veritable itinerary of Michelangelesque memory (Fig. 5). The first stop was made on Via Ghibellina, at the Casa Buonarroti, where a bronze bust on the facade of the building was ceremonially unveiled. From there, the cortège continued to the Basilica of Santa Croce, where participants paid homage at Michelangelo's tomb. Next came the ascent along the newly constructed San Niccolò ramp (Fig. 6), culminating in the final destination: Piazzale Michelangelo, the stage for the unveiling of the monumental statue of David, installed at the center of the *belvedere* and destined to symbolically overlook the urban landscape to this day (Fig. 7).

The cortège's route highlighted the symbolic transition from the historic city to the modern city, from the ancient to the new. The Lungarno Serristori, the San Niccolò ramps, and Piazzale Michelangelo represented, at the time, the city's newest face: spaces designed to reshape the urban image of Florence according to the codes of monumentality and visibility typical of European

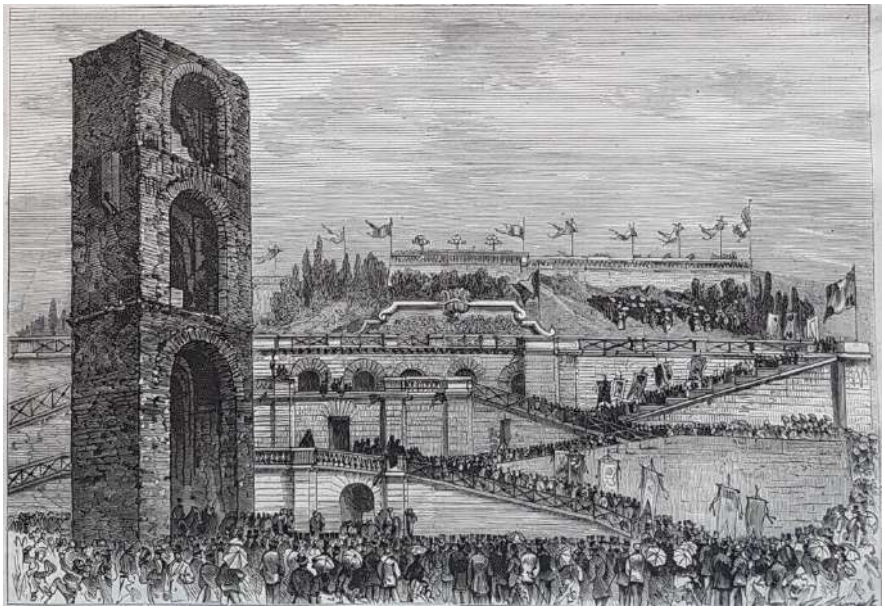

Fig. 6 – Cortège on the San Niccolò ramps heading toward Piazzale Michelangelo (Albert Robida, *Le monde illustré*, no. 963, September 25, 1875).

Fig. 7 – Piazzale Michelangelo with the monument of David (Albert Robida, *Le monde illustré*).

capitals. Yet this march toward modernity did not unfold in a linear fashion: backtracking and detours toward the past were always possible.

A clear example of this can be seen in the second cortège, which set off two hours later from another part of the city and joined the first at their shared endpoint. This was a procession of carriages, also accompanied by a significant number of bands (Fig. 8). Its route, extending from Piazzale di Porta Romana to Piazzale Michelangelo, followed the new Viale dei Colli, the panoramic thoroughfare envisioned in Poggi's plan, which wound through the hills south of the Arno. The avenue's tree-lined layout and sinuous course explicitly echoed the model of the Parisian boulevard, bringing Florence into line with the visual codes of modern capitals without neglecting the importance of the historic center. Indeed, from the Viale dei Colli, the eye was naturally drawn to the dome of the Duomo and the tower of Palazzo Vecchio, which remained stable points of reference within the urban landscape. In short, the center—with its monuments, network of streets, churches, and palaces—remained the radiating core of the city's culture, despite numerous attempts to create new urban centers.

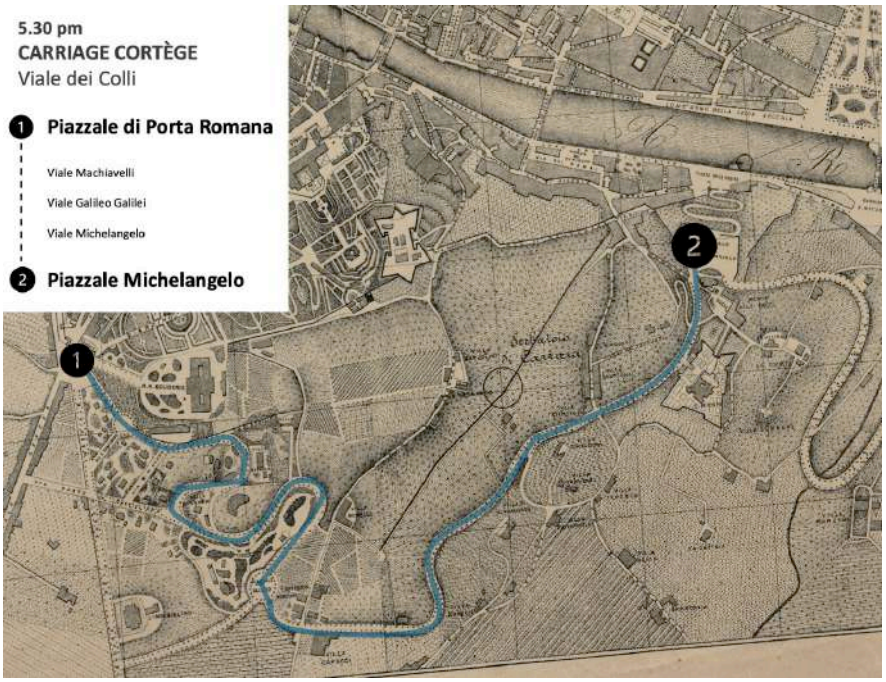

Fig. 8 – Route of the carriage cortège.

The visual component was complemented—though not subordinated—by the sonic one: the presence of bands along the entire route reinforced the immersive effect of the cortège, transforming the Viale dei Colli into a veritable acoustic corridor. Sound, advancing together with the cortège, guided the gaze and heightened perceptual intensity, helping to bind the urban landscape to a shared participatory experience. Although we lack direct accounts, one clue to this possible configuration lies in the presence of the trees, which must have functioned as natural acoustic barriers, blending into a single sonic flow the noise of carriages, the murmur of passersby, and the music of the bands.

The Garden and the Square

In the days following September 12, the celebrations continued with a series of official events, often accompanied by musical entertainment intended primarily for a select audience.[16] Far more significant, however, in terms of collective participation and consensus-building, were the popular festivities held at the Tivoli Garden, which, on the evenings of September 12–14, offered band concerts, games, and open-air performances. Whereas the preceding official events reaffirmed the public dimension of power, these festivities, operating within a sphere of proximity and informality, promoted more horizontal forms of social gathering. Here, the celebration took on the character of a civic festival, rooted in the city's celebratory traditions, although one that included a patriotic component articulated through rhetoric openly invoking military symbolism.

This aspect already emerged on the evening of September 12: among the pieces performed by the "Principe Umberto" band and the Municipal Band of Montevarchi, both conducted by Enrico Del Lungo, the newspaper *La Nazione* mentioned only *L'assedio di Firenze* (The Siege of Florence), though without naming its composer. Although the score has not survived, it is plausible that the work was composed by Ottavio Frangini, a Florentine musician active in the field of operetta.[17]

16 Among these were the musical evenings at the Società del Casino and at Palazzo Riccardi, both held on September 13.

17 In addition to the article in *La Nazione* ("Cronaca della città," *La Nazione*, September 12, 1875, 3), an indirect reference to this attribution appears in a letter sent by Luigi Ferdinando Casamorata—who was in charge of the musical programming for the festivities—to the president of the organizing committee, Mayor Urbano Peruzzi. In the letter, dated August 9, 1875,

The piece, as the title suggests, belonged to the *battaglia* genre, widely disseminated within the band repertoire of post-unification Italy. The evocation of the 1529 siege by the imperial troops of Charles V not only recalled Michelangelo's role as a military engineer for the Florentine Republic, but also took on particular symbolic resonance due to the location of the performance: the Tivoli Garden, situated on the hills of San Miniato near the present-day Piazzale Michelangelo, stood on the very site where the events being commemorated had taken place. The sonic representation of the conflict functioned as a powerful rhetorical device, transforming the historical event into a civic myth. Thus, Michelangelo was celebrated not only as an artist, but as a republican hero, an emblematic figure of civic resistance.

Just hours earlier, during the inaugural cortège, the mayor of Florence had referred to him as a "steadfast zealot for the liberty of the homeland,"[18] emphasizing his commitment to defending the city during the siege—a strongly localist reading. This narrative permeated several of the official addresses delivered over the course of the Festivities and was clear from the start to the organizing committee, which resolved to place the new monument to the artist "in that memorable place of his patriotic and military deeds"[19]—namely, Piazzale Michelangelo, located on the heights that had hosted the defensive lines during the siege.

In keeping with this logic, the final event of the Festivities took place precisely in the square which, on the evening of September 14, once again became a theater of patriotic memory. The focal point of the evening was the performance of *La battaglia* (The Battle) by Enea Brizzi, a potpourri for band inspired by the Battle of San Martino, one of the most significant clashes of the Second War of Independence. The choice of this subject marked a decisive chronological and symbolic shift from the event held on the evening of September 12: from the Renaissance to the Risorgimento, from local to national memory. From both a sonic and a scenographic perspective, the event also assumed more monumental proportions. The band, composed of 120 performers, gave the performance a powerful impact, amplified by the visual staging: electric lighting of the square and the San Niccolò ramps, fireworks, and the launch of hot air balloons transformed the

Casamorata mentions the rehearsals that the band conducted by Del Lungo was holding on a piece by Frangini, though without specifying the title (Archivio Storico del Comune di Firenze, ASC, Filza I, *Centenario di M.lo Buonarroti*, no. 4144, file "Corrispondenza").

18 "Discorso del Comm. Ubaldino Peruzzi Sindaco di Firenze," in Parrini, *Relazione del centenario*, 111.

19 Parrini, *Relazione del centenario*, 27.

urban space into a full-scale celebratory machine (Figs. 9 and 10). Music, at the center of this civic dramaturgy, acted as both a rhetorical and synesthetic device, immersing the audience in a deeply engaging experience.

As the piece had already been performed during other civic festivities, descriptions of previous performances allow us to reconstruct its structure and function with reasonable accuracy.[20] It took the form of a potpourri, organized as a sequence of sonic tableaux that represented an entire day of battle: dawn in the camp, evoked through imitations of a rooster crowing and birdsong; the bivouac and prayer; warning signals and the outbreak of combat, with gunfire, trumpet calls, and drum rolls; the moans of the wounded and the tolling of funeral bells; and, finally, the triumphant march and return of the troops. The composition included excerpts from operatic repertoire, specifically from Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto*, Bellini's *Norma*, and Meyerbeer's *Le prophète*. While sources do not specify exactly which excerpts were used, it is easy to imagine that the chorus "Dal tuo stellato soglio" (Act III) from Rossini's opera was chosen for its solemn and spiritual tone, ideally suited to represent the contemplative atmosphere of the camp before battle. To underscore the more agitated moments of combat, the chorus "Guerra, guerra" from *Norma* was likely employed. Finally, the triumphant march from Act III of *Le prophète* may have accompanied the symbolic victory and return of the troops. All of these pieces were well-known to the Italian public, resemanticized within the potpourri according to a patriotic imaginary that, as Alberto Mario Banti has explained, was grounded in the concepts of sacrifice, martyrdom, and redemption.[21]

Thus, on the one hand, Brizzi's *Battaglia* helped assign new functions to urban space and to the figure of Michelangelo himself, now fully incorporated into national mythmaking; on the other, it served as a form of collective elaboration of national trauma, evoked as a shared foundation of identity. Through the sonic evocation of suffering—the wounded, the fallen, the violated homeland—the idea of a nation built on sacrifice was reinforced. The music, therefore, did not merely recount a battle: it transfigured pain into a framework, and the violence of the past into an instrument of cohesion.

20 See "Aquila 20 marzo," *Gazzetta del Popolo*, no. 85, March 26, 1862: 4; Pierin Del Vaga, "Corriere di Firenze," *Nuovo Giornale Illustrato Universale*, no. 11, March 12, 1871: 110.

21 Alberto Mario Banti, *La nazione del Risorgimento. Parentela, santità e onore alle origini dell'Italia unita* (Turin: Einaudi, 2000), see especially chapters 2 and 3; Banti, *Sublime madre nostra. La nazione italiana dal Risorgimento al fascismo* (Rome: Laterza, 2011), especially chapters 1 and 2.

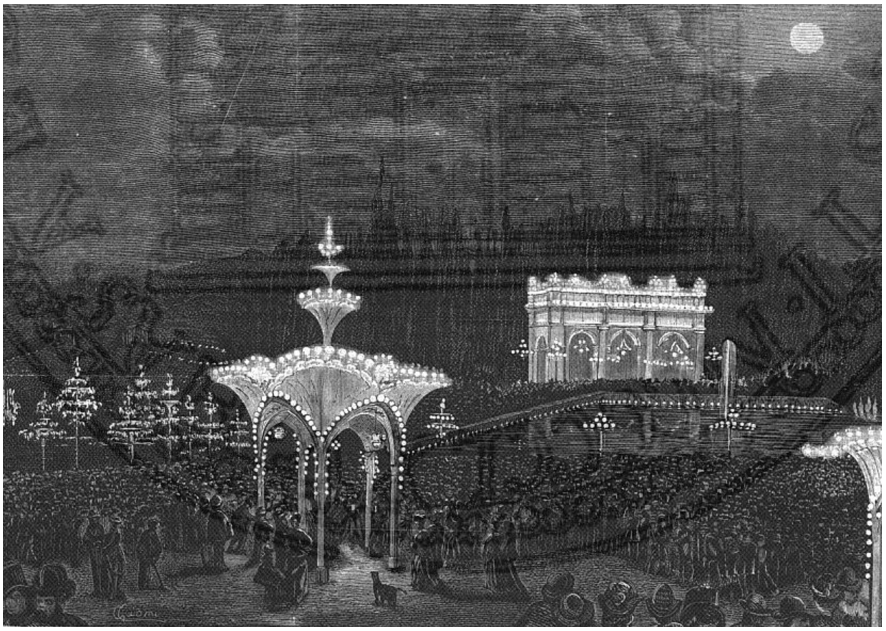

Fig. 9 – Piazzale Michelangelo during the closing event of the celebrations on the evening of September 14 (*L'illustrazione universale*, no. 60, October 3, 1875).

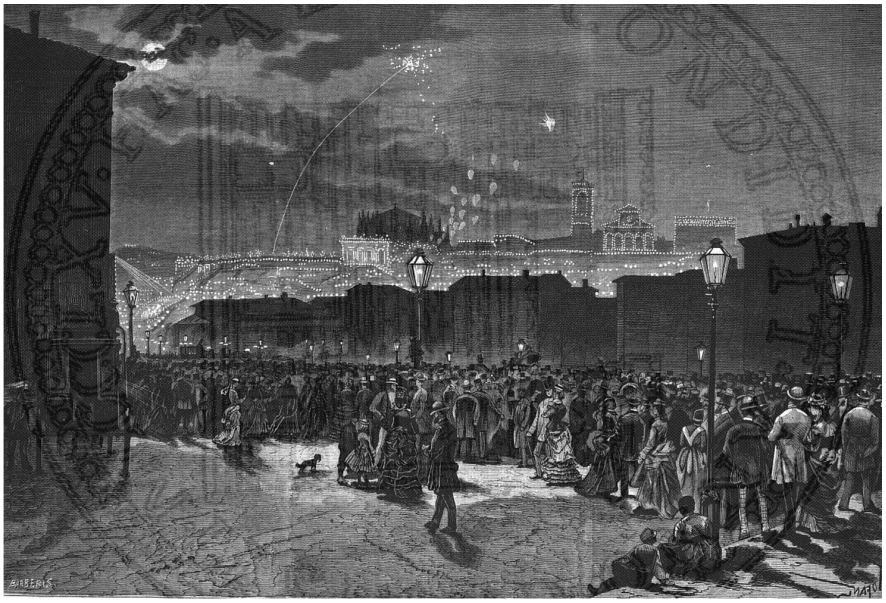

Fig. 10 – View of Piazzale Michelangelo from the Lungarno during the closing event of the celebrations on the evening of September 14 (*L'illustrazione universale*).

