

Abstracts: New Beethoven Research Conference
New Orleans, Oct. 31-Nov. 1, 2012

Wednesday morning, October 31, 9 – 12 noon

Bathia Churgin

Professor emerita, Bar-Ilan University, Israel
“Beethoven’s Handel and the Messiah Copies”

Joel Lester

Professor, Mannes College of Music
“What Beethoven might have learned from J.S. Bach”

Beethoven was the first major composer to have grown up knowing the music of J.S. Bach, playing *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (vol. 1 only?) before his teens. Haydn was largely unaware of Bach’s music, and Mozart was a “mature composer” when he encountered it. How might this early exposure have influenced Beethoven? Beyond his well-known use of counterpoint and fugue, I argue that Bach’s influence perhaps pervades three aspects of Beethoven’s music:

- 1) Vigorous Rhythmic Energy. Bach’s metric hierarchies often feature vibrant energy at all levels, including contra-metric groupings, as in the C-major Prelude’s figuration, where the pattern projects significant activity in half-notes, quarter-notes, eighth-notes, and a contra-metric 2+3+3 grouping of sixteenths. Beethoven frequently creates metric hierarchies with significant activity at several metric levels as well as contra-metric groupings: e.g., in the Fifth Symphony’s opening theme group (where the eighth-note pulse features contra-metric 1+3 and 1+2+1 – but never 2+2 – groupings) and at the “Ghost” Trio’s *ff* opening (where four-note scale-fragments begin off the beat in a displaced 2/4 metric that contradicts other factors supporting the notated 3/4). Such rhythmic/metric complexities, common in Beethoven, are different from active rhythms by Haydn and Mozart. Bach’s double fugues feature subjects with strikingly different rhythmic features (e.g., the C#-minor Fugue in *WTC I*). Beethoven uses strikingly different rhythmic profiles for different themes in sonata-form movements, so that, as in Bach’s music, musical interactions and cross-references occur because of rhythmic as well as melodic motives. In the Fifth Symphony, e.g., the first theme group completely lacks quarter notes, whereas quarter notes are ubiquitous in the second key area; then as the recapitulation begins, the new bassoon counterpoint’s quarter notes are a rhythmic reminder of the second theme. Again, this Bachian/Beethovenian feature is absent in music by Haydn and Mozart.
- 2) Reinterpreting Unaccompanied Opening Thematic Material. Bach’s fugue subjects are as famous for what they omit as for what they contain, allowing multiple interpretations as the piece unfolds. This is also true of many unaccompanied Beethoven openings: e.g., the Fifth Symphony’s opening motive lacks C (so that it can be heard in E^b upon the exposition’s literal repeat), and the opening motive of Beethoven’s first string quartet (strikingly similar in melodic profile to Bach’s C-minor Fugue’s subject) waits until m. 4 to announce its mode.

3) Heightening Rhetorical Processes Culminating at a Movement's End. Bach's fugues often end with a contrapuntal tour-de-force (e.g., the B^b-minor Fugue, where the concluding stretto's five voices replicate the exposition's entrances). Beethoven's codas often include an apotheosis of a theme or motive left incomplete earlier (e.g., the "Ghost" Trio's first movement coda that ends as the hitherto incomplete opening motive leads to a conclusive motion).

John David Wilson

independent scholar, Ph. D. Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna
"Of Hunting, Horns, and Heroes: A brief history of E-flat major before the *Eroica*"

Numerous writers on music in the 18th and 19th centuries elaborated upon the belief that each major or minor key was appropriate for the expression of a distinct affect or character, a sentiment that Beethoven appears to have concurred with. Just how this belief impressed itself on compositional practices, in specifically musical ways, is a more difficult question to answer. This is because the choice of key for a composition in Beethoven's era entailed several intertwining factors, both instrumental/acoustic and symbolic/traditional in nature. The analysis of musical topics (or *topoi*) provides a promising framework with which to study this issue, as particular *topoi* were frequently employed in vocal music in combination with certain keys. That these combinations of *topos* and key also frequently appeared in instrumental music shows that even without a text, composers held the same aesthetic attitude toward keys.

