

Abstracts

Music as Magic in Irish Storytelling: The Case of *Waking Ned Devine*

Heather Beltz (Texas Tech University)

This paper focuses on the trope of music as symbolic power within Irish storytelling, even across millennia. Drawing on folkloric analysis, musical analysis, and shot-by-shot film analysis, I argue that *Waking Ned Devine*'s evocation of an ancient folkloric trope reveals the cultural significance of music within Irish culture.

Within the Irish Cycles (transcriptions made in the late Medieval and Renaissance periods of earlier orally-transmitted texts), there are three categories of music: *geantraí*, the music of happiness; *goltraí*, the music of sadness; and *suantraí*, the music of sleep and meditation. Each is understood to both fulfill a certain psycho-social role and to carry specific expressive connotations. In the Cycles, these three kinds of music are used as magical tools to control people, manipulate items, or to impact the outcomes of events: in other words, as weaponry, sorcery, or beauty.

Music's archetypal magical capacities may be argued to endure. Even in the context of more modern technologies and art forms and technology, stories can be 'performed' in various ways: plays, operas, instrumental music, books, visual art, and so forth. Such mythic usage continues even into contemporary mass media, in television and films. Though many scholars have focused on pre-Christian Irish folklore of antiquity, the tropes recur in more contemporary sources that are remarkably consistent. The example of this that I am focusing on is the movie *Waking Ned Devine* (1998), within whose climax is a series of carefully cross-cut scenes that reflect the ancient powers of music as magic.

The Pitch Aspects of Flow in Rap Music

Taylor Carmona (Texas Tech University)

Although research in the anatomy of flow has gained popularity in recent years, very few scholars focus on the melodic aspects of flow. Most research focuses on how rhythm, meter, and rhyme contribute to the structure of a rapper's flow. Scholars regard rap music as consisting of spoken word and using rhythm and meter to convey structure. Although metrical techniques have a significant impact on the formal implications of flow, several pitch and inflection techniques impact the organization of phrases in rap music as well. In this paper, I will argue that pitch relationships between rhymed words, the rate of rhyme, and melodic contour also contribute to the structure of a rapper's flow. I will focus my analysis on seven songs within the genre of reality rap from the 80's and 90's, and will use a combination of melodic contour graphs, rhythmic transcriptions, and charts comparing high and low-pitched rhymes.

New Set, New Design: The Roller Sketches for the Vienna Court Opera, 1903-1907.

Greg Eckhardt (Southern Methodist University)

A shift in operatic aesthetics took place during Gustav Mahler's tenure as the conductor of the Vienna Court Opera. Early in this period, Mahler began considering contemporary artistic developments and how they might support his goal of creating a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In this endeavor, Mahler turned to Alfred Roller, an artist who specialized in posters, advertisements, and set designs, and whose own aesthetic was, like other Secession artists, deeply informed by the same Wagnerian concept of artistic integration. Forming a partnership, Mahler and Roller worked together to create new productions of some of the great operas, including *Don Giovanni*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and *Fidelio*.

While scholars have noted the significance of these collaborations, few have examined the aesthetic genesis behind the Mahler-Roller productions. Using data collected from the Theater Museum Archive in Vienna, I will demonstrate how the visual techniques used by Roller realized a new form of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Specifically, analyzing the sketches Roller created will illuminate the ways he envisioned his new program. This project, supported by these primary documents, will help readers understand the impact art movements can have on musical production.

'I Miss My Woman So': Remoteness in the Music of Paul Simon

David Falterman (Eastman School of Music)

This paper examines a set of features in Paul Simon's music that serve to distance Simon's musical persona from the prevailing narrative of the song. I term passages that contain these features 'areas of remoteness.' Major seventh sonorities are especially important in cultivating remoteness, but Simon also makes use of remote key areas, as well as changes in harmonic language, texture, vocal register, meter, harmonic rhythm, and stylistic markers to place these passages at a critical distance from the rest of the song. Simon uses these areas of remoteness for a number of purposes: to comment upon the larger ramifications of a song's prevailing narrative, to create a sense of fantasy or nonreality, to dislocate a passage temporally or geographically, to indicate a switch from one narrator to another, or to generate a moment of honesty in a song with an unreliable narrator. Drawing especially on previous work by James Benninghof (2007), Walter Everett (1997), and Alan Moore (2012), I couple analyses of texture and harmonic language with close readings of the lyrics of selected songs in order to trace similarities and differences in how Simon crafts these areas of remoteness throughout his decades-long career.