Within this narrative, however, the audience's attention remained focused on the city and its most recognizable landmarks, as Parrini recounts:

> From the top of the terrace the spectacle was truly imposing. Night had fallen into the valley, broken only by the moon's rays and the lights of the city, in the midst of which—lit in reddish hues by the usual torches—the tower of Palazzo Vecchio rose, glowing amid a bluish illumination.[22]

The tower of Palazzo Vecchio, lit by torches, emerged as a visual focal point, anchoring the spectacle in a horizon of local recognizability. This symbolic centrality, repeatedly emphasized in Parrini's chronicles, reflected a clear localist perspective: Florence was not presented as a mere backdrop to the Michelangelo Festivities but as a symbolic space within the national cultural imaginary. This narrative was echoed in the words of another observer, painter Serafina Botto-Tassara, a Florentine by adoption and correspondent for the newspaper *La Donna*:

> A magical spectacle, not soon to be forgotten by the foreigners who came from all corners of the civilized world, and who had the chance to admire—in this truly unique city—its ancient beauty alongside the modern; with its historical and artistic memories religiously preserved, and the comforts and embellishments required by modern civilization. One hardly knows whether the greater contribution to Florence's decorum and beauty comes from nature, which granted it such a splendid setting, from ancient art, which lavished it with treasures, or from the squares transformed into gardens and the boulevards that encircle it with a green belt.[23]

Botto-Tassara's words reflect the aspirational desires that animated the city's community and the organizing committee of the Festivities: the hope for a harmonious dialogue between ancient and modern, between historical memory and the momentum of urban progress. The event of September 14, with its synchronized illumination of the surrounding hills and its sonic reenactment of battle, gave visible form to this fusion: the lights illuminating the Florentine landscape extended the city's perimeter to its natural borders, while the sounds of explosions, trumpets, and drums echoed

22 Parrini, *Relazione del centenario*, 70.

23 Serafina Botto-Tassara (Foglia d'Edera), "Le Feste Michelangiolesche," *La Donna*, nos. 265–6, October 25, 1875: 2351.

through the streets and hills, creating a visual and acoustic bridge between the historic city and the new post-unification Florence. The spectacle—visible and audible from afar—consolidated the image of a city intent on embracing its tradition while projecting itself into the future, presenting itself as a model of perfect integration between past and present within the national panorama. It was, in short, an effort to preserve local identity within a celebratory narrative that threatened to flatten its particularities.

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Abstract

This article examines the 1875 Feste Michelangiolesche in Florence to investigate the role played by music within large-scale post-Unification public celebrations. Held ten years after the Dante celebrations—the first great national festival of the new Kingdom—and four years after the relocation of the capital from Florence to Rome, the 1875 festivities were marked by profound tensions between local allegiances and national agendas. By reconstructing the city's sonic geography through its musical events (concerts, cortèges, and outdoor performances), the study demonstrates how sound actively shaped the experience of urban space, serving as a mediator between local memory and the national imaginary, and negotiating the cultural relevance of Florence within the newly formed Italian State.

Keywords: urban musicology, musical mapping, Michelangelo Buonarroti, Post-Unification Italy, nation-building

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ARTICLES

Remapping Aesthetics through Musical Labor:

Julius Eastman and the CETA Orchestra in New York City, 1978–79

Ryan Dohoney

1

Imagine yourself a music-lover in New York City in 1978. It's Sunday, May 7 and you are thumbing your way through the kilo-plus weight of that day's *New York Times*. After no small amount of effort, you extract the "Arts and Leisure Guide" and survey the upcoming musical offerings. Work is light (your boss is out of town for once) and you are looking for something early in the week. Scanning the exceedingly fine print, you locate Tuesday's listings and are intrigued by the following: "CETA ORCHESTRA OF N.Y.—All-baroque. Kitchen. 59 Wooster St. At 8:30."[1] You're puzzled by a few things in this brief item. What is the CETA Orchestra and why are they playing baroque music at the Kitchen? You'd heard about the goings on in SoHo—wild punk rock concerts and a whole new "loft" jazz scene—but have been too spooked by a steady stream of neighborhood crime reports to risk venturing below 14th Street.[2] The Kitchen is supposed to be ground zero for whatever the avant-garde had mutated into since the 1960s; so why in God's name was it hosting an unknown orchestra playing old music? Weren't those sounds for Carnegie Hall? You screw up your courage and decide to check it out.

As Tuesday night rolls around you put on your best flannel shirt, stop off for a quick drink at your favorite bar in Greenwich Village and meet a handsome stranger. Eager to impress, you suggest he accompany you downtown for some culture, even if the Kitchen concert doesn't sound like

1 Ann Barry, ed. "Arts and Leisure Guide: Theater Dance Film Music," *The New York Times*, May 7, 1978: D38.

2 David Hershkovitz, "Confronting Crime in SoHo," *SoHo Weekly News* February 1, 1979. Clipping, The Kitchen Collection, Getty Research Institute.

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the hottest thing happening. He agrees if you'll drop by the Mineshaft afterwards. Doubling back after a wrong turn taken at the Performance Garage, you both wend your way through poorly lit streets to an unmarked doorway that might be the right place. Surprisingly, the concert is free, and you and your companion are handed programs with works by Rhys Chatham, Ralph Jones, Alan Lloyd, and Arthur Russell. You're a bit embarrassed. These aren't baroque composers you're familiar with—and you got an A in your college music appreciation class! Reading further down, your simmering annoyance with the *New York Times*'s fact-checking bubbles over. This isn't baroque music; it's *new* music for *baroque* orchestra! A lithe dreadlocked man in a white T-shirt, black leather vest, and jeans has taken his place in front of whatever the CETA Orchestra is. As you take in the scene, you think you recognize him from one of Boulez's "rug concerts" at Avery Fischer Hall just a few years ago. Julius Eastman gives the downbeat, and the music begins.

2

What kind of map is a musical performance? How might it make vivid a sense of geographic knowledge conjoined to aesthetic experience and artistic labor? My opening thought experiment suggests some ways in which historical attention to performance lets us experience music as a form of cartography and an event of place-making. In what follows, I take up a series of propositions from the late Adam Krims who argued that music's affects and affordances "assign music a particular and lamentably under-explored role in mapping the contemporary city."[3] His attention to *the music itself*—which he redefines as "a crucial, highly planned, and controlled social object"—inspires me to sharpen attention to the ways in which the poetics of musical performance "increases in significance as music increasingly acquires a central role in characterizing spaces."[4] That is to say, sound and space interpenetrate one another, each shaping the other affectively and ideologically in order to *make a scene*. Aesthetics, however, can overdetermine geography and obscure other potential cartographies; yet, I should be clear that I am not against the scene as a unit of analysis as it has been developed in the work of Will Straw and others.[5]

3 Adam Krims, *Music and Urban Geography* (London: Routledge, 2007), xvi.
4 Krims, xvi.
5 See the locus classicus: Will Straw, "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change:

What I resist is the historiography of downtown (detailed below) that has used the concept of scene to reify a set of artistic values while excluding other relations upon which those values depend.

In crafting the fictionalized thought experiment above based on an incorrect concert listing, I noted some dissonances in what one might expect to constitute the discrete scenes of 1970s New York City. These show up as discrepancies between the kinds of music an avid concert music fan might expect to hear in a particular neighborhood and what they actually heard in those places. In my opening narrative, I've mapped New York City with familiar terms found in both music criticism and scholarly literature. There's midtown concert music associated with big institutions of classical music (where one would expect to hear Bach and see Boulez conduct) and downtown, with its air of dangerous cool, where you could hear the latest in postmodern classical, punk, and jazz, and then end up at a gay sex club like the Mineshaft down the block (which featured a soundtrack of avant-garde, punk, and classical music).[6]

Troubling this standard geographical narrative is Julius Eastman, who was a powerful force in both these and other milieux. As a polymath composer-performer-improvisor-conductor-pianist-vocalist, Eastman was a near constant presence in New York City's musical life from 1966 to 1986. He made his debut in a piano recital at Town Hall in 1966, performed dozens of concerts with the Creative Associates at Carnegie (now Weill) Recital Hall, sang at Lincoln Center under the baton of Dennis Russell Davies and Pierre Boulez, was a fixture at the Kitchen with the SEM Ensemble and other musical collaborators, and appeared regularly with Lukas Foss and the Brooklyn Philharmonia.[7] Scholars including

Communities and Scenes in Popular Music," *Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (1991): 368–88, and more recently Benjamin Woo, Jamie Rennie, and Stuart R. Poyntz, "Scene Thinking," *Cultural Studies* 29, no. 3 (2015): 285–97, and Will Straw, "Some Things a Scene Might Be," *Cultural Studies* 29, no. 3 (2015): 476–85.

6 Joel I. Brodsky, "The Mineshaft: A Retrospective Ethnography," *Journal of Homosexuality* 24, no. 3 (1993): 245.

7 On Eastman's Town Hall debut see Theodore Strongin, "Piano Recital Given by Julius Eastman," *The New York Times*, December 9, 1966: 58. On Eastman's performances at Carnegie Recital Hall with the Creative Associates see *passim* Renée Levine Packer, *This Life of Sounds: Evenings for New Music at Buffalo* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). On his performance of Frederic Rzewski's cantata *Struggle* with Dennis Russell Davies see Donal Henahan, "'New and New Music' Begins Its Fourth Season," *The New York Times*, January 29, 1974: 22. On his performance of Peter Maxwell Davies *Eight Songs for a Mad King* with Pierre Boulez and the New York Philharmonic at Avery Fischer Hall see Raymond Ericson, "Music:

Bernard Gendron and Tim Lawrence have detailed Eastman's role in the downtown scene, focusing on his collaborations with Frederic Rzewski and Arthur Russell respectively.[8] My other work has emphasized Eastman's circulation through various communities inclusive of downtown (as in his collaboration with Meredith Monk who composed *Dolmen Music* with Eastman's voice in mind) and also brought attention to his movement through the city's outer boroughs as an organizer of the Brooklyn Community Concerts with Tania León and Talib Rasul Hakim (of which more below).[9] The work of the present article will be to broaden our view of New York City's musical geography with Eastman as our guide to the ways in which downtown was linked to the broader city's musical labor structures. In taking a spatial turn towards Eastman's musical life, I am indebted to Alexander Liebman's pioneering work and build upon it.[10] Liebman insists we theorize Eastman's life as an instance of how "Black and queer geographies expose and subvert capitalism's gendered and racialized processes of codification, enslavement, extraction, and erasure."[11] Following Liebman, I will turn to the work of Black geographer Katherine McKittrick to track the racial logics at work in Eastman's musical life within and without downtown's confines.[12]

With the two-or-so years of Eastman's involvement with the CETA Orchestra as my historical present, I want to question the logic of scene-making upon which downtown's historiography depends. Through the confluence of cultural and financial capital, scenes formalize what sociologists Daniel Aaron Silver and Terry Nichols Clark describe as "the

Eight Songs at a Rug Concert," *The New York Times*, June 30, 1975: 40.

8 Bernard Gendron, "Rzewski in New York (1971–1977)," *Contemporary Music Review* 29, no. 6 (2010): 557–74; Tim Lawrence, *Hold on to Your Dreams: Arthur Russell and the Downtown Music Scene, 1973–1992* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

9 Ryan Dohoney, "A Flexible Musical Identity: Julius Eastman in New York City, 1976–90," in *Gay Guerrilla: Julius Eastman and His Music*, ed. Renée Levine Packer and Mary Jane Leach (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2015), 116–30; Dohoney, "For Failed Friendship: Meredith Monk, Julius Eastman, and the Intimacies of *Dolmen Music*," *American Music* 44, nos. 1–2 (forthcoming).

10 Alexander Liebman, "'Nothing to Practice': Julius Eastman, Queer Composition, and Black Sonic Geographies," *Cultural Geographies* 29, no. 4 (2021): 1–17.

11 Liebman, 2.

12 In addition to McKittrick's work discussed below see Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) and Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, eds., *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2007).

aesthetic view of place."[13] Gendron argues that downtown's new music scene became one by establishing institutional spokespersons and discursive stability. He writes:

> By a 'new music scene', I mean first a local network of new music composers, musicians and the array of agents and institutions that give it support and sustenance. A network only becomes a 'scene', as Downtown did, when it acquires a public face, an image largely constructed by the mass media. Of course, the existence of a new music scene presupposes that, at a given time, there were at least overlapping (if not common) musical interests among its constituents.[14]

What I take Gendron to say here is that networks and scenes are not the same things. What I'll argue for in what follows is the historiographic advantage of attending to matters beyond aesthetics as I reiterate Benjamin Piekut's strenuous call for us to move from simple connective concepts of networks to a broader range of actors, technologies, and bodies through which music moves.[15] By mapping the peregrinations of a group of musicians—the CETA Orchestra—I also want to amplify Kirsten Carithers's call for greater attention to labor in the stories we tell about music history. She is adamant that we do not let aesthetic categories obscure the material structures and human work that produce those categories in the first place.[16]

There is a politics implicit in any translation from a network to a scene. Strategic acts of forgetting haunt these translations, but they do not seal them off from further reflection. Indeed, I want to reflect on what's forgotten in valedictory claims such as those of Rhys Chatham, who celebrated the inclusive non-hierarchical aesthetics of downtown like this: "Tearing down the walls of the music establishment was very much in the air. … The breakdown of barriers separating genres of art music, improvised music, and rock was complete. … [B]y the middle of the 1980s there was no longer [a] feeling of transgression."[17] Chatham's claims of victory are ironic,

13 Daniel Aaron Silver and Terry Nichols Clark, *Scenescapes: How Qualities of Place Shape Social Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 1.

14 Gendron, "Rzewski in New York," 558.

15 Benjamin Piekut, "Actor Networks in Music History, Some Clarifications and Critiques," *Twentieth Century Music* 11, no. 2 (2014): 191–215.

16 Kirsten Carithers, *Interpretive Labor: Experimental Music at Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2025).

17 Rhys Chatham, "Five Generations of Composers at the Kitchen," in *The Kitchen Turns*

as aesthetic freedom is contingent upon geographical restriction such that freedom from generic and institutional constraints is predicated upon *not* leaving SoHo. It was hyperbolic of Chatham to claim success in the demolishment of the music establishment. At best, downtown provided a heterotopic space where boundaries could be troubled and new possibilities explored, but which did not overcome and even likely enabled the rapacious gentrification that followed downtown's cultural ascendancy. But what of those moving in and out of that space, those like Julius Eastman for whom downtown wasn't always hospitable? Who had such freedom and for how long? My wager is that Eastman and his involvement with CETA will tell us much about the dynamics of musical freedom as it was enlivened and constrained by the material conditions of life in New York City in the aftermath of the 1975 financial crisis. While Chatham and others could celebrate new aesthetic possibilities of the 1970s, the labor dynamics of the musical establishment remained firmly in place—the CETA Orchestra throws this situation into sharp relief.

3

A few years before Chatham's celebration of downtown's aesthetic liberation, sociologist Samuel Gilmore published an analysis of Manhattan musical life that divided the city into three zones, each with their own musical cultures distinguished by "social" (that is institutional) referents and "cultural" (that is aesthetic) referents.[18] "Midtown" is the domain of repertory classical music (as its cultural referent) and institutions such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Opera, and the New York Philharmonic (as its social referent). Spatially, this area comprises the middle of Manhattan from Town Hall in Times Square to Lincoln Center in the West 60s. "Uptown" is defined by the cultural referent of academic composition (usually reduced to serialism, though much more pluralist in practice). Its social referents are universities: Columbia University, the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, and the Manhattan School of Music. "Downtown" is associated culturally with experimental and "innovative" practices of "nonspecialist" composer-perform-

Twenty: A Retrospective Anthology, ed. Lee Morrissey (New York: The Kitchen, 1992), 18–19.