The key of E-flat major offers an interesting example of this complex interplay of instrumental and symbolic associations which were determinative of key character. As the principal tonality he chose for such epoch-making compositions as the *Eroica* symphony and the fifth piano concerto, E-flat (along with its relative C minor) is frequently mentioned in connection with Beethoven's "heroic" style. The association of heroism and *Tugend* with this key however neither began with Beethoven, nor was it purely invented by 19th-century audiences of his music. Rather it had its roots in the musical culture of German-speaking Europe in the late 18th century, clearly evident in opera and oratorio known to audiences throughout the area. Part of this tradition originated in hunting music and the natural horn whose sonority became metonymous with the hunt, an area of research which has recently been given authoritative treatment by Joseph Pöschl and Raymond Monelle. Yet this does not explain why E-flat major became the key of choice for heroic sentiments: contrary to received wisdom, Austro-German hunting horns were typically not pitched in this key until the very late 18th century, and orchestral horns had long been capable of playing in multiple keys. Through the lens of musical *topoi*, this paper takes a fresh look at the musical sources, including music-dramatic works known to Beethoven in his youth in Bonn, and traces their heroic symbolism into the realm of instrumental music.

Helmut Loos

Professor, Universität Leipzig

"Arnold Schmitz as a Beethoven Scholar: Achievement and Impact"

Wednesday afternoon, October 31, 2 – 6 pm

Bernhard Appel

Beethoven-Archiv, Bonn

“Model and Emulation: Beethoven and E. T. A. Hoffmann’s *Grand Trio*”

E. T. A. Hoffmann’s reviews of some of Beethoven’s outstanding compositions (5th Symphony op. 67, Trios for piano op. 70, Music to Egmont op. 84, Mass op. 86, Coriolanus Overture op. 62) are considered to be highlights within the history of musical criticism and of crucial importance as documents for the emancipation and autonomy of instrumental music. But Hoffmann’s advanced aesthetic viewpoints stand in contrast to his own instrumental compositions, which are regarded as conservative. Generally it is accepted that Hoffmann’s compositional ideals were J. Haydn and particularly Mozart. This lecture will show that Hoffmann’s *Grand Trio* in E major, composed in 1809, but not completely published until 1971, follows Beethoven in a surprising way.

Tamara Balter

independent scholar, Ph.D., Indiana University

“Parody of *Learned Style* in Beethoven’s Chamber Music”

Since Ratner’s studies on topics and their significance for the classical style (1980), accounts of the topic of *learned* or *strict style* have become common in literature. However, a specific variant of this topic, *parody of learned style*, has scarcely been discussed, with the exception of Grave’s study of Haydn’s string quartets (2006). Most writers (e.g., Ratner, Longyear, and Lowe) have only briefly touched upon this theme in their accounts of comic elements in some of Haydn’s and Beethoven’s fugal writing, focusing on genres or forms that are usually not associated with *learned* or *fugal style*. Raymond Monelle (2006) raises the possibility of tracing irony “when a topic appears in an uncharacteristic position,” noting that *learned style* typically appears in the middle. Indeed, when a movement *starts* with such a topic (e.g., fugal writing) but quickly moves to a contrasting topic, frustrating expectations for the main topic of the movement, irony, or parody may result. Similarly, when fugal writing is used in an uncharacteristic idiom (e.g., with a rustic dance as subject), , irony may stem from the incongruity between contrasting topics and associations.

Parody of highly contrapuntal writing in Haydn’s and Beethoven’s string quartets is sufficiently common to demand a detailed study. Whereas Haydn rarely employs “full-fledged” fugal procedures in string quartets written after Op. 20, when he does employ such procedures locally, they often serve an expressive function (e.g., as topics suffused with certain associations, such as learned style, sacred music, archaism, authority, etc.). Given the established role of contrapuntal procedures as markers of *learned style*, Haydn and Beethoven often introduce them only to be used as ground for comic or ironic manipulation. In his early quartets,

Beethoven often parodies fugal procedures, whereas later quartets reveal varied attitudes toward fugal writing, often departing from traditional ones. In what seems to be Beethoven's first satirical parody of contrapuntal procedures (String Quintet Op. 4), Haydn serves as the target. Although the parody of counterpoint became more frequent in Beethoven's quartets, he most likely emulated Haydn in this type of parody. Uncovering the irony embedded in Beethoven's music offers a glimpse into the artist's mind, setting aright what was previously often considered "bad" writing (e.g., A. B. Marx's dismissal of the finale of Op. 102/2), affording new insight and interpretation.