Gestures of Criminality and the Gist of Violence: Gestus in ‘Die Moritat vom Mackie Messer’

Heidi Jensen (University of Florida)

“Die Moritat vom Mackie Messer” chronicles the murderous misdeeds of Mackie, the protagonist of Bertolt Brecht and composer Kurt Weill’s *Die Dreigroschenoper*. Mackie’s criminality emerged between factual descriptions of *Ringvereine* organized crime and fictive imaginings of Jack-the-Ripper mythology. Weill—like the surrealists and authors of the *Kriminalroman*—blurred normative and musical boundaries. I contend that Weill communicated this dynamic concept of criminality through *gestus*.

Musicologist Kim Kowalke suggests that *gestus* is a “modern reflection of *affection*,” that moves beyond individual emotions to gain relevance through a common human experience. For Brecht, *gestus* revealed the depth of particular elements of speech or posture in a process of evolving social relations. Musical *gestus* goes beyond static forms, rhythmic structures, or lyrics, to reveal a process of shifting relations and shared understandings. As Weill stated, “even the melody is stamped by the *gestus* of the action that is to be represented . . .” I argue that the memorable melody of the “Moritat,” centered on a descending minor seventh interval, serves gestic function.

Weill’s pairing of the word “Messer,” with the descending minor seventh interval produces *affect* in the listener. When underlain with a ‘ii-V-I progression’ *gestus* moves beyond the interval—or the jazz inspired harmony—creating a distinct category of criminal. Musical *gestus* encompasses the subject, the act, and the object of violence, moving past individual physical reaction and toward socially recognized action. Mackie’s criminality reveals both societal restrictions and indeterminate possibilities through the gestic communication of dynamic categories of embodied being.

The Confluence of Italian, German, and Spanish Elements in the Genesis of Spanish National Opera Around 1900: The Case of Tomás Bretón

Alessio Olivieri (University of California, Riverside)

Tomás Bretón (1850-1923) is renowned for his *zarzuelas*, especially *La verbena de la paloma* (1894). However, at a time when Spain was striving to create a national music, Bretón's principal contribution was to the discourse on *Ópera Española* rather than to light operetta. In particular, Bretón advocated for the use of poetry over prose, thus rejecting Wagner's "infinite melody" and promoting the Spanish language as a distinctive and indispensable feature of national opera.

This paper reassesses Bretón's contribution to Spanish musical theater by arguing that his opera *La Dolores* (1895) established a new model for *ópera española*, a model imitated in several works by later Spanish composers. Traditionally considered to be realist operas adorned with Spanish color, such works share unique features that distance them from both the hybrid zarzuela-opera and the *tout court* Italian models: namely, an emphasis on realism, the use of national language, and the distinctive concurrence of both Italianate and Wagnerian elements. In short, they exhibit the peculiar *topoi* of Italian *verismo* operas.

Approaching *La Dolores* from a *verismo* perspective allows us to shed new light on a Spanish work whose importance goes beyond its folkloric musical numbers, as well as to identify its pivotal position in the complex nineteenth-century discourse on *ópera española*. I maintain that if there was such a thing as Spanish national opera at the crossroads of the centuries, it was a sort of Spanish *verismo*. *La Dolores* represents a leading and paramount contribution to this endeavor.

Intersectionality and Music: The Role of Third-Wave Feminism in the Development of Pauline Oliveros's Musical Aesthetic

Eloy F. Ramirez III (University of Arizona)

Shifts in feminist and queer movements during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in the United States prompted discourse regarding the intersections between music, backgrounds, and communities of composers from underrepresented groups. Pauline Oliveros's (1932–2016) work in the field of avant-garde music is a powerful case study in this discussion. A lesbian, activist, and witness to second- and third-wave feminism, Oliveros's music was shaped by these movements. While third-wave feminism (1992) embraced an all-inclusive form of social equality, the exclusion of lesbians during the second wave (1966-1992)—along with sexism in the synchronous LGBT movement—resulted in a separatist strand of feminism dubbed Lesbian feminism.

While the conception of Oliveros's *Sonic Meditations* was originally associated with this exclusive brand of feminist thought, I argue that Oliveros's oeuvre reveals parallels to the more inclusive third-wave feminism and queer theory, long before their formal conception. Inclusivity is central to her work, requiring non-hierarchical relationships among performers. Details of Oliveros's life and analysis of *Sonic Meditations*, along with its evolutionary application, illustrate how bridging second- and third-wave feminism played a vital role in her musical aesthetic. Through archival research and musical analysis, I demonstrate the significance of Oliveros's collaborations with political activists, her goals for selected compositions, and how her compositional decisions prefigured third-wave ideas.