18 Samuel Gilmore, "Schools of Activity and Innovation," *The Sociological Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (1988): 203–19.

ers and socially with do-it-yourself venues such as private lofts (like Environ), school concert halls (like the Third Street Music School Settlement) and nonprofit performance spaces (like the Kitchen).[19] Gilmore's model, as with any sociological model, doesn't capture it all. This is most notable in his definition of "uptown" which excludes the vibrant creative life of Harlem. Long before uptown came to be associated with the modernism of Charles Wuorinen and the Group for Contemporary Music, it was a vital center of Afro-diasporic modernism stretching back into the late nineteenth century.[20] Those in the know were taking the A train to get to Harlem long before they took the 1 to Columbia's McMillin Theater.[21] Gilmore's model also fails to include the outer boroughs of the city, notably Brooklyn and Queens.[22]

George E. Lewis has cautioned scholars against leaning too heavily on Gilmore's model, noting that while "the terms 'uptown,' 'midtown,' and 'downtown' are still used in New York, it must be emphasized that in the 1970s, as now, the art worlds to which they refer interpenetrated one another to a considerable extent to form an overall 'art music' scene in New York."[23] Yet writing on downtown emphasizes the geographical distinctions of the city as well as its supposed singularity.[24] The richness and importance of this work notwithstanding, the geographical distinction of downtown is at best a cracked lens through which to view New York City's late-twentieth-century musical practices. Building on my comments on Chatham above, what strikes me about the conceptual linkage of geography and aesthetics is its similarity to nineteenth and twentieth-century historiography which rendered music histories as national histories, naturalizing ties between aesthetics and place. As Brigid Cohen notes of this historiographical mode,

19 Gilmore, "Schools of Activity," 210.

20 Houston A. Baker, Jr., *Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

21 There were, however, important (if temporary) alliances formed in the late 1960s between Black modernists, gathered as the Society for Black Composers and Columbia University's music department.

22 On Black radical self-determination in Brooklyn and Queens in the period see Kwasi Konadu, *A View from the East: Black Cultural Nationalism and Education in New York City*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009).

23 George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 330.

24 See, for instance, Kyle Gann, *Music Downtown: Writings from the Village Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006) and Tamar Barzel, *New York Noise: Radical Jewish Music and the Downtown Scene* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015).

> Such national presentations of history are not relegated to the past, but endure in the present. Survey books of nineteenth and twentieth-century concert musics still often organize their narratives through nationally defined schools and categories. Toward this end, traditional genealogies of influence and style are by no means neutral, but bound up with ideas of national inheritance and expression. If questions of migration remain understudied and under-theorized in musical modernism studies, then this gap persists because national frameworks of historiography have obscured the conditions of displaced and nationally disenfranchised peoples.[25]

Scholars can reproduce such geographical determinism at the level of the city as much as the nation and fail to consider mobility and displacement that cross-cut urban landscapes and subtend neighborhood identities. This association of the aesthetic with the spatial in Gilmore's analysis is case in point. My approach in following the CETA Orchestra and Julius Eastman around New York City in the late 1970s is to bring Cohen's insights in conversation with "micro-spatial" history.[26] Through my micro-spatial approach to the CETA Orchestra, I rethink place-bound aesthetic views like Chatham's in favor of an analysis that does not assume any deterministic relationship between urban geography and musical style. Christian De Vito writes of a micro-spatial perspective:

> Here, the point is not to see each place as one "context," but rather to acknowledge that the context of a social process lies in multiple localities, individuals, objects and knowledges. Seen from the perspective of the researcher, this means that the relevant unit of analysis does not coincide with one single place, connection or individual, but with the whole of the networks created by their interactions related to the specific historical object that is being observed.[27]

By attending to the "whole network created by their interactions," I'll argue that the CETA Orchestra proffers itself as a relevant unit of analysis that will help us map an alternative geography in which downtown is a neces-

25 Brigid Cohen, *Stefan Wolpe and the Avant-Garde Diaspora* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 112–3.

26 Christian G. De Vito, "History Without Scale: The Micro-Spatial Perspective," *Past & Present* 242 (2019): 348–72. See also De Vito, "Verso una microstoria translocale (*Micro-Spatial History*)," *Quaderni Storici* 50, no. 150 (3) (2015): 815–33 and Christian G. De Vito and Anne Gerritsen, eds., *Micro-spatial Histories of Global Labour* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

27 De Vito, "History without Scale," 361.

sary but not sufficient spatial unit for our accounts of NYC in the late 1970s and will help us see the labor of musicians as essential to any emergence of an aesthetic sense of place.

4

In April of 1978, composer-critic Tom Johnson noted a curious development in the city's music life the previous winter:

> Symphony orchestras usually arise out of actual needs. Some audience or community decides it needs an orchestra, some good musicians need jobs, some local businesses need tax writeoffs that will improve their community image, a few key individuals need an outlet for their managerial and conducting skills, and gradually the factions pull together. It's a natural kind of process and, if all goes well, it can result in a full-time professional orchestra, though this can easily take 10 or 20 years. But what if we don't want to wait that long? What if we decide to just legislate a full-time orchestra, simply allocating funds and declaring it into existence as of January 2, 1978?[28]

And so, the CETA Orchestra was born. The allocated funds were provided by the U.S. federal government and authorized by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973. In effect from July 1, 1974 to September 30, 1984, CETA provided block grants to state and local governments amounting to $55 billion over its duration. Unlike the earlier New Deal era Works Progress Administration (WPA), CETA was decentralized and gave the grant recipients great latitude in the distribution of funds. However, like the WPA, CETA was created to address economic collapse—specifically the recession of 1973, which worsened soon after the law was passed. During its implementation, CETA was adapted to increase public sector employment and mitigate rising unemployment.[29] While not explicitly intended to serve the arts, block grants did go to state, county, and city governments who used the money to found CETA Orchestras, some as early as 1976: Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; Cleveland, Ohio; and

28 Tom Johnson, "'I Personally Like Getting Paid': Stalking the orChEsTrA," *Village Voice*, April 3, 1978: 35–7.

29 For a history and analysis of CETA see Grace A. Franklin and Randall B. Ripley, *CETA: Politics and Policy, 1973–1982* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984).

elsewhere.[30] These orchestras employed out-of-work musicians, though the brief duration of the grants (one year) and the uncertainty of their renewal made CETA Orchestras precarious operations. Adding to the complexity were conflicts engendered between these players and union musicians—notably in Chicago—that pitted musicians against one another for gigs in a musically dense city.[31]

The challenges in New York City were even more daunting. Adding to the difficulties of a national recession was the financial collapse of 1975.[32] This dire situation made CETA funds even more necessary. While other cities, such as San Francisco, had been using CETA dollars for the arts as early as 1974, New York did not follow suit until 1977.[33] City officials from the Cultural Council Foundation invited the contemporary music ensemble Speculum Musicae to form a CETA Orchestra. Speculum Musicae would be categorized in Samuel Gilmore's framework as an uptown ensemble and is notable for their performances of the music of Charles Wuorinen and Elliott Carter. The group declined to sponsor the orchestra, though its flutist Paul Dunkel seized the opportunity to lead the nascent group. Already the assistant conductor of the American Composers Orchestra, he volunteered his services to the still-embryonic organization.[34] Lukas Foss, longtime supporter of Julius Eastman from their days together in the Creative Associates at Buffalo, eventually housed the CETA Orchestra within the organizational structure of the Brooklyn Philharmonia, where he had been music director since 1971. As I will elaborate on below, Foss had committed the Philharmonia to public service and outreach; giving CETA a home was congruent with these commitments.[35]

30 On the Chicago CETA, see Monroe Anderson, "New Orchestra Attacks Lack of Union Support," *Chicago Tribune*, August 13, 1976, 15. On the Los Angeles CETA Orchestra see Richard Slater, "Balazs Plays Unaccompanied Bach at Immaculate Heart College," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1978: E11. On the Cleveland CETA Orchestra see "Calendar of Events," *Cleveland Call and Post*, August 26, 1978: 7B.

31 Anderson, "New Orchestra Attacks."

32 On the financial collapse, real estate and the arts see Kim Moody, *From Welfare State to Real Estate: Regime Change in New York City, 1974 to the Present* (New York: New Press, 2007) and Hillary Miller, *Drop Dead: Performance in Crisis, 1970s New York* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2016).

33 "Comprehensive Employment Training Act Artists Project records circa 1977 to 1980," *NYC Records and Information Services*, accessed July 13, 2026. https://a860-collectionguides.nyc.gov/repositories/2/accessions/1229.

34 Raymond Ericson, "Music Notes: CETA Orchestra," *The New York Times*, July 15, 1979: D20.

35 Nicholas Kenyon makes this point in his review of a CETA concert from 1980. See

One of the conditions of membership was the rigid poverty-level income requirements of CETA programs more broadly. Sadly, for freelance musicians like Julius Eastman, these were easy to meet. But when their applications for membership were approved after organizers heard 140 auditions, players were guaranteed a $10,000-a-year income.[36] At its founding the group was fewer than 20 players. On 9 January 1978, Eastman wrote to his friend, composer Rocco di Pietro, with details of the instrumentation: "The orchestra consists of 4 violins, 2 violas, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 1 bass violin, 1 cello, 1 trumpet that also plays one of the violas."[37] Early rehearsals were in a cramped room in an upper corner of the Brooklyn Academy of Music but soon moved to the more spacious basement of the Hanson Place Central Methodist Church. Eastman, who served as resident composer, vocalist, and co-conductor with Dunkel, was pleased with the initial situation. He said to Tom Johnson, "Of course I personally like getting paid. That's a great thing. And there's not the pressure. You know how it is—one rehearsal and one concert. I call it fast food concerts."[38] Clarinetist Rob Yamins reiterated Eastman's opinion, "The orchestra has a lot of promise . . . We're all free-lancers, and it's a big advantage to have that steady check coming in every two weeks."[39]

But as in Chicago, membership in the CETA Orchestra complicated labor relations among freelance musicians in the city.[40] Tom Johnson reported one of the musician's concerns:

> The orchestra has also had to take a hard line on the question of performing free in situations where musicians might otherwise have been hired. This is a crucial point. One of the orchestral members was disturbed by the possibility that he might be assigned to augment a local opera orchestra as a CETA musician. The year before, the opera company had paid him to play the same job, so if he had agreed to do the work as part of his CETA employment this year,

Nicholas Kenyon, "Musical Events: Politics," *The New Yorker*, February 2, 1980: 110–1.

36 On the audition numbers see Kenyon, "Musical Events," 111. On the salary see Johnson, "'I Personally Like Getting Paid.'"

37 Julius Eastman to Rocco di Pietro, January 9, 1978, reprinted in Rocco Di Pietro, *Yours in Beethoven: A Memoir of My Musical Journey with Julius Eastman* (self-published, 2023), 51.

38 Johnson, "'I Personally Like Getting Paid,'" 35–6.

39 Johnson, 37.

40 On labor relations with the CETA Orchestra in Chicago see Anderson, "New Orchestra Attacks." On the history of musical labor in Chicago see Amy Absher, *The Black Musician in the White City: Race and Music in Chicago, 1900–1967* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014).

> essentially he would have been taking an existing job away from himself, or from some other free-lancer. Abuses of this sort could easily occur.[41]

This complexity was matched by a mind-boggling level of bureaucracy. The orchestra would only play for nonprofit institutions that put in formal requests which required a 16-page application form. Even so, by July of 1978 the group had grown to 30 members and had a steady stream of concerts all over the city that first year: Goodman Auditorium at the Hebrew Arts School on 129 West 67th Street, the International Center for Photography at 1130 Fifth Avenue, Midwood Field in Flatbush, Brooklyn, Fordham University, Port Authority Bus Terminal, Riverside Church, the Staten Island Ferry, and the Kitchen in SoHo.[42] They also collaborated with the Boys Choir of Harlem, the Opera Orchestra of New York, Meet the Composer, and the dancers Katherine Liepe and Vic Stornant. CETA violinist Clara Zaher remarked, "It's musically stimulating too, because it gives us a chance to do all kinds of repertoire."[43]

5

With a need to cultivate broad musical appeal for a city-wide audience, the CETA Orchestra couldn't take a committed aesthetic stance nor align itself with any particular scene. In 1978 the orchestra's repertoire ranged from John Williams's *Star Wars* soundtrack to Alessandro Scarlatti songs to Joseph Haydn's symphonies to a work by Fluxus composer Philip Corner.[44] Such catholic tastes bolstered an image of the orchestra as a service to the whole city. Its name eventually changed in the summer of 1978 to the CETA Orchestra of New York which solidified its commitment to the five boroughs. With its free concerts all over the city, the orchestra made music into an accessible public good.

That CETA funding was available to create an orchestra required the law to be reinterpreted so that it might include the arts at all. The legis-

41 Johnson, "'I Personally Like Getting Paid'," 37.

42 Ericson, "Music Notes: CETA Orchestra," D19.

43 Johnson, "'I Personally Like Getting Paid'," 37.

44 For the John Williams performance see "Water Music," *Staten Island Advance*, August 18, 1978: A5. For the Scarlatti performance see the program reproduced in Di Pietro, *Yours in Beethoven*, 48. For the Haydn and Corner performances see Ann Barry, "Arts and Leisure Guide," *The New York Times*, March 12, 1978: D32.

lation was intended as a job-training program and funding well-trained artists and musicians was not part of the plan. Indeed, its support of the arts would be used against CETA as news of financial abuse came to light around the time the New York orchestra came into existence. Yet, arts administrators were able to make convincing cases to the Department of Employment for funds, something evinced by the other CETA Orchestras formed before New York's. The template for success was crafted early in the program's life. In 1974, San Francisco arts administrator John Kreidler argued for CETA funding for the arts and performance on the grounds that they *were* a public service and were within the remit of the program. He showed that unemployment rates for artists were far worse than national averages. In his proposal, Kreidler made a virtue of the fact that artists were already well-trained and could be put to work immediately in service of the public. That CETA had "adopted a broad concept of what could be categorized as a public service" worked to arts administrators' advantage.[45] Journalists and politicians went on to successfully make cases for CETA as a funder for the arts.[46] In November of 1979 Joan Mondale, second lady of the United States and the Carter administration's arts representative, spoke at the dedication of five murals created at the World Trade Center by CETA-supported artists: Ilya Bolotowsky, Hunt Slonem, Germaine Keller, James Biederman and Cynthia Mailman. The New York CETA Orchestra provided music for the dedication. In her comments, Mondale explicitly connected the CETA program both to the arts projects of the Works Progress Administration and Eleanor Roosevelt's commitment to public art:

> Artists should be employed to do what they do best, whether it's painting, writing, dancing, making music—whatever it is, and the CETA program does this. Art needs to be looked at. It is more than just decoration of public places; it sharpens our perceptions and helps us to get a little more out of life … [Eleanor Roosevelt] would smile at us today, at the CETA Orchestra and the wonderful murals, and she would feel that, yes, we are growing up.[47]

45 Colleen Hooper, "'Ballerinas on the Dole': Dance and the US Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA), 1974–1982," *Dance Research Journal* 49, no. 3 (2017): 73.

46 Rosalyn Bernstein, "Artists on Salary: Funds for the Starving Class," *New York Magazine*, August 21, 1978: 45–9.

47 Quoted in Elain Boies, "Islander's Mural Glows in Spotlight at Arts Celebration," *Staten Island Advance*, November 9, 1979: C3.

Amidst dire economic conditions, Mondale looked back to the progressive era to celebrate the work of CETA. She argued for art's status as a public good even as critics assailed the program, especially its funding of artists, dancers, and musicians. Journalist Ralph Kinney Bennett criticized these artists "on the dole," "many of whom have left jobs in the private economy."[48] Unbowed by such criticism, President Jimmy Carter continued support of CETA though arguments like Bennett's would eventually contribute to the program's demise in 1983 following Ronald Reagan's election. Yet the CETA Orchestra's fate was sealed not by Reagan, but by New York City's Cultural Council Foundation which defunded the orchestra at the end of 1980.[49]

6

In the months following the CETA Orchestra's founding in January of 1978, Julius Eastman's role expanded beyond his initial appointment as composer-performer. By March he was sharing conducting duties with Paul Dunkel on a concert of Haydn, Wagner, and Philip Corner at the YMCA at 180 W. 135th St. in Harlem.[50] His work with the Brooklyn Philharmonia and music director Lukas Foss made Eastman an important liaison between the CETA Orchestra and its sponsoring institution. Foss featured Eastman regularly as both composer and performer in the Philharmonia's "Meet the Moderns" concert series. In 1976, Foss appointed Eastman, along with Tania León and Talib Rasul Hakim as co-coordinators of a Community Concerts series under the auspices of the Philharmonia. These concerts initially served as a vehicle for the organizing work of the Society of Black Composers, which Hakim had co-founded in 1968 with Ben Patterson, Carmen Moore, Hale Smith, Dorothy Rudd Moore and others. The Brooklyn Philharmonia's board approved the Community Concerts; Consolidated Edison and Philip Morris provided seed funds. These corporate sponsorships proved necessary as the Philharmonia's board approved the series on the condition that no resources be diverted from the orchestra's established programs and that it should be supported only by new gifts.

48 Ralph Kinney Bennett, "CETA: $11-Billion Boondoggle," *Reader's Digest* (August 1978): 75.

49 Maurice Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn: A Biography of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 118.