Steven Whiting

Professor, University of Michigan

"Finale finally, finely"

Unlike Beethoven's "unborn children" (as William Drabkin called them), the rejected finale of op. 30/1 was reborn, as the finale to op. 47, the concerto-sonata written posthaste in May 1803 for performance with the formidable virtuoso and "gran pazzo e compositore mulattico" George Bridgetower. Curiously, since Wilhelm Engelsmann's 1931 dissertation, no one seems to have examined the movement in its original context (a context in which Beethoven soon found the finale "too brilliant"). Not surprisingly, such examination reveals numerous motivic, harmonic, structural, and rhythmic connections with the first two movements of op. 30/1; the Presto definitely bears the imprint of its original surroundings. When Beethoven took the finale "off the shelf" one year later, he had to make two new movements that would (1) create a more convincing context for the virtuosic finale and (2) seem to grow toward and culminate in a movement already composed. Accordingly, those new movements (especially the first) bear the imprint of their ready-made finale, with some traits being traceable back to op. 30/1. The finale is, so to speak, the transmitter of structural "DNA" from a sonata at the threshold of Beethoven's "heroic" style to a sonata exemplifying that style. To unpack the resultant "layering of reversals" (Richard Kramer) entails remembering that what is staged in the finale to seem like a recollection of (or reflection upon) "issues" in preceding movements is actually, given the order of composition, their "cause." Much was at stake in Beethoven's endeavor, because his current symphonic project was the *Eroica*, for which the finale was essentially in place in the form of the Variations op. 35.

Michael Heinemann

Professor, Musikhochschule Carl Maria von Weber, Dresden

"Suspended Time: the Fugue in the Credo of the Missa Solemnis"

Michiko Theurer

Student, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Indiana University

"Playing with Time: The *Heiliger Dankgesang* and the Evolution of Narrative Liberation in Op. 132"

Joseph Kerman describes the sudden turn from A minor to A major that takes place in the coda of the finale of Op. 132 as a “dissolving conclusion” that conveys an impression of “liberation, even of play,” in its blithe rejection of the preceding A-minor narrative. But he adds that “the play seems genuinely earned or achieved,” raising the question of how an act defined by apparent spontaneity can be perceived as justified through the course of the very narrative from which it emerges. The central *Heiliger Dankgesang* movement provides one perspective from which to assess this question. Analysis of its structure and modal language suggests that the *Dankgesang* is both temporally isolated from the surrounding music and also an indirect center of meaning for the narrative from which it is detached. This calls to mind Kant’s idea of freedom originating in an agent that is independent of the causal bonds of extended time. Since the *Dankgesang*’s narrative discontinuity disrupts linear analysis of the quartet as a whole, study of sketches and related works provides a useful framework through which to trace the *Dankgesang*’s influence on surrounding material.

In particular, sketches extending back to the Ninth Symphony show a tight web of genetic connections between the *Heiliger Dankgesang*, Op. 132’s finale, and the symphony’s “Joy” theme and finale. These connections support a view of the “Joy” theme and the *Dankgesang*’s chorale as structurally and functionally inverted counterparts central to the narratives of their respective works. The conjunct turning motion essential to both themes drives many early sketches for the quartet’s finale. Connections between the third and fifth movements of Op. 132 extend through the *Autograph 11/2*, *De Roda*, and *Moscow* sketchbooks, surfacing in sketches for the transitional fugato section of the finale that accompany Beethoven’s decision to end the movement in A major. An analysis of the corresponding section in the finished composition suggests that the directional ambiguity of the *Dankgesang*’s modal language had a direct influence on the trajectory of the quartet’s ending. The synthesis of spontaneity from the nonlinear interaction of the *Dankgesang*’s modal aesthetic with the finale’s A-minor drive calls to mind Schiller’s ideal of the “play-drive” as a means of liberation from both formal idealism and causal necessity. Whereas the Ninth Symphony achieves D-major joy through outward confrontation with its narrative past, the quartet finds its A-major release through an inner transcendence of narrative time.