Polish Experimental Music in Illinois: Festivals, Concert Series, and Education

Emily Theobald (University of Florida)

Józef Patkowski's arrival at the University of Illinois Experimental Music Studio (EMS) in 1969 signaled a shift in both the Studio's artistic values and its representation at the university's annual Festival of Contemporary Arts. Patkowski's work as founder of the Polish Radio Experimental Studio (PRES), examined in David Crowley's *Ultra Sounds* (2018), seemed a natural match for the mission of the EMS. My examination of the fruits of this reciprocal alliance helps to quantify the significant impact that Polish experimental music had on the experimental trend in America through the sharing of these cultural products in this generative environment.

This paper considers the prominence of Polish experimental music at the Illinois Festival for Contemporary Arts between 1965 and 1971, which was underpinned by artifacts shared between the artists at PRES and EMS. The programs featured achievements of the School of Music, with the addition of EMS contributions after 1957. Titans such as Aaron Copland, Gunther Schuller, and John Cage represented American experimentalism. While Ben Johnston's review of the 1963 festival shows no trace of Polish music, the 1965 festival established a tradition of representing works realized at PRES and lectures about the studio, shifting the festival's focus to promoting experimental electroacoustic works. Drawing upon archival materials and Roberta Comunian's 2016 discussion of artistic networks, I suggest that the presence of Polish experimental music at these festivals, and at the EMS more generally, helped to shape the future of American experimental music through the relationships fostered in these artistic communities.

Portsmouth Square: “Dens of Iniquity” and Musical Exchange in Gold Rush San Francisco (1849-1856)

Jonathan Verbeten (Texas Tech University)

The small settlement of Yerba Buena was once nestled against a large cove in the San Francisco Bay. As was custom for Spanish settlements from the period, the town was organized around a central plaza which served as a nexus for business, government, and community activities. The 1846 Mexican-American war led to an American occupation and the plaza was renamed Portsmouth Square, a nod to the warship *USS Portsmouth* which docked in the nearby bay. The discovery of gold inspired a world-wide convergence on what only a few years prior had been the small Spanish settlement. This convergence transformed San Francisco into an isolated and multicultural urban center, a complex city where traditional demographic and social structures eroded. Migrants from nearly every continent were living in close proximity and brought with them—along with their linguistic, political, and religious identities—unique traditions and perspectives on music.

Understanding music in early San Francisco requires a multi-disciplinary approach that can more completely interpret cultural and social shifts happening at a rapid rate. By combining musical, historical, geographical, and cultural histories, this project shows how Portsmouth Square became a diverse node of musical exchange. Musicological inquiries into Gold Rush San Francisco have thus far favored the development of opera and sacred music, but an in-depth look at popular traditions remains absent. Beyond simply contributing to this void in research, my work attempts to develop more sophisticated methods for understanding the history of music within a city, especially as it relates to geographic urban change.

Global Double Cycle and Damaged Double Cycle as Representations of Fate in *Les Troyens* (1858) by Hector Berlioz (1803--1869)

Levi Walls (University North Texas)

In this paper, I expand upon the terminology surrounding David Lawton's concept of "double cycle"—a recurrent tonal structure that suggests a parallel between two parts of an operatic narrative. "Global double cycle" involves a parallel between the structure of the first act and that of the entire opera. Since fate is the necessary conclusion brought about by a person's character, nineteenth-century operas sometimes feature a structural parallel between the character-building phase (Act I) and the culmination (the entire work). "Damaged double cycle," meanwhile, is my proposed term for a marked flaw in a double cycle that draws attention to important differences between two narrative situations. As a case study in applying these new terms, I illustrate how global and damaged double cycles combine to produce a clear structural expression of fate in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*.

As I argue, the structure of the first act follows a background VI-II-V-I progression, which is then composed-out across the entire opera. This parallelism between Act I and the overall background structure serves to unify Parts I and II, thereby conceptually solving a commonly observed aesthetic issue in *Les Troyens*, namely, the apparent lack of dramatic continuity between the two halves. My graph of Act I also displays the structural importance of what Julian Rushton calls "medial punning," in which a tonal pairing is established between two keys that share a third (e.g. C minor and B major). This characteristically Berliozian technique serves to connect the tissue of the VI-II-V-I progression.