50 Barry, "Arts and Leisure Guide."

The founding of the CETA Orchestra coincided with the Community Concerts' second season and the musicians were put to work on the series. Their labor came as a relief. Philharmonia manager and archivist Maurice Edwards described the relationship between the two orchestras like this: "The CETA Concert Orchestra became something of an extension of the Brooklyn Philharmonia—almost like a stand-in, taking on assignments that the parent itself could not handle for various reasons that were mostly logistical and monetary."[51] This arrangement is curiously similar to *outsourcing*—where labor costs are cut by employing short-term contingent labor—which the CETA musicians certainly were.[52] Edwards framed this expansion of the Philharmonia's labor force at no-to-minimal cost as in service of the public good and saw their sponsorship of the CETA Orchestra as an "opportunity to bring music to many more people than it could possibly afford to serve through its own community outreach, family, and educational programs."[53]

Eastman's work as CETA conductor and coordinator of the Community Concerts demonstrates the ways in which the argument for the orchestra as a public good was made. One tactic was to emphasize increased audience access to music. The CETA Orchestra worked exhaustively to bring concerts into the urban public sphere including sites of mass circulation like the Staten Island Ferry and the Port Authority Bus Terminal. Another tactic was to increase composers' access to performances. In their service to the Community Concerts, the CETA musicians increased access to the music of historically marginalized composers. These tactics comprised a broader strategy designed by Foss and the Philharmonia that remapped the geographical focus of the organization's efforts. Foss, Léon, Eastman, and Hakim used the Community Concerts to increase musical offerings in neighborhoods surrounding the Brooklyn Academy of Music, whose programs offered European imports of music theater and performances by downtown-affiliated artists. Works mounted there by African American composers living in Brooklyn, downtown, Harlem or elsewhere were few and far between. The Community Concerts developed a dual focus on geographical and aesthetic expansion that extended the orchestra's reach into the majority African American neighborhoods of Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Bedford-Stuyvesant, East New York, and Cobble Hill. The concerts were

51 Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn*, 107.

52 On the contemporary state of outsourcing in relation to new music see Martin Iddon, "Outsourcing Progress: On Conceptual Music," *Tempo* 70, no. 275 (2016): 36–49.

53 Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn*, 107.

held in established Black-founded and run institutions including the Paul Robeson and Billie Holiday Theaters. These concerts frequently travelled into Manhattan—specifically Harlem. The board and Foss hoped that by exposing new and primarily African American audiences to the orchestra, its base of support would expand and bring new listeners to the Philharmonia's concerts at BAM.[54] Foss did not conduct the community concerts; in another act of outsourcing, that job was given over to Léon. After the CETA Orchestra became involved, Eastman shared these duties with her. CETA musicians were called upon for the Community Concerts' orchestral programs, such as a program of William Canaday and Anthony Coleman at the Queens Museum on June 16–17, 1979 and a concert of Ed Bland and Judith Martin in the Museum Mile Festival on June 26. Eastman's work on other concerts in 1978 and 1979 was supported by his CETA salary, defraying costs that the Philharmonia would have otherwise had to bear.

By reorienting the Philharmonia's activities outward to other parts of Brooklyn and Harlem, the Community Concerts coordinators reimagined a broader cultural movement begun in the 1960s with the Black Arts Movement. Jazz (along with Soul) had assumed a political and musical significance within Black Nationalist movements that largely eclipsed African American composers, whose access to Euro-American ensembles and institutions had been historically limited.[55] Black composers were in something of a double bind, excluded from both Black cultural nationalism and the primarily white art music establishment.[56] The Community Concerts provided a space for the exploration of Black-composed music as a force for cultural nationalism and politics. Each of the composer-coordinators negotiated this uneven terrain by exemplifying a creative mobility exemplified by the Black radical tradition.[57]

Yet, by the second season of the Community Concerts—when the CETA Orchestra was in its service—the exclusive of programming Black composers was challenged. Jon Gibson recalls that Eastman initiated the shift in emphasis. Léon and Eastman along with Hakim made programming decisions, which became contentious around matters of representation. Playing

54 Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn*, 98.

55 For an instance of the marginalization of composed music in Black radical aesthetics see James T. Stewart, "The Development of the Black Revolutionary Artist," in *Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writing*, ed. Leroy Jones and Larry Neal (New York: William Morrow, 1968), 3–10.

56 Though some composers, like Julia Perry and Ulysses Kay made significant inroads into elite institutions with Guggenheim fellowships (Perry) and Rome Prize fellowships (Kay).

57 See Dohoney, "A Flexible Musical Identity."

to his contrarian type, Eastman programmed Gibson's *Melody IV* (1975) and *Song II* (1974) on the second Community Concert of the 1977–78 season performed at both the Bushwick United Methodist Church and the Harlem Performance Center.[58] Gibson (1940–2020) was a habitué of downtown, a white composer-performer working with Steve Reich and Philip Glass. Gibson remembered, "Years later someone told me that these concerts were supposed to feature Black composers and performers exclusively which they did except for me. I was taken aback when I learned that Julius had to fight long and hard on my behalf to get my music on this program. He never mentioned any of this to me at the time."[59]

Concerts in subsequent seasons featured integrated programming. Eastman brought in works by white experimental composers Beth Anderson, Petr Kotik, and Frederic Rzewski for a concert celebrating Langston Hughes at Medgar Evers College in Crown Heights, Brooklyn on February 23, 1979.[60] The concert also featured music by co-coordinator Talib Hakim and Joyce Solomon. Tania León programmed and conducted an all-Latin American concert given at INTAR in Manhattan as the final Community Concert of that season. These shifts in programming marked a turn from the original goal of advocating Black cultural nationalism towards proffering a multiculturalist musical aesthetic, exemplified by the 1978–79 theme of "Music of the Americas." Outreach remained the goal; as Maurice Edwards emphasized, "With concerts built around the works of living Black, Hispanic, and American Indian composers, we are trying to reach people who might not otherwise come to hear us at the Brooklyn Academy of Music."[61] The Community Concerts were restructured after the CETA Orchestra's dissolution. Once funding for the musicians ran out at the end of 1980, the Community series was combined with the Family concerts in the 1981–82 season to minimize the added labor for the Philharmonia players. It continued into the late 1980s and garnered support from grants and corporate sponsorships.[62]

58 Gibson was programmed with works by Yuji Takahashi, Chou Wen-Chung, Angela Bofill, and Joyce Solomon. Solomon would later join Eastman for performances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1986 for choreographer-dancer Molissa Fenley's *Geologic Moments*. See Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn*, 106.

59 Quoted in Renée Levine Packer, "Julius Eastman: A Biography," in *Gay Guerrilla*, ed. Packer and Leach, 49.

60 Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn*, 111.

61 Quoted in "Brooklyn IBM News: Philharmonia Season Openers Sponsored," *International Business Machines Corporation* 1, no. 2 (August 1979).

62 Edwards, *How Music Grew in Brooklyn*, 123.

7

Let us return to my opening thought experiment: The Kitchen, one of the key sites of the downtown scene. Eastman conducted the CETA Orchestra in two nights of new music for baroque orchestra on May 9 and 10, 1978. The May 9 program featured music by Rhys Chatham, Ralph Jones, Alan Lloyd, and Arthur Russell; May 10 featured Tania León, Rocco di Pietro, Judith Martin, and Ned Sublette.[63] The mix of voices is eclectic, featuring downtown denizens like Chatham and Russell, Eastman's former collaborator Martin from the SEM Ensemble, and his current collaborator León from the Community Concerts. Sublette recalled the performance of Russell's *Instrumentals* like this: "I had never heard *Instrumentals* before, and I was amazed at how good it sounded with that grumpy group of players, who would rather have been at home watching TV … I thought it was a beautiful take on orchestral sonority and structured indeterminacy." Russell himself was "not satisfied."[64] Given the sheer amount of concertizing that the CETA Orchestra was responsible for, it was likely that the players were exhausted. Sublette and Russell's attitude towards them is striking for its dismissal of the labor of the musicians. But it is precisely the labor of the CETA Orchestra that I have insisted we pay attention to. If we were to follow Sublette and Russell, we might fault them for undermining the sound of the downtown scene—for not reproducing its aesthetic sense of place at one of its key sites. But following Eastman and his fellow travelers through New York's urban territory, we might rather consider the ways in which such scenes are possible at all only through the work of a "grumpy group of players."

The scene of musical failure at the Kitchen returns me to the theoretical propositions presented at the outset of this article: that, against a reified conception of scene suturing together aesthetics and space, as in Gilmore and Chatham, we might instead attend to micro-spatial mobilities of performance labor that cross-cut urban locales. Musical labor, mutable and exploitable, could be put in service of multiple scenes and cultural initiatives. I've traced this in Eastman's work with the CETA Orchestra. Together they endeavored to create music as a citywide public good in keeping with the broad goals of the CETA program. Their labor supported the cultural nationalist project of the Society of Black Composers through their work on the Community Concerts Series for the Brooklyn Philharmonia. In

63 See the flyer for the concert in Di Pietro, *Yours in Beethoven*, 47.
64 Sublette and Russell quotes both in Lawrence, *Hold on to Your Dreams*, 156.

each performance, the orchestra formed a novel coalition with a sponsoring organization—from the Staten Island Ferry to Riverside Church—that showed the potential for music to be translocal, to establish connections through musical labor and a broad notion of music's social worth.

This is in line with De Vito's goals for a translocal micro-spatial historiography: "Translocal microhistory has the dual objective of deconstructing universalistic concepts and reconstructing the histories, meanings, and representations that lie beneath them."[65] Beneath reifying scenic signifiers like "uptown," "midtown," and "downtown," we can shift focus to those forces connecting them. I've argued that labor is certainly one of these but so is a conception of music as a public good. To notice this however is not to substitute one reified conception (aesthetic-space) for another (general musical value) but is instead to take up another task of translocal microhistory: rethinking comparison. To note a shared structure of labor and political value is not to suggest that they operate in each location in the same manner. Again, De Vito: "the homogeneous discontinuity of the historical fabric points to the fact that each place is shaped by the intersection of multiple social networks and connections and by their evolution over time. The specificity of each site derives, in other words, not from its isolation, but from the specificity of the connections that traverse and shape it."[66] In the end, because of its particular configuration of institutions and cultural cachet, downtown has remained a name to conjure with, while no comparable scene was forged by the Brooklyn Philharmonia or the Community Concerts. I'll turn now to a closer, final look at the specificity of the CETA Orchestra and its service to the Community Concerts.

8

As with most musical relationships, the CETA Orchestra was short-lived. Eastman left the group sometime in late 1979, writing to Rocco di Pietro in an undated letter, "The CETA Orchestra and I have fallen out, such that

65 "La microstoria translocale ha per duplice obiettivo la decostruzione dei concetti universalistici e la ri-costruzione delle storie, dei significati e delle rappresentazioni che si celano al di sotto di essi." De Vito, "Verso una microstoria translocale," 822.

66 "Il riconoscimento dell'omogenea discontinuità del tessuto storico rimanda al fatto che ciascun luogo è costruito dall'intersecarsi di molteplici reti sociali e connessioni e dal loro mutare nel tempo. La specificità di ciascun sito deriva cioè non dal suo isolamento, ma dalla specificità delle connessioni che lo attraversano e lo costruiscono." De Vito, 823.

I don't perform with them anymore."[67] But as I argue elsewhere, the temporariness of Eastman's musical relationships need not diminish their importance.[68] Their contingency has much to tell us about the actual existing conditions of musical life in New York City. Despite its brief life, The CETA Orchestra from 1978 to 1980 provided stability for musicians like Eastman who found themselves confronting the rising precarity unleashed by a fiscal crisis that utterly transformed the urban landscape. The orchestra's defunding in 1980 and the ending of the CETA program outright in 1983 exemplified at the city and national levels the "new federalism" emerging in the 1970s and supercharged by the Reagan administration.[69] Now more commonly known as neoliberalism, Reagan's policies were prefigured by those impacting New York City in the 1970s and strategically dismantled social safety nets, including CETA.

Scholars have called such strategic disinvestment *urbicide*—the enforced destruction of a city.[70] Urbicide operates through "selective urban development practices that prioritize economic goals and/or specific historical narratives, leading to the intentional or unintentional destruction of diverse urban spaces [that] erode collective urban memory, undermine cultural sustainability, and diminish community resilience."[71] As Sharon Zukin has shown, the gentrification of downtown New York and the aestheticization of the "loft lifestyle" were modes of selective urban development at work in the 1970s.[72] Despite its analytical and activist uses, Black feminist geographer Katherine McKittrick cautions us against romanticizing urbicide and lazily adopting what she interprets to be its dehumanizing logic. An urbicidal historiography has deleterious effects on what kinds of stories are allowed to matter. Given the racial dynamics that attend to narratives of urbicide, vibrant signs of life—especially Black lives like Eastman's and his collaborators in the Community Concerts—get lost:

67 Di Pietro, *Yours in Beethoven*, 50.

68 Dohoney, "For Failed Friendship."

69 E. Terrence Jones and Donald Phares, "Formula Feedback and Central Cities: The Case of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act," *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (1978): 31–54.

70 Martin Coward, *Urbicide: The Politics of Urban Destruction* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

71 Sebla Arin Ensarioğlu, "A Threat to Cultural Sustainability: Urbicide," *Space and Culture* 29, no. 3 (2026): 302–18.

72 Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989).

> [T]he complexity of a Black sense of place—questions of encounter, practices of resistance—can be, at least conceptually, swallowed up by the very death and decay that is bolstered by the hard empirical evidence of Black geographic peril. With this in mind, urbicide—the deliberate death of the city and willful place annihilation—can stand in as a viable explanation for the ongoing destruction of a black sense of place in the Americas.[73]

The mapping of Eastman's work with the CETA Orchestra and that orchestra's work with the Community Concerts testifies to the complexity of Eastman's musical geography in New York City in the 1970s and exemplifies the ways in which a "Black sense of place is not a steady, focused, and homogeneous way of seeing and being in place, but rather a set of changing and differential perspectives that are illustrative of, and therefore remark upon, legacies of normalized racial violence that calcify, but do not guarantee, the denigration of Black geographies and their inhabitants."[74]

9

In conclusion, I'd like to advance some methodological claims as they are thrown into relief by Eastman's movement through New York City. What I find compelling about McKittrick's work is the emphasis she places on poesis as a response to these conditions. As Clyde Woods argued, musicking has often been a way in which Black lives make space matter and, in turn, shape landscapes.[75] Building on Woods, McKittrick argues forcefully against narratives of urbicide that make spectacles of Black death. Such narratives remap antebellum plantation logics onto contemporary geographies. She takes pains to emphasize that urbicide cannot not dispense with Black life and is continually met by assertions of Black aliveness—what literature scholar Kevin Quashie describes as a *poetics of being*.[76] Blues and hip hop are perhaps the most consequential iteration of this everyday Black living in the face of structural divestment, but they are not the only genres

73 Katherine McKittrick, "On Plantations, Prisons, and a Black Sense of Place," *Social & Cultural Geography* 12, no. 8 (December 2011): 951.

74 McKittrick, 950.

75 Clyde Woods, *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Power in the Mississippi Delta* (New York: Verso, 2017).

76 Kevin Quashie, *Black Aliveness, or A Poetics of Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021).

where these dilemmas were confronted. Indeed, my attention to the micropolitics of Eastman's labor in NYC offers another way to test McKittrick's thesis. In each of the examples above, Eastman responded to precarity with creativity and (ultimately dissonant) coalition-building. Translocal analysis of such work brings McKittrick's insights into renewed focus.

To build on her theory, I have been thinking McKittrick's geography and De Vito's translocal microhistory in tandem with the vocal philosophy of Adriana Cavarero, of which I have written elsewhere.[77] I am particularly concerned with Cavarero's concept of "an absolute local" (*locale assoluto*) that emerges whenever voices (and musicians) sound out in relation to one another. Cavarero writes that the space of the absolute local is "the name of a taking-place of politics that has no predefined borders, nor any fixed or sacred confines."[78] The radical potential of such locality resounds in performances of CETA Orchestra and redefines relations of belonging and resistance in novel ways. Relations we saw with the orchestra included its reframing of music as a public good and its expansion of access to it. Musicking may do no more than reveal the structuring constraints of a place, but it also might generate a politics that points towards their overcoming. Music's production of an absolute local is what McKittrick might mean when she articulates the work of Black poesis as a particular form of place-making. And it resonates with De Vito's concern with a "historical fabric ... made up of singular configurations."[79] Such place-making valorizes life against death, and we hear such valorization in the musical life of the CETA Orchestra and the Community Concerts. Even if the conditions of urbicide constrain and condition the production of an efficacious political moment, musical work may yet bypass them, at least as long as the sound resounds.