Thursday morning, November 1, 2012

Jens Dufner

Beethoven-Archiv, Bonn

“Beethoven and his Copyist: Written Dialogues”

Marie Rivers Rule

Independent Scholar, Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Tracking Trends in Beethoven’s Compositional Style: Manuscript Materials from Nottebohm’s *Nachlass*”

In 1870 Brahms wrote to publisher Reiter-Biedermann about the quality and significance of Gustav Nottebohm's work, "Are you aware that Nottebohm has some extremely thorough and significant works on Beethoven ready? ...you may be assured that they are products of immense diligence and that they are of the greatest interest to artist, expert, and connoisseur." Nottebohm's arduous research on Beethoven's sketch materials was championed by Brahms, who succeeded in facilitating the publication of Nottebohm's writings in book form. Reiter-Biedermann would indeed publish two books of Nottebohm's Beethoven studies in the 1870s, and his work remains a seminal source for the study of Beethoven's manuscripts.

Nottebohm's *Nachlass* at the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* in Vienna is rich in transcriptions and commentary on Beethoven's sketches. Much of this material was published in numerous articles in both the *Allgemeine Musikalisches Zeitung* and the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* in the 1860s and 70s, and subsequently in his books. However, some of these fascinating materials remain unpublished and are explored in my study.

Research on Nottebohm's *Nachlass* to date has been relatively scant. Aside from copious sketch transcriptions, Nottebohm's *Nachlass* preserves bundles of pages with his commentary and analysis of characteristics he regarded as significant in Beethoven's music. My paper presents findings from unpublished pages in Nottebohm's *Nachlass* where he carefully traces specific compositional techniques throughout Beethoven's oeuvre. One such page is devoted to *Zirkel-Ketten* (circle-chains) with notated chains of thirds, fifths, sixths and fourths appearing melodically and structurally. Another page features instances of enharmonic and abrupt modulations. I also provide an overview of the uncatalogued Beethoven materials in the *Nachlass*, many which await further study.

Nottebohm's identification and synthesis of these ideas shows the impressive depth of his engagement with Beethoven's music. His insightful identification of these compositional techniques offers a fresh perspective on Beethoven's compositional style and further facilitates comparison to works by later composers, most notably, Brahms.

Allan Gosman

Associate Professor, University of Michigan

"Beethoven's Sketches for *Vestas Feuer* and their Relationship to the 'Eroica' Symphony and *Leonore*"

All the known sketches for *Vestas Feuer* are found on twenty-one pages of the Landsberg 6 sketchbook. Beethoven developed ideas for Act 1, Scenes 1 and 2 of the opera before abandoning the project. While there have been discussions of the music for Scene 1, until now, little or nothing has been written about these sketches, at least partly owing to the exceptional difficulty of deciphering them. Gustav Nottebohm, in *Ein Skizzenbuch von Beethoven aus dem Jahre 1803*, devotes a mere thirteen lines of commentary to Beethoven's early attempt at writing an opera despite the fact that the sketches occupy more than a ninth of Landsberg 6. And his description does not refer to Scene 2 at all.

In this paper, I will consider the sketches for *Vestas Feuer* based on the complete transcription of Landsberg 6 by Lewis Lockwood and me. This transcription reveals how interconnected Beethoven's work on *Vestas Feuer* is with his large projects, both directly before and after.

The first scene of *Vestas Feuer*, composed in the shadow of the "Eroica" Symphony's finale, is clearly impacted by the prior work. For example, the last pages of "Eroica" sketches, of the finale's coda, enlarge the relationship between the keys of G minor and Eb major. These are the same keys Beethoven chooses for the opening of *Vestas Feuer*, and the progression between the two keys in the opera is astonishingly similar to the one in the symphony.

Vestas Feuer's influence on later works is larger than has been realized. It is well known that the Scene 1 Trio "Nie war ich so froh wie heute" is the precursor to the duet "O namenlose Freude!" from *Leonore/Fidelio*. Unrecognized until now, is that Beethoven's preliminary plans for Scene 2---a solo aria for Malo---were also appropriated for his later opera. Beethoven reused his sketch material for Pizarro's Aria with chorus "Ha! Welch' ein Augenblick!" Accordingly, a large portion of *Vestas Feuer* found life in *Leonore*. In addition, there is the possibility that the mysterious, attached introduction that Beethoven connected to the Finale of the "Waldstein" sonata was influenced by some of the design features of *Vestas Feuer*.

Lewis Lockwood

Professor emeritus, Harvard University

"Transformation Within the Frame: Beethoven's Revision of the First Movement of the Cello Sonata in A Major, Opus 69"