With my attention to micro-spatial moments in 1970s New York, I also have a broader point to make about the historiography of downtown and its supposed boundaryless creativity. Chatham's geographically constrained cultural triumphalism cited above obscures the fact that boundaries did remain and hides the fact that downtown was not hospitable to all. With its aesthetic emphasis, it devalues the difficult interrelatedness that was

77 Ryan Dohoney, "An Antidote to Metaphysics: Adriana Cavarero's Vocal Philosophy," *Women and Music* 15 (2011): 69–84.

78 Adriana Cavarero, *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, trans. Paul A. Kottman (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 204.

79 "Il tessuto storico nel suo complesso è costituito da configurzationi singolari." De Vito, "Verso una microstoria translocale," 823.

achieved by Eastman and the CETA musicians' labor. Instead, my translocal micro-spatial approach leads us to a historiography that does not determine in advance how musicians and music might relate to one another. And it does not shy away from recovering the evidence that remains and using it to answer the ethical demands placed upon us whenever we set out to map musical life. Eastman and the CETA Orchestra's achievements call for us to undertake a more just geography that does not disguise racialized constraints under the guise of aesthetic freedom but recognizes that fleeting moments of place-making through musical performances can remap the geographies we think we know.

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Abstract

The New York CETA Orchestra was legislated into existence in 1978 at a time of economic peril both for New York City as well as the nation. Over its brief life, the CETA Orchestra played in all five boroughs and made a strong case for music as a public good. Their mobility across the Five Boroughs—from the Staten Island Ferry to the Paul Robeson Theater to the Port Authority Bus Terminal—displayed a form of musicianship that decoupled associations of place and aesthetics. Following the CETA Orchestra from 1978–1979 reveals shortcomings in geographical models of musical history that divided the city into distinct aesthetic zones of "uptown," "midtown," and "downtown." As a corrective to a Manhattan-centric model, I offer a micro-spatial account of New York City musical life detailing Julius Eastman and his involvement with the CETA Orchestra. Eastman served as resident composer, vocalist, and conductor with the group. Through his connections to Lukas Foss and the Brooklyn Philharmonia, Eastman brought the CETA Orchestra into the service of the Philharmonia's Community Concerts. These focused on the music of Black composers performed in majority Black neighborhoods of Brooklyn, Queens, and Harlem. Eastman is usually grouped among the "downtown" experimentalists, yet Eastman's work with the CETA Orchestra and that orchestra's work with the Community Concerts testifies to the complexity of musical geography in New York City in the 1970s and the dynamics of race and labor shaping it.

Keywords: urban geography, micro-spatial historiography, Julius Eastman, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, musical labor

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COMMUNICATIONS

Mapping Vienna's Concert Life around 1800: An Interdisciplinary Journey

John D. Wilson, Francesca-Maria Raffler, Viktor Kochkin, Nicole Yeung

The research project and online database Concert Life in Vienna 1780–1830[1] has at its core an interesting paradox: our subject is a city where thousands of musicians and composers made a living, a city where a great deal of the modern concert music canon was premiered, a city whose reigning dynastic family had distinguished itself through the patronage of music for centuries. Music historians have taken an interest in Vienna of this period for exactly as long as the profession itself has existed.[2] Yet any scholar, student, performer, or anyone else interested in this repertoire would have a very hard time trying to get a full picture of Viennese concert life from the musicological literature. Before this project began there was no central hub for the known facts about what music was played where, when, and by whom, much less what the underlying sources for that knowledge are, what exactly they say, and how reliable they are. The root of the problem is that few musicologists have attempted to get a full picture in the first place. Biographers and specialists working on major composers have of course taken great care to identify each of the concerts their subjects organized, the other performers involved, how much money was made, even who copied the parts and led the rehearsals.[3] And one

1 The WEAVE research project is made possible by grants from the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and the German Research Foundation (DFG), project number I 5623-G.

2 Eduard Hanslick received the world's first professorship in the history and aesthetics of music in 1870, while he was in the middle of publishing his two-volume *Geschichte des Concertwesens in Wien* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1869–70).

3 Among many: Simon P. Keefe, *Mozart in Vienna: The Final Decade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Theodore Albrecht, *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: Rehearsing and Performing its 1824 Premiere* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2024); Till Gerrit Waidelich, Renate Stark-Voit, Andreas Mayer, Ernst Hilmar, and Werner Bodendorff, *Franz Schubert: Dokumente, 1817–1830* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1993).

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overview for part of the period has been attempted, with relative success considering the usual vagaries that attended research of this sort in the pre-digital era.[4] But the enterprising scholar doesn't have to get far off the beaten path to come up against a complete lacuna of information. Even concerts in Vienna that featured Beethoven's music, but in which he was not involved personally, have not been studied thoroughly enough.[5] The picture gets even foggier when you start to look into musicians not named Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, or Schubert. The seeming wealth of literature on concert life in Vienna quickly starts to feel rather thin.

The main hurdle to creating an overview, as we've found, is the same reason that a mapping approach has proved so fruitful: the highly decentralized nature of musical performances in the city. Vienna had no dedicated concert space until 1831, when the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien opened its first concert hall on the Tuchlauben.[6] Until then, performers who wanted to reach an audience had to get creative: concerts took place in theaters and festive halls, but also in cafés, hotels, garden huts, piano factories, and drawing rooms. Each of these spaces, which were spread out not only within the walled city but also in its suburbs (*Vorstädte*, Districts 2–9 in today's Vienna), entailed different rules for access and corresponding social connotations. Old musicological value judgments can get in the way of a clear view, particularly of what defines a concert. In a landmark book on the subject, Mary Sue Morrow attempted for the first time to systematically collect data on concerts from 1760 to 1809.[7] Tellingly, Morrow defined her dates of study by the life of a famous composer, Haydn (a curious choice, given how relatively seldom he was personally involved in concerts), and just as tellingly, she divided her concert calendars into "public" and "private" ones. In doing so, Morrow followed a long music-historical tradition of focusing on the big three theaters for which the most detailed concert data is readily available: the *Kärtnertorthe-*

4 Mary Sue Morrow, *Concert Life in Haydn's Vienna: Aspects of a Developing Musical and Social Institution* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon, 1989). This study's ambition is regrettably matched by a number of omissions and errors; for emenda and corrigenda, as well as the sharpest comments to date on the difficulties of this research question, see Dexter Edge, "Review Article: Mary Sue Morrow, *Concert Life in Haydn's Vienna*," *Haydn Yearbook* 17 (1992): 108–66.

5 An overview only exists for performances of Beethoven's orchestral music. See Stefan Weinzierl, *Beethovens Konzerträume* (Frankfurt: Erwin Bochinsky, 2002), 220–45.

6 The Gesellschaft's first concert hall was in the building "Zum roten Igel," whose location is now occupied by the northeastern half of the building on Tuchlauben 12 in the inner city (A-1010).

7 Morrow, *Concert Life in Haydn's Vienna*.

ater, the *Theater nächst der Burg* (in common parlance the *Burgtheater* or *altes Burgtheater*), and, from 1800, the *Theater an der Wien*, located just outside the city walls.[8] These were prestigious spaces, tightly regulated by agents of the Habsburg court, which were only made available to rent for limited windows during the year. A private concert, on the other hand, has traditionally been defined as one in a private space whose attendance was by invitation only, and with it, there is a faulty assumption (no doubt based on traditional association with the term "salon," which has often been used to describe such events) that the repertoire was lighter or less challenging, or even that the choice of program was left to chance. Privileging public concerts over private ones tends to give a blinkered view which has often distorted characterizations of the city's musical life in popular literature and in composer biographies.

Even the boundary between "public" and "private" concerts becomes, upon closer inspection, permeable in the extreme. When Johann Friedrich Reichardt visited Vienna in the winter of 1808–1809, he attended either an opera or a concert almost every single evening and some mornings and afternoons. In the month of December 1808 alone, he saw eighteen concerts, only two of which were advertised in the newspaper and held in large imperial spaces (see Table 1).[9] But although a few of the performances were truly private in nature, such as a performance by Beethoven of his two new piano trios Op. 70 for Reichardt at Marie Erdödy's residence, the majority of the remaining ones were ticketed events. One concert, in the Arnstein Garden Palace far from the city center, had an estimated 300 or 400 guests. Other private concerts Reichardt attended, those held weekly by the Schuppanzigh String Quartet alternately in the Razumovsky and Lobkowitz Palaces, were for a smaller audience but featured programs that closely resemble those played in twentieth- and twenty-first-century concert halls. Reichardt's detailed accounts of his experiences, which encourage humility or even despair in the music historian who wishes

8 While the *Theater an der Wien* is still standing today (current address: Linke Wienzeile 6, A-1060), though with a new facade facing the Naschmarkt, the other two theaters have since been demolished. The *Kärntnertortheater* was located in the inner city between today's Kärntnerstraße and Albertinaplatz, while the *Theater nächst der Burg* occupied part of today's Michaelerplatz. The historical name reflects the location directly next to the entrance of the imperial residence, the Hofburg.

9 Reichardt, 182–286. Reichardt's narrative takes the form of letters written on particular dates which record events over the previous several days. Occasionally his mention of a day of the week allows for an exact date, but otherwise only a rough estimate within the dates covered in the respective letter is possible. These are indicated in the table by a date range.

DATE	VENUE	PERFORMERS	REPERTOIRE
December 1–5	Palais Lobkowitz	Lobkowitz's Kapelle	Reichardt: *Bradamante*
December 8	Palais Razumovsky	Schuppanzigh Quartet	Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven
December 6–10	Residence of Marie Erdödy	Beethoven, Schuppanzigh, Linke	Beethoven: Op. 70, no. 1 or 2, unnamed string quartet
December 6–10	Unknown	"Liebhaberkonzert"	Beethoven, Romberg, Paer
December 15	Palais Razumovsky	Schuppanzigh Quartet	Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven
December 11–16	Gartenpalais Arnstein	Fanny Pereira, Magdalena Kurzböck	Steibelt, waltzes
December 11–16	Kleiner Redoutensaal	Marie Bigot	Beethoven: WoO 80, Op. 37, unnamed symphony
December 18*	Kleiner Redoutensaal	Carolina Longhi	Unnamed works for harp and piano
December 17–21	Palais Lobkowitz	Gräfin Lunin	Various arias and ensembles
December 22	Palais Razumovsky	Schuppanzigh Quartet	Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven
December 22*	Theater an der Wien	Beethoven, Josephine Killitzky	Beethoven: Opp. 68, 65, 86, 58, 67, 80
December 23–25	Palais Lobkowitz	Gräfin Goubeau, Potocky	Various arias and duets
December 23–25	Palais Henikstein	"Liebhaber" Singers, Seligmann	Various choruses
December 23–25	Palais Lobkowitz	Ferdinand Ries	Unnamed piano trio
December 29	Palais Lobkowitz	Schuppanzigh Quartet	Unnamed quartets
December 26–31	Residence of Goubeau Family	Fräulein Goubeau	Own piano compositions
December 26–31	Residence of Marie Erdödy	Beethoven, Schuppanzigh, Linke	Beethoven: Op. 70, no. 1 and 2
December 26–31	Razumovsky Establishment	Marie Bigot	Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven

Table 1 – Concerts seen by Johann Reichardt in December 1808 (dates with asterisks indicate concerts advertised in the newspaper)

to get a complete picture, give a vivid impression of a city where music could be heard in a wide variety of contexts and spaces.[10]

Understanding this variety, both in terms of how the spaces might have sounded and how they impacted programming, was part of the *Concert Life* project's DNA from the beginning. Serving as the glue between these various types of data, a dynamic map-based interface seemed like an obvious choice for the publication of the research on the website. But which kind of map, and how to build it? It became clear that other expertise was needed. The collaboration of cartographers and music historians on this project was born out of necessity: no single historical map represents the rapidly industrializing urban landscape accurately for the entire period, and modern digital maps simply differ far too much from Vienna around 1800 to provide a meaningful visualization. The solution—an interactive digital map based on historical maps that represent the city at various stages in the fifty-year period—was a simple concept whose implementation would require specialized expertise. But like any good interdisciplinary work, this collaboration has paid off multiple unexpected dividends in how each discipline has conceived its research questions and carried out its fundamental work.

Concert Life from a Cartographic Perspective

Cartography is a unique discipline that brings together artistic, scientific, and technical aspects in varying proportions to create a detailed visualization—a map—that can be understood by viewers with a wide variety of competencies and educational backgrounds. It is inherently shaped by a series of epistemological questions and considerations:[11] what do we choose to represent? How do we abstract and simplify complex realities?[12] Whose perspectives are being inscribed in the spatial dimension? A map is not a mirror of the world, but a selective narrative. In the context of cultural and humanities studies, cartog-

10 Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Vertraute Briefe: geschrieben auf einer Reise nach Wien und den österreichischen Staaten zu Ende des Jahres 1808 und zu Anfang 1809*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Kunst- und Industrie-Comptoir, 1810).

11 David Fairbairn, Georg Gartner, and Michael P. Peterson, "Epistemological Thoughts on the Success of Maps and the Role of Cartography," *International Journal of Cartography* 7, no. 3 (2021): 317–31.

12 Matthew H. Edney, *Cartography: The Ideal and Its History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

raphy is a vital medium for interpreting and representing human experiences, social relations, as well as institutional presence through space and time.[13]

This is particularly relevant when exploring the topographies of music history—where musicians lived, the institutions that supported them, and the cultural rhythms of daily life. In this project, we apply cartographic principles to build a web map that integrates historical and biographical data, with the goal of offering glimpses into the soundscapes of Vienna in the 1800s.

To set the scene for our research question, we turned to historical base maps that offer both spatial and cultural information. The *Franziszeischer Kataster* (1817–29)[14] captures building footprints, land use patterns, and historical road networks—elements that are critical for understanding where individuals lived, how communities were structured, and which institutions played a central role in historical Vienna's musical life. Maps that represent earlier stages of the city are the bird's eye view plan by Joseph Daniel von Huber (1773–1778),[15] and floor-plan maps by Joseph Anton Nagel (1770–1774 and 1780–1781),[16] Maximilian von Grimm (1810),[17] and Anton Behsel (1820–1825).[18]

13 Tania Rossetto and Laura Lo Presti, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Cartographic Humanities* (London: Routledge, 2024).

14 The *Franziszeischer Kataster* map of Vienna, one result of a massive land survey of the Habsburg territories commissioned by Emperor Franz I, was compiled between 1817 and 1829, proceeding from the outlying villages in the present-day districts 11–23 to the inner city, which was finished last. A georeferenced composite version can be accessed at Arcanum, accessed July 27, 2026, https://mapire.eu/de/map/cadastral/?layers=osm%2C3%2C4&bbox=1804506.254499529%2C6136676.889457674%2C1836284.9490090911%2C6144320.592286191.

15 *Scenographie, oder, Geometrisch perspect. Abbildung der Kaÿs. Königl. Haupt u. Residenz Stadt Wienn in Oesterreich*…, scale 1:1440 (Vienna: Jakob Adam, [1778]), available online at the David Rumsey Map Collection, accessed July 27, 2026, https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~342180~90110412:Composite--Sheets-A-Z-Stadt-Wien-in.

16 *Grund Riß Der Kay. Königl. Residenz Stadt Wien*…, scale 1:1340 (Vienna: Mansfeld, 1774), available online at Moll's Map Collection, accessed July 27, 2026, https://mapy.mzk.cz/en/mzk03/001/042/780/2619265947/. This floor-plan map of the inner city, the first since conscription numbers were introduced, was expanded and updated in 1780–81 and printed under the same name (available online at Arcanum: https://mapire.eu/de/map/vienna-1770/). The fact that these represent two different versions of the same map is often misunderstood in music-historical literature, as is the presence of updates to the inner city.

17 *Grundriss der K. K. Haupt und Residenzstadt Wien mit ihren Vorstaedten. Zweyte verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage im Jahr 1810*, scale 1:4,400 (Vienna: Artaria, 1810), available online at the David Rumsey Map Collection, accessed July 27, 2026, https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/d2bopf. A popular portable map, the Grimm went through many editions between 1783 and 1814.

18 Plan der Inneren Stadt, der Vorstädte, der Brigittenau und vom Prater, scale 1:1,360

Fig. 1 – Map of the inner city and first ring of *Vorstädte*.

The road from archival map to a digital research platform was paved by a trail of decisions. Digitizing historical maps requires careful decisions about what to retain and what to generalize.[19] Our map intentionally simplifies land use to only four categories: buildings, green space, water, and fortifications (the two sets of walls, around the inner city and the *Vorstädte*); this simplification reduces visual overload while preserving key wayfinding indicators. Notably, we chose to digitize the historical road network with custom labels showing historical names of streets and neighborhoods to maintain fidelity to the historical context and avoid anachronism. Not only are some modern streets named after people and events after 1830, but modern spelling and place-naming conventions are the result of a process of linguistic standardization that has frequently ironed out local and dialectical variations. The style and design of a map also tell a story. We chose a color palette reminiscent of

(Vienna: Carl Gerold, 1829); divided into several neighborhood maps, the Behselplan is available online at Wien Geschichte Wiki, accessed July 27, 2026, https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Stadtplan,_Anton_Behsel_(1820-1825). A georeferenced version is available on Wien Kulturgut, accessed July 27, 2026, https://www.wien.gv.at/kulturportal/public/grafik.aspx?bookmark=kF43RvSY2kV-aLjRGS2OzRRwpYtBQ7P5DLogg4SqCdiQ-isDl-ao8ORmqZkUyTPsSwD.

19 Alberto Cairo, *The Truthful Art: Data, Charts, and Maps for Communication* (Indianapolis: New Riders, 2016).

old historical maps in order to maintain some of their communicative syntax despite the very different context of a digital interface (see Fig. 1). To identify the historical location of the concert venues and map them correctly, extensive archival research was conducted, as Vienna's street names and house numbers have changed multiple times over the past 200 years and errors proliferate through the literature.

This line of decision-making processes underscores a paradox in digital humanities cartography: the balance between a map's archival function[20] and its interpretative narrative. The *Concert Life* website needs a map that centers on residences and social institutions instead of city navigation. In recreating and custom-digitizing an archival map, this map becomes a medium for ethnographic recovery and exploration, rather than a product for spatial orientation.

A further interpretive decision of both the map and the database, one which creates its own limitations, is the focus on concert venues as enclosed spaces. As was (and is) the case with many other European settlements large and small, outdoor music-making in the warmer months of the year was certainly not unknown in Vienna between 1780 and 1830. The decision to de-emphasize this kind of event does not, however, reflect a modern value judgment, but rather a problem of source material, which in turn reflects their truly informal status in Viennese culture and law: outdoor concerts were not registered with the authorities or advertised, so next to nothing is known about their performers or repertoire. Other outdoor events, such as the annual May 1 celebrations in the Augarten, were treated as mere side attractions to the large concerts held in the Saalgebäude, leading to a similar lack of informative source material. In this and in other cases in which some combination of indoor and outdoor music-making occurred, the sources are vague as to the division between them, which necessitates a pinning of the event to the enclosed venue where the concert was organized.[21] While one can imagine many research questions in which visualizations of outdoor concerts would be far more crucial,[22] their

20 Andrew Janes, "Making Maps of Records: What Cartography Can Teach Us about Archival Description," *Archives and Records* 42, no. 1 (2021): 95–118.

21 The various coffee houses in the Prater, especially the Erstes Kaffehaus owned by Matthias Benko, are a case in point. Better described as a collection of small huts in natural surroundings, these coffee houses most likely featured some combination of indoor and outdoor performance forces depending on the weather, but advertisements do not specify exact locations. See Gustav Gugitz, *Das Wiener Kaffeehaus: ein Stück Kultur- und Lokalgeschichte* (Vienna: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1940), 44, 113.

22 See the many articles on open-air concerts throughout Europe in Francesc Cortès and Ramón Sobrino, *Music in Unconventional Venues of Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2026).

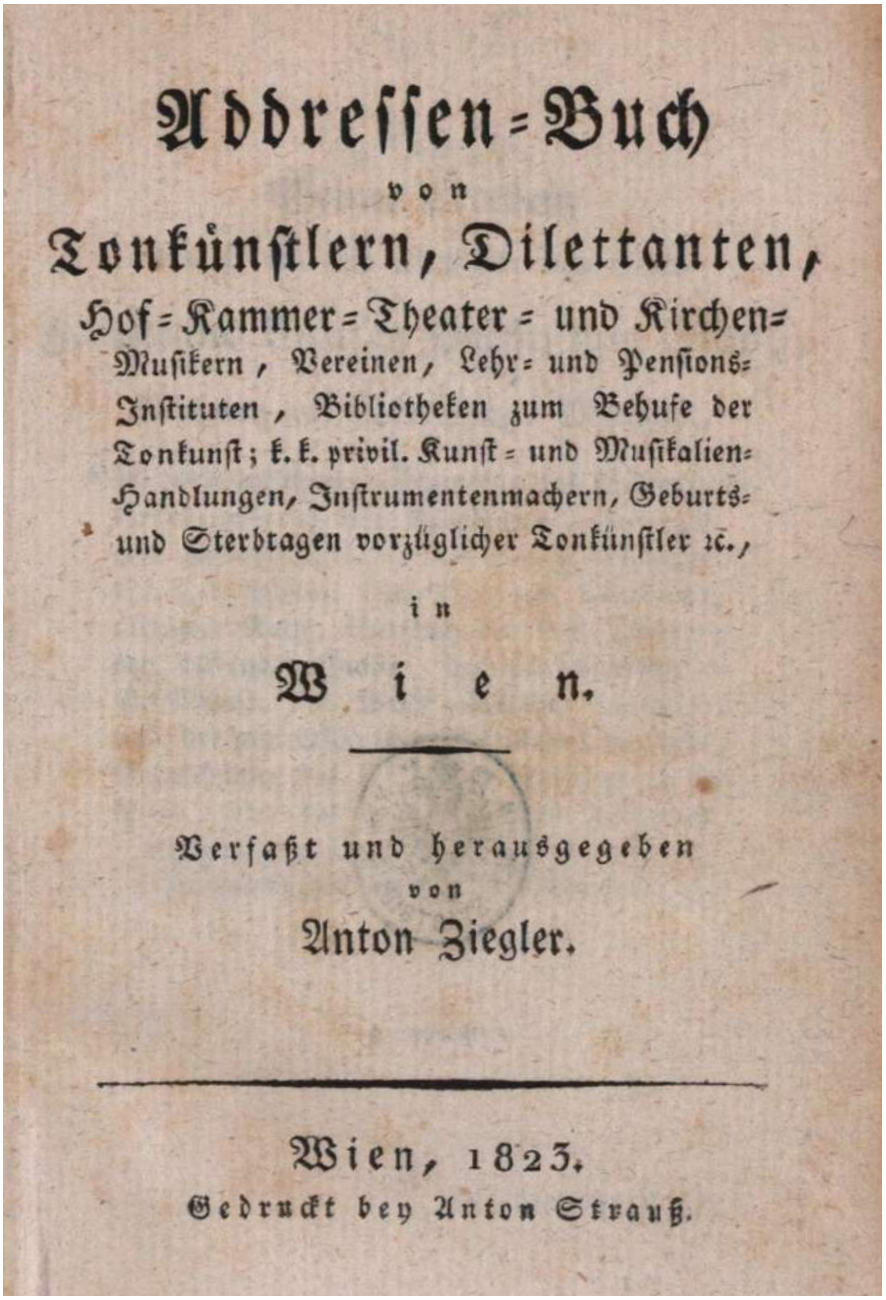
pragmatic omission from the *Concert Life* map does not necessitate a loss of meaningful information.

Mapping the Biographical

Biographical research, which is particularly crucial for this project, serves as a vital bridge between the cartographic layer and the lived experiences of individuals. One of the key questions when reconstructing Viennese concert life during this period is not only how to gather information on venues and programs but also how this data aligns with the biographies of key figures involved in music-making. One essential body of sources in this pursuit are address lists of musicians, which serve as a crucial tool for getting an overview over the people involved in music making in Vienna at the time.[23] One such book, by Anton Ziegler published in 1823, lists the names, professions, and specific musical roles of individuals—both amateur and professional—who contributed to Vienna's rich cultural life (Fig. 2). This includes details such as their instrument or vocal type, as well as their affiliations with various institutions, notably the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, and their employment at various theaters. Most importantly in the context of mapping, Ziegler's work also provides the home addresses of these individuals, offering a window into the geosocial landscape of Viennese music history.

With address books as our starting point for further in-depth biographical research, we managed to compile a list of over 2,700 individuals who were involved in the Viennese concert scene in the whole period of study. The next step has been to integrate these individuals into the *Gemeinsame Normdatei* (GND), an authority control database maintained by the German National Library that helps users differentiate between individuals with similar names, ensuring accurate identification in historical research. Now considered the gold standard in performance databases, the linking of individuals, institu-

23 The three most important for this period are Johann Ferdinand von Schönfeld, *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag* (Vienna: Schönfeld, 1796); Franz Heinrich Böckh, *Wiens lebende Schriftsteller, Künstler und Dilettanten im Kunstfache: dann Bücher-, Kunst und Naturschätze und andere Sehenswürdigkeiten* (Vienna: Bauer, 1821); and Anton Ziegler, *Addressen-Buch von Tonkünstlern, Dilettanten, Hof-Kammer-Theater- und Kirchenmusikern* […] (Vienna: Anton Strauss, 1823). For an overview, see Martin Eybl, "Female Singers, Virtuosos, and Dilettantes in the Music Culture of Vienna: Published Lists of Names and their Interpretation," in *Women's Agency in Schubert's Vienna*, ed. Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl, Birgit Lodes, and Melanie Unseld (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2024), 45–65.



Addressen-Buch
von
Tonkünstlern, Dilettanten,
Hof-Kammer-Theater- und Kirchen-
Musikern, Vereinen, Lehr- und Pensions-
Instituten, Bibliotheken zum Behufe der
Tonkunst; k. k. privil. Kunst- und Musikalien-
Handlungen, Instrumentenmachern, Geburts-
und Sterbtagen vorzüglicher Tonkünstler ꝛc.,
in
Wien.

Verfaßt und herausgegeben
von
Anton Ziegler.

Wien, 1823.
Gedruckt bey Anton Strauß.

Fig. 2 – Anton Ziegler, *Addressen-Buch von Tonkünstlern, Dilettanten, Hof-Kammer-Theater- und Kirchenmusikern* (1823), title and page 122 (including Sophie Linhart's entry).
Digitized by the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus.

122

Gulyas, Fräul. Therese von, wohnt in der Stadt, Bürgerspital Nr. 1100, 1ten Hof, 5te Stiege.

Gütter, Fräul. Elise, wohnt in der Stadt, Seilerstätte Nr. 804.

Gyannastasio, Fräul. Fanny —

Heger, Fräul. Rosa (Fortepiano), wohnt in der Stadt, vordere Schenkenstraße Nr. 58.

Herl, Fräul. Therese von —

Hochenadl, Fräul. Katharina, wohnt in der Stadt, Bürgerspital Nr. 1100, 5ten Hof, 10te Stiege, 3ten Stock.

Hofstätter, Fräul. Cäcilia. —

Jans, Fräul. Fanny, wohnt auf der Wieden, Heugasse Nr. 109.

Jaus, Fräul. Nannette, wohnt auf der Wieden, Heugasse Nr. 109.

Kriegseisen, Frau Antonia v., wohnt auf der Landstraße am Glacis Nr. 423.

Langer, Fräul. Theresia Maria, wohnt in der Josephstadt, lange Gasse Nr. 66.

Linhart, Fräul. Sophie, wohnt in der Stadt, Judengasse Nr. 459.

Luß, Fräul. Regina v., wohnt in der Stadt, Wollzeil Nr. 789, nächst dem Stubenthor.

Mayer, Fräul. Josephine, wohnt in der Stadt, Wollzeile Nr. 858.

Milani, Fräul. Josephine.

Minetti, Fräul. Therese, wohnt in der Stadt, Judengasse Nr. 504.

tions, musical works, and buildings to authority control files has a beneficial accumulation effect in the wide world of online historical data: multiple individuals with various research needs—from music archivists puzzling over names on title pages, to performing musicians in search of repertoire, to Wiki editors trying to distinguish one Carl Demmer from another—not only are served by these small, reliable data points, but are able to contribute to the web of knowledge in their own way. When a person, work, institution, or building does not have a GND entry already, as is the case for at least half of the items in our database, our team creates one.

One of the main aspirations of our database is to not only list soloists or the most famous individuals, but also to include every member of the orchestra and choir, allowing for a comprehensive record of the musicians involved in each concert. In the dense network-oriented constellations of musicians in Vienna, even seemingly insignificant ensemble members may appear repeatedly in various performances, often in different capacities. This interconnectedness is one of the strengths of a relational database linked to the broader world of data, enhancing its value as a resource for scholars. The research potential here is vast, especially when considering individuals who, though less prominent in or even entirely absent from traditional narrative histories of music in Vienna, played significant roles in the city's cultural fabric. This approach is especially promising for the study of individuals who have traditionally been omitted from the "Great Man" histories: not only women, whose many kinds of contributions to concert culture can be easy to overlook in primary sources, but also migrants, whose names were frequently spelled in so many different ways that their identities remain frayed and their achievements undervalued. One example of an important individual who represents both marginalized groups is the soprano Sophie Linhart. Born in Ljubljana in 1788, Linhart is typically only mentioned briefly in music-historical texts, and only in connection with a canonical composer and work: she sang many early performances of Schubert's Lieder, including the first known outing of *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (D 118) in March 1821 in the house concerts of Ignaz von Sonnleithner.[24] Yet her prominence on Viennese stages is only obvious when one widens the lens beyond the "famous firsts" of concert history; Linhart was a fixture on the scene between 1817 and 1827, appearing in multiple concerts per season

24 Marko Motnik, "'Weilet die Muse mit dir, ihrem Liebling'. Die Freundschaft zwischen der Sängerin Sophie Linhart und Anselm Hüttenbrenner," in *Drehscheibe Graz: musikkulturelle Verbindungen im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Ingeborg Harer (Graz: Leykam, 2022), 61–74.

and even organizing her own *Akademie* on November 20, 1825.[25] Her inclusion in the database required the creation of a GND entry, thus creating her first digital identity.

One of the future goals of this project includes further development of the spatial aspect of our research by creating a heat map that would allow users to search for a specific individual in the database and immediately visualize all the venues where that person performed. Other future goals include the programming of house numbers and, an important goal only possible after this basis is completed, the ability for users of the database to create their own layers based on the mapping of other pertinent information, such as publishing houses, instrument builders, or musician's residences. By combining biographical data with geographical information, we aim to offer a more dynamic and multifaceted view of Viennese concert life, enabling potentially thousands of microhistories.

Mapping Vienna's concert life of this period, especially on the foundation of biographical research, can potentially uncover connections that would be otherwise invisible in more narrative-based histories. One example among many is the building known as the *Gundelhof*. This was a music-rich residential building, where not only the Sonnleithner family lived and held concerts—which they called "Musikalische Übungen"—but also Otto Hatwig, a concertmaster whose private orchestral society played premieres of Schubert's *Overture in the Italian Style* as well as the Fifth and Sixth symphonies in his apartment.[26] Vinzenz Neuling, the owner of the building, was a brewer, innkeeper, and occasional composer who held salons in his apartment and concerts at a brewery he purchased in the Viennese suburb of Landstraße. Neuling's social memberships may have been the decisive factor behind another prominent resident: the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, which took up offices in the building between 1820 and 1822, transforming a ten-room apartment into a set of offices, instructional space (in their role as administrators of Vienna's only conservatory) and concert venue.[27]

25 Program handbill in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, available online at Musikverein, accessed July 27, 2026, https://www.musikverein.at/konzert/?id=0005dcdb.

26 See Leopold von Sonnleithner, "Musikalische Skizze aus Alt-Wien," *Rezensionen und Mittheilungen über Theater, Musik und bildende Kunst* 8 (1862). These valuable vignettes on private concerts were serialized between March 1862 and May 1863; the one on the Sonnleithner family (actually authored by Wilhelm Böcking) appeared on June 15, 1862 (369–75), and the one on Hatwig on March 23, 1862 (178–9).

27 Anna Schirlbauer, "Visionen und Wirklichkeit. Zu den Wirkungsstätten der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien in den ersten Jahren ihres Bestehens," in *Musikfreunde:*

Immediately upon seeing the spatial visualization of often-discussed performances, further interesting questions come to the fore. Why were certain locations chosen over others? What factors influenced these decisions? While one might initially think the choice of venue was a simple matter of availability and/or seating capacity, a deeper look reveals the complexity of the matter. One well-documented case is the two Beethoven *Akademie* concerts held in May 1824, which featured the premieres of (famously) the Ninth Symphony and (less famously) movements of his *Missa solemnis*. Although the program for each of the concerts was similar, the performances took place at two different venues, the *Kärntnertortheater* and the *Großer Redoutensaal*. As Theodore Albrecht's research on the Beethoven conversation books has uncovered, choosing a venue was a complex matter with multiple interlocking considerations that occupied the composer's inner circle for many weeks.[28] The choice of the large *Kärntnertortheater* for the first concert on May 7 brought with it a requirement to use the house orchestra and chorus, which in the opinion of several interlocutors was sub-standard. Extra players were hired, and other instrumentalists and choristers were provided by the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. Given the substantial outlay for orchestra, extra players, and the refusal of the theater's manager to allow Beethoven to charge a higher ticket price, the financial returns were disappointing, leading him to plan a repeat concert two weeks later. Since the theater was unavailable by then, the prestigious *Großer Redoutensaal* was settled upon. Discussions centered around the difficulty in filling such a large hall for a repeat performance, so three Italian singers from the court opera were brought on board, whose repertoire was a mix of their own popular arias (especially by Rossini) and Beethoven's earlier music with Italian texts. These famous *Akademie* concerts provide a stark reminder that the interaction between space, organizers, performers, and repertoire was a constantly shifting equilibrium that needed to be navigated with finesse. They also invite music historians to peek behind the curtain of less well-researched concerts, venues, individuals, and repertoires to consider the broader historical, institutional, and sociocultural contexts that shaped the music scene.

In summary, the use of a relational database connected to linked data offers immense potential for historical music research. By cataloguing both prominent and lesser-known musicians, venues, and events, we can uncover new insights into the sociocultural and institutional forces that shaped the music

Träger der Musikkultur in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts, ed. Ingrid Fuchs (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2017), 29–46.

28 Albrecht, *Beethoven's Ninth*.

scene in early-nineteenth-century Vienna. As we continue to expand and refine this resource, the integration of spatial data and biographical information will allow for more dynamic and thorough investigations into the rich history of Viennese concert life.

The mapping of Viennese concert life around 1800 thus becomes more than a backdrop. It provides material for new research questions—who and where were the cultural actors within a given community? How did proximity shape collaboration? What can spatial patterns reveal about access, exclusion, or influence? Our interdisciplinary work on the *Concert Life* project has allowed us to explore these and other related questions from two separate perspectives, and in so doing points the way to how cartographers and musicologists can work together more generally.

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Every place tells a story, and every story is woven from connections between people, communities, culture, and nature. This belief is at the heart of **Nicole Yeung**'s work as a Cartographer. With a Master's in Cartography and a background in Ecological Conservation, Nicole translates and transforms complex data into meaningful, engaging narratives that inform and inspire conservation actions. Nicole believes that geospatial technology and effective cartography extend far beyond map-making. A map is a powerful medium for storytelling, understanding, and relations-building. Her approach to cartography combines technical expertise and thoughtful designs while sharing stories and insights to inspire action and foster collaboration. Previously a geospatial technician at Parks Canada and now a geospatial system engineer at WWF Germany, Nicole continues to partner and collaborate with researchers, organizations, and communities to tell stories of our connections with nature, and with each other. Whether it is optimizing geospatial workflows, designing cartographic narratives, or transforming earth observation into solutions, Nicole connects science, art, and technology to support data-driven decisions, empowering individuals and communities to build a resilient future together.

COMMUNICATIONS

Urban Musical Life in Post-Unification Italy: The MML Project

Mila De Santis

Funded as a Project of National Interest by the Italian Ministry of University and Research (PRIN 2017), the project Mapping Musical Life: Urban Culture and the Local Press in Post-Unification Italy (MML) had as its main objective the analysis of different aspects of musical life in some major Italian cities (Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome, Naples, and Palermo) between 1866 (the Third War of Independence) and 1882 (the signing of the Triple Alliance), through the visualization of data on interactive maps.[1]

After the unification of Italy, cities underwent a process of modernization and rethinking of public spaces. The reconfiguration of urban space also had significant repercussions on musical life, leading to new modes of production and enjoyment. From a general perspective, we can thus observe, on the one hand, the emergence of a new social geography of theaters, reflected in the inauguration of new venues, and on the other, a diversification of artistic offerings aimed at satisfying the tastes of a wider and more heterogeneous audience, whose needs therefore differed significantly from those of the past.

The musical life of this period also involved new spaces and new realities: the number of concert halls increased, and there were numerous private salons, music shops and even cafés hosting soloists and small orchestras. Finally, we should mention the open-air spaces: parks, squares, and gardens, rich in musical events of various kinds.[2]

1 The project involved four research units: the University of Florence, the University of Milan, Sapienza University of Rome, and the University of Palermo. The Florence unit, coordinated by Mila De Santis (Principal Investigator of the project), included the continuous involvement of Antonella D'Ovidio, Renzo Guardenti, Elena Oliva, and the geographer Camillo Berti. The Milan unit, under the coordination of Emilio Sala, comprised Davide Daolmi, Bianca De Mario, and Carlo Lanfossi. Andrea Chegai led the Rome unit, which included Alessandro Maras, while the Palermo unit was coordinated by Anna Tedesco, with Lucio Tufano as a member.

2 For a more detailed, though concise, account of the changes in the socio-urban struc-

Sound Stage Screen, Vol. 5, Issue 1–2 (Spring–Fall 2025), pp. 213–228, ISSN 2784-8949. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. © 2026 Mila De Santis. DOI: 10.54103/sss32533

The methodological premise of the project was the need to identify a new analytical perspective, capable of establishing a dialogue between the study of urban configuration and the examination of the social fabric and musical life in each of the cities considered. While historiography has traditionally focused primarily on individual works, authors, specific repertoires, and musical institutions (theaters, concert societies, educational institutions, publishing houses, etc.), MML sought to develop a different model of integrated research that, by adopting a comparative urban studies perspective, would focus on the crucial relationship between musical life and the city. MML stands at the confluence of several recent trends in musicology—including urban musicology and sound studies—that have emerged from the so-called spatial turn, the paradigm that has affected the entire field of social sciences and humanities over the last twenty years. While the spatial turn has reconfigured the role of spatiality within historical processes, emphasizing a threefold dialectic between the temporal, spatial, and social dimensions, in the field of musicology this has led to new lines of research exploring the relationship between music and the city. In this regard, the studies by Strohm, Johnson, Scott, and Sala[3] have been paradigmatic; more recent examples include the edited collections *Hearing the City in Early Modern Europe*, *Music, Place, and Identity in Italian Urban Soundscapes, c. 1550–1860*, and *Geographies of Sound: Sounding and Listening to the Urban Space of Early Modern Italy with a Contemporary Perspective*.[4] In these works, the urban context, its musical life, and its soundscape have not merely provided the backdrop against which composers and their works were set, but have themselves become central actors in the spatialization of history and the historicization of urban spaces.

ture and musical life of each of the cities examined by the MML research program, readers are referred to the descriptive texts accompanying the interactive maps on the project website, which are discussed in greater analytical detail below.

3 Reinhard Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Derek B. Scott, *Sounds of the Metropolis: The 19th-Century Popular Music Revolution in London, New York, Paris, and Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Emilio Sala, *The Sounds of Paris in Verdi's La traviata* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

4 Tess Knighton and Ascensión Mazuela-Anguita eds., *Hearing the City in Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018); Simone Caputo, Franco Piperno, and Emanuele Senici eds., *Music, Place, and Identity in Italian Urban Soundscapes circa 1550–1860* (New York: Routledge, 2023); Luigi Collarile and Maria Rosa De Luca eds., *Geographies of Sound: Sounding and Listening to the Urban Space of Early Modern Italy with a Contemporary Perspective* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023).

Within the methodological framework outlined above, periodicals—specifically daily newspapers—have been the primary source of documentation for understanding the relationship between musical life and urban space, and the reciprocal redefinition of the two. This corresponds to a broader shift currently underway in the study of nineteenth-century music reviews and criticism. In this perspective, in fact, the attention of scholars "is moving steadily from the bare content of what is written—the opinions expressed—to its manner of expression and to a more nuanced concern with the standpoint of its often lowly authors."[5] Katharine Ellis refers here in particular to "those contributions … that focus on rhetorics of criticism and on the personas that different critics adopted as they approached evaluation of the new, the traditional, the novel and the routine."[6] These considerations can be usefully linked to the position of Emanuele Senici, who sees the local periodical press as a tool of primary importance for studying the "discursive" developments and transformations of various musical phenomena:

> More often than not, the periodical press has been used as a means to investigate the reception of a specific work or a genre in a given city: only rarely have the potential connections between some specific features of a work or genre and some specific characteristics of an urban environment as addressed in the periodical press received direct and explicit attention.[7]

Senici takes up and applies to the musical sphere the reflections on the relationship between journalistic discourse and urban space that Nick Hayes had developed from a historical perspective:

> Beyond the walkable city, [the press] was the primary means through which urbanites understood and communicated with each other in the sense that they could think about the same things at the same time, presenting the opportunity for a common vision of social reality. It was also a purveyor of the dominant urban narrative.[8]

5 Katharine Ellis, "Opera Criticism and the Paris Periodical Press," *Revue belge de musicologie* 66 (2012): 127.

6 Ellis, 127.

7 Emanuele Senici, "Delirious Hopes: Napoleonic Milan and the Rise of Modern Italian Operatic Criticism," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 27, no. 2 (2015): 99.

8 Nick Hayes, "The 'Local Rag' and Urban Histories," paper delivered at the conference *Mediapolis: Media Practices and the Political Spaces of Cities*, Open University, Milton Keynes, June 9–10, 2008, quoted in Senici, "Delirious Hopes," 103.

Newspapers and periodicals provide a privileged vantage point from which to reconstruct the articulation of a city's musical life in a comprehensive manner, identify places and reconstruct musical spaces, modes of musical consumption, the principal aesthetic orientations of critics and audiences, and the discourse on musical identity as articulated in different urban contexts in relation to national and transnational dimensions.

MML was developed by examining some of the most widely read newspapers of the time and by systematically cataloging all news items of musical interest relating to the period in question. A small portion of this material was already available, whereas most of it was entered into the ArtMus database[9] for the first time and subsequently displayed on interactive historical maps using georeferencing (GIS) technologies, as discussed below. The ArtMus database was conceived primarily to "provide scholars with data for investigating Italian music criticism, which emerged and flourished during the nineteenth century, frequently taking shape through newspaper contributions by highly authoritative authors."[10] It also aimed to "reconstruct the everyday life of the repertoire and the practices surrounding the production and consumption of music, both in highly institutionalized contexts—such as theatrical seasons and concert series—and as expressions of specific social and cultural milieus, linked to festivals, ceremonies, and public events." The collection thus covers the widest variety of source types, including music criticism articles, reports, news items, announcements, *tamburini* (daily newspaper listings of performances in local theaters and cinemas, as well as cultural events), and advertisements. As will be explained further below, the perspective adopted by MML required substantial filtering and processing of the data drawn from ArtMus.

9 The database *ArtMus – Musical Articles in Nineteenth-Century Italian Newspapers* was established with funding from the Italian Ministry of University and Scientific Research within the framework of the *Progetti di Rilevante Interesse Nazionale* (PRIN). During the first three-year phase (PRIN 2009), the research was coordinated nationally by Adriana Guarnieri (University of Venice) and involved the universities of Venice, Florence, and Cagliari; in the subsequent three-year phase (PRIN 2012), it was coordinated by Mila De Santis (University of Florence) and included the universities of Florence, Venice, Cagliari, and Turin. ArtMus brings together the results of the systematic survey of music-related articles published in several local Italian daily newspapers of the nineteenth century, along with their digital reproductions. Initially covering newspapers from Tuscany, Veneto, and Sardinia, the corpus was later expanded to include several Piedmontese titles; within the framework of the MML project, it was further extended to include newspapers published in Milan, Bologna, Rome, Naples, and Palermo for the period under consideration.

10 *ArtMus*, accessed July 26, 2026. https://www.artmus.it/public/.

Among the newspapers considered, those most representative of the city's musical culture were selected. In Milan, these included *Il pungolo*, edited by Leone Fortis with contributions from Arrigo Boito, Emilio Praga, and Iginio U. Tarchetti, and *La perseveranza*, which featured national and international correspondence, including musical criticism by Filippo Filippi. In Florence, attention focused on *La nazione* and *La gazzetta d'Italia*, the latter enriched for several years by Girolamo Alessandro Biaggi writing under the pseudonym Ippolito D'Albano. ArtMus had already incorporated data from other contemporary Florentine papers, including *L'opinione*, *La nazione*, *L'opinione nazionale*, *La riforma*, and *La gazzetta d'Italia*. In Bologna, the main source was *Il monitore di Bologna*, the city's leading newspaper and the most detailed in its coverage of musical activity. Rome, with its vibrant publishing scene throughout the nineteenth century, was represented by general news outlets such as *L'osservatore romano* and *Il giornale di Roma*, as well as music-focused publications including *L'eptacordo* and, after the Unification, *L'opinione*, *Il fanfulla*, and *Il diritto*. For Palermo, the unit turned to two major newspapers active in the former capitals of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies: *Il corriere del mattino*, edited by Edoardo Scarfoglio, and *Il giornale di Sicilia*, founded in 1860 by the liberal Girolamo Ardizzone and still published today.

Interest in the spatial dimension and in the cartographic representation of historical data, supported by specialized georeferencing software, has led to the development of so-called Historical GIS: interdisciplinary research initiatives that integrate methods and technologies from geographical sciences—such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS)—with historical sources in order to highlight the role of spatial contexts in understanding historical dynamics.[11] The map can thus become a genuine tool for understanding not only the physical layout of a space, but also how it is perceived and enacted. In other words, it can reveal what Henri Lefebvre called *lived space*,[12] later described by Edward Soja as the *third space*, highlighting the importance of social and cultural processes in its formation.[13]

11 Cf. *Historical GIS. Strumenti digitali per la geografia storica in Italia*, ed. by Massimiliano Grava, Camillo Berti, Nicola Gabellieri, and Arturo Gallia (Trieste: EUT, 2020), XX. On Historical GIS see also Ian N. Gregory and Paul S. Ell, *Historical GIS: Technologies, Methodologies, and Scholarship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Ian N. Gregory and Alistair Geddes eds., *Toward Spatial Humanities: Historical GIS and Spatial History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

12 Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace* (Paris: Anthropos, 1974).

13 Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

In musicological research, the application of GIS and the development of georeferenced databases represent a growing field, which, until now, has yielded significant results primarily outside Italy.[14] Within this framework, MML has sought to employ GIS as a methodological tool to enhance and exploit maps for the study of musical life in selected major Italian cities at specific historical moments. Maps, in this context, enable the visualization of particular phenomena and patterns, such as performances in dedicated indoor venues versus open-air spaces, activities in historic theaters compared to smaller or newly established ones, regular concert and theater seasons versus exceptional events, and the spatial distribution of musical sites in relation to urban centers, peripheral areas, or emerging neighborhoods. By providing such detailed spatial perspectives, GIS facilitates a nuanced understanding of the interplay between musical activity and urban development.

Featuring extensive descriptive texts complemented by images—including posters, flyers, historical maps, librettos, handwritten and printed scores, and newspaper articles—the MML portal fulfills a dual role. It functions both as a geodatabase and as a digital platform for content related to musical mapping, providing an integrated environment for the exploration, analysis, and visualization of historical musical practices.[15]

Users can explore data on musical life in Italian cities of the late nineteenth century through two complementary approaches. The first is a dynamic map-based query system, structured around multiple search keys

14 See, for example, *Musical Geography*, directed by Louis Epstein at St. Olaf College, which reconstructs—through a series of interactive maps—the development of musical styles and practices, as well as production contexts and patterns of reception across different geographical areas. Also noteworthy is the interuniversity project *Carmen Abroad* (Cardiff University and the Royal College of Music, coordinated by Clair Rowden and Richard Langham Smith), which visualizes on a global map data relating to performances of Bizet's opera over the period 1875–1945. Another example is *Paisajes Sonoros Históricos (c.1200–c.1800)*, curated by Juan Ruiz Jiménez and Ignacio José Lizarán Rus, which uses historical cartography to reconstruct the musical spaces of several Spanish cities across different historical periods. The first portal relies primarily on Digital Storytelling technologies, such as ESRI's Story Maps—web applications that combine interactive maps with other forms of multimedia content, including texts, images, music, and video. The other two projects are structured as geodatabases that users can explore and query through interactive maps.

15 A presentation video for the project, which introduces users to the portal's objectives and features, was produced in collaboration with the Multimedia Laboratory at the University of Florence and is also accessible directly through the MML portal: *MML – Mapping Musical Life*, YouTube, October 28, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9UuyJMOyIho.

and functioning as a cartographic search engine. The second consists of curated pathways, designed according to digital mapping principles, which guide users through selected historical and spatial perspectives. The MML portal is organized into three main sections. The first, *Urban Maps*, corresponds to the first approach, as it provides access to the cartographic search engines for the cities included in the project.[16] The second approach is addressed by the portal's other two sections, *Itineraries* and *Stories*, which will be discussed in more detail below.

The backbone of the project is, of course, the cartographic search engine, accessible through the *Urban Maps* section. The development of the engine and the research methodology it enables first required a "refactoring" of the ArtMus database. Originally designed with largely different assumptions and objectives, focusing primarily on the presence of music in the daily press, the database was partially modified to better store and deliver geographic data related to events for map visualization and to prepare REST endpoints for portal queries.[17]

The vast amount of data entered into the ArtMus database was subsequently optimized within a GIS environment and directed toward the MML map through the development of a series of procedures designed to link the two databases (APIs). In collaboration with the Laboratory of Applied Geography (LabGeo) at the University of Florence, an extensive research effort was carried out, based on historical and archival sources, followed by a meticulous georeferencing process. This latter phase required careful analysis of historical documents—including maps, municipal registers, toponymic lists, city guides, and private correspondence—to extract the geographic coordinates of musical sites (theaters, concert halls, cafés,

16 Currently, Milan, Florence, and Rome are available.

17 The work included the following operations: expanding the database (and its web back-end) to accommodate georeferenced data on event venues, participants, and works performed; collecting place names for the cities under study; lemmatizing venues, events, and works; and developing a REST API to enable MML to query the ArtMus database in real time for three types of requests: (a) retrieving entries for option menus (cities, event types, object types, location types, venues, people, addresses, objects); (b) executing queries to search for events and, secondarily, participants; and (c) retrieving full information on a selected event. At the same time, the MML website was built using WordPress CMS (https://www.mml-project.it/index.html); a custom post template was developed for generating dynamic pages and entering data; data retrieval in MySQL was initiated; historical maps were georeferenced within a GIS environment; and a Leaflet-based mapping engine was implemented, allowing both the georeferenced visualization of musical event venues and the publication of historical cartography.

and other spaces of musical production and consumption) that either no longer exist today or are associated with a different address. These activities were accompanied by the creation of detailed records for each site, including information such as the historical and current addresses, the type of venue, and GPS coordinates.[18]

Drawing on the data adapted from the ArtMus database, the cartographic search engine allows users to visualize, on each city map, both the sites associated with musical production, together with the events that took place there, and venues not associated with specific performance events, such as music shops, educational institutions, publishers, and the like.

The MML search engine features full-page navigation with an expansive, full-screen map (Fig. 1). On the left side of the interface is a list of filters, while a timeline at the bottom allows users to select the chronological interval of interest using two sliders (From – To). Results are displayed on the map as markers, or pins, positioned on the sites associated with events recorded in the database. Each pin is equipped with a numerical counter (marker cluster) indicating the number of musical events linked to that specific location. Clicking on a pin opens a panel on the right side of the browser, providing access to two channels of information: one offers data about the site itself, and the other lists the musical events that took place there. In this section, events are presented in a concise format, specifying only their type (civil ceremony, religious ceremony, public concert, private concert, impromptu performance, dance party, equestrian show, theatrical performance, etc.) and date. More detailed information—such as the music performed, its composers, the performers involved, and links to newspaper article records in the ArtMus database—can be accessed by clicking on each individual result. The search interface integrated within the mapping engine is structured into three primary sections:

18 In close collaboration and synergy among all operational units, IT specialist Luigi Tessarolo (for the ArtMus database), the Laboratory of Applied Geography (LabGeo, represented by Dr. Camillo Berti), and the Laboratory of Cultural Heritage (LIEC, represented by Dr. Vincenzo Bologna) at the University of Florence, the team optimized ArtMus data within a GIS environment. A key step was the creation of a new "Places" record for georeferencing musical events and sites of musical production and consumption, with additional data fields (Venue, Municipality, Historical Municipality, Toponym, Street Number, Historical Address, Type of Location, Notes), enabling each location to be associated with geographic coordinates. Data optimization in preparation for transfer to the MML portal also included the development of new applications, notably the "Event Union" tool, which merged all ArtMus records pertaining to the same event. Collaboration with the IT company AND (Ambienti Narrativi Digitali), specialized in cultural heritage IT, then led to the creation of the MML portal website.

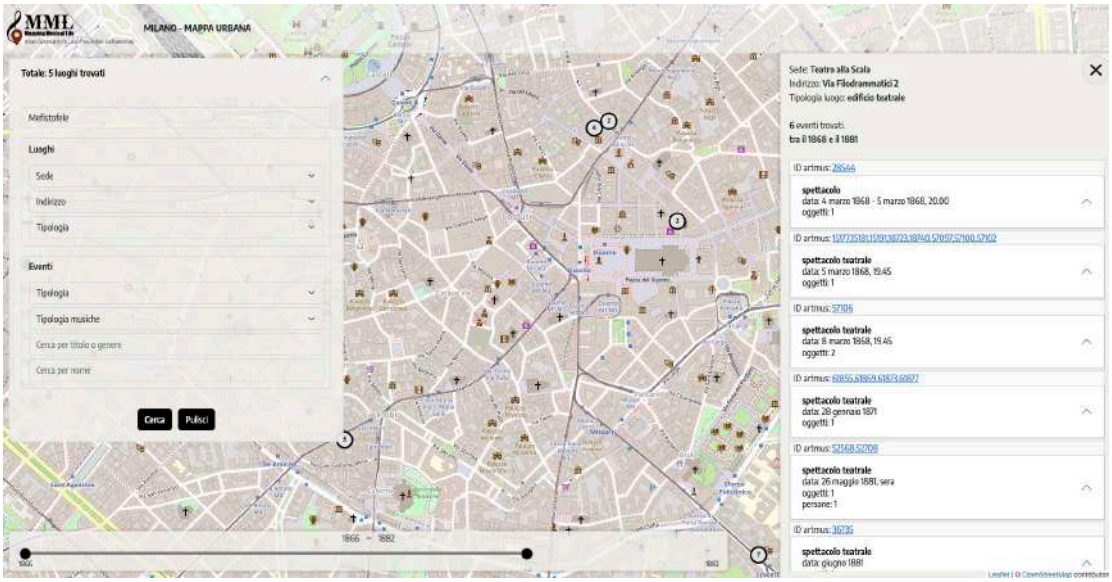

Fig. 1 – Example of a search on the Milan map.

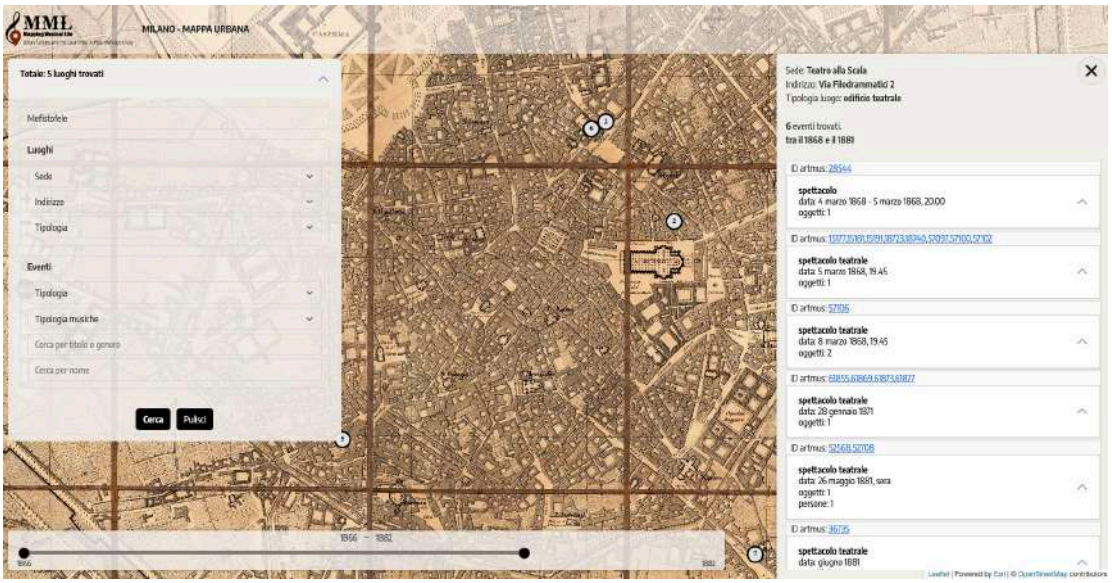

Fig. 2 – The same search displayed on a historical map.

1. *Free Search*, which facilitates comprehensive full-text queries;
2. *Places*, encompassing specific search fields such as Location, Address, and Type (e.g., private residence, theater building, music publisher, commercial establishment, institution, musical institution, place of worship, music store, concert hall, private salon, open space, ephemeral structure);
3. *Events*, which consolidates search parameters including Event Type, Musical Genres, and the ability to search by Title, Genre, or Performer/Organizer Name.

The interactive map additionally provides the option to select among multiple cartographic layers. These comprise historical maps, each covering approximately a five-year interval, which are overlaid atop the base maps to facilitate temporal and spatial analysis (Fig. 2).[19]

The advantages of this querying methodology are readily apparent and may be summarized as a substantial expansion—both in scope and in depth—of the historian's field of vision. It enables the immediate identification of the locations in which musical events occurred, situating them within the specific urban contexts of Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century and in relation to the major transformations these cities underwent during the period under consideration. At the same time, the system allows for the instantaneous visualization of the number, type, and spatio-temporal distribution of these events. Furthermore, the system links back to the source (the ArtMus record), making the newspaper page from which the information was derived immediately accessible.

It is worth reiterating that the sources employed prove particularly well suited to capturing the complexity of musical life in the cities under examination, making it possible to approach it from a multifaceted and multi-perspectival vantage point—one that marks a clear departure from the traditional perspective of music history. The focus is neither on so-called "music itself," nor solely on the systems of production associated with "high" musical repertories performed in opera houses, concert halls, and institutions of musical training. Rather, daily newspapers document an extraordinarily wide range of events connected with music—and, more broadly, with *the sounds of the city*—as well as the venues in which they

19 At present, five historical maps have been identified and georeferenced for Milan (1860, 1870, 1875, 1881, 1884), five for Florence (1855, 1867, 1876, 1880, 1890), and four for Rome (1862, 1866, 1881, 1891), and are available for querying within the platform.

took place. The field of observation thus broadens to encompass a wide spectrum of urban sonic expressions, ranging from the most familiar and everyday soundscapes to those associated with specific festivities or historical circumstances. Restricting ourselves to a few significant examples, one might recall, in the Milanese context, the songs and short musical-dramatic pieces featured in the year-end performances of several infant schools, as well as the boisterous late-night singing of a group of boys in Via Santa Margherita, described as "belting out songs that were not always decent" ("a squarciagola canzoni non sempre decenti," November 25, 1868). Also noteworthy is the singing of "popular hymns" during a procession from the Duomo to the Cimitero Monumentale, organized by a group of citizens to honor the memory of Carlo Cattaneo (June 13, 1869). Historical maps of Florence also make it possible to trace the frequent performances of the National Guard band, which primarily performed in the Piazzale degli Uffizi, as well as the exclusive balls organized by the House of Savoy at Palazzo Pitti and the small concerts given by the Strauss Trio at the Birreria Monaco in Borgo SS. Apostoli. In Rome, *L'opinione* of October 9, 1871 also records the long-standing popular custom of the *scampanacciata*, a "barbarous serenade" performed in the dead of night beneath the windows of an elderly couple who had recently married, using "tin buckets, pans, bells, iron plates, and whatever else comes to hand … to create the greatest possible racket" ("secchi di latta, padelle, campanacci, lastre di ferro e tutto ciò che capita alle mani … per cagionare il più gran frastuono possibile"). Meanwhile, the issue of June 25, 1873 describes the lively soundscape of Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano on the eve of the Feast of St. John.

By integrating map-based data with newspaper accounts, researchers can transform otherwise neutral locations into spaces that are actively inhabited and experienced, while also examining how journalists and critics document and interpret the musical life of cities. The website's section *Itineraries* is designed to provide readers with concise, thematically focused pathways for exploration, grounded in digital mapping. Combining texts, images, and maps, these virtual journeys highlight key figures, institutions, locations, and practices of post-unification musical life at both local and national levels.

Yet a critical issue quickly emerges. The daily press captures only a portion—albeit a substantial and largely significant one—of a city's musical life. While the information it provides is by no means confined to the public and "official" spheres of music production and reception, many events in the private sphere may nonetheless escape this type of source. This is par-

ticularly true for the widespread nineteenth-century practice of *salon music*, encompassing solo instrumental and vocal recitals, chamber concerts, student performances, and dance entertainments.[20] Nor is the presence of music always recorded when it belongs to the everyday sphere and does not constitute a clearly defined "event," as in the case of music in cafés and city parks or spontaneous performances in streets and squares. In such instances, newspaper coverage typically occurs only in response to "excesses" that require intervention by public authorities.

A valuable complement to research aimed not only at gathering the largest possible amount of data on the urban "sonic sphere," but also at reconstructing its impact on individual listeners or on specific audiences and social classes, can be found in the examination of correspondence, diaries, memoirs, registers, family archives, literary sources, journals, and similar materials. The MML portal also provides the means to present the results of this type of investigation. The third section, *Stories*, presents in-depth explorations of specific aspects of urban musical life, "narrated" through the use of Story Maps (Esri). Some Stories are already available. *Musical Societies and Concerts during the Years of Florence as Capital*, for instance, examines the activities of the numerous associations devoted to the dissemination and cultivation of musical culture in the Tuscan capital, connecting key figures (founders, directors, performers), the music performed, and the significance of particular choices to the locations where the performances took place.[21] Similarly, *Music from Around the World in Rome, 1866* reconstructs the diverse range of musical performances taking place across the city—at the time not yet the capital of Italy—reflecting the presence of various foreign communities.[22]

The author of *El Barchètt de Boffalora. Milanese Theater and Vaudeville in Post-Unification Milan* retraces the trajectory of the once highly popular—but now largely forgotten—four-act dialect vaudeville by Cletto Ar-

20 On musical life in nineteenth-century Italian salons, see in particular Maria Iolanda Palazzolo, *I salotti di cultura nell'Italia dell'Ottocento. Scene e modelli* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 1985); Carlida Steffan, *Cantar per salotti. La musica vocale italiana da camera (1800–1850). Testi, contesti, consumo* (Pisa: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, 2007); *Firenze in salotto. Intrecci culturali dai riti aristocratici del Settecento ai luoghi della sociabilità moderna*, ed. by Francesca Fiorelli Malesci and Giulia Coco (Florence: Consiglio regionale della Toscana, 2017).

21 Giacomo Berlingozzi, *Società musicali e concerti negli anni di Firenze Capitale*, *MML – Mapping Musical Life*, accessed July 26, 2026, https://www.mml-project.it/Storie_1.html.

22 Alessandro Maras, *Musiche dal mondo nella Roma del 1866*, *MML – Mapping Musical Life*, accessed July 26, 2026, https://www.mml-project.it/Storie_2.html.

righi. Although very little of the music, composed by various authors, has survived, the text offers a privileged perspective on post-unification Milan, revealing locations and events that would otherwise have remained in obscurity, having escaped coverage by the press. The places mentioned are georeferenced and can be explored on an interactive map, and some of the surviving stage music is available for listening in a piano adaptation.[23]

Other Stories are currently in development: *The Spaces of Music at the Michelangelo Festivals in Florence (September 1875)* and *Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Florence* (Florence as seen, inhabited, and perceived by Tchaikovsky during his numerous stays in the city, traces of which remain in his diaries and in the many letters he sent to his brothers and to Nadežda von Meck).

In conclusion, it can be observed that, despite its fundamentally scientific character, MML also makes a significant contribution to what is often called Public History. The portal makes knowledge of the region's cultural history readily accessible to a non-specialist audience, potentially engaging those interested in rethinking urban space through an integrated lens that combines musical, cultural, socio-economic, urban-architectural, geographical, and local-historical perspectives.[24]

23 Paolo Cobetto Ghiggia, *"El Barchètt de Boffalora." Il Teatro milanese e il vaudeville nella Milano postunitaria*, *MML – Mapping Musical Life*, accessed July 26, 2026, https://www.mml-project.it/Storie_3.html.

24 On this topic see Mila De Santis and Elena Oliva, *Mapping Musical Life (MML). Risvolti di Terza Missione in un progetto di ricostruzione della vita musicale urbana*, in *Musica, Terza Missione e valorizzazione delle conoscenze*, ed. Luca Aversano (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2024), 196–208.

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