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An OER Collection of Primary Sources for Western Art Music

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An OER Collection of Primary Sources for Western Art Music

**Edited by Giacomo Fiore and Kumiko Uyeda
Performing Arts and Social Justice
University of San Francisco**

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Plato on Music **(from The Republic, Book III, 375 BCE)**

Plato's *Republic* is written in the form of a dialogue between Socrates (Plato's mouthpiece) and various interlocutors; in this excerpt Socrates converses with Glaucon.

Socrates: At any rate you can tell that a song or ode has three parts—the words, the melody, and the rhythm; that degree of knowledge I may presuppose?

Glaucon: Yes; so much as that you may.

S: And as for the words, there will surely be no difference between words which are and which are not set to music; both will conform to the same laws, and these have been already determined by us?

G: Yes.

S: And the melody and rhythm will depend upon the words?

G: Certainly.

S: We were saying, when we spoke of the subject-matter, that we had no need of lamentation and strains of sorrow?

G: True.

S: And which are the harmonies expressive of sorrow? You are musical, and can tell me.

G: The harmonies which you mean are the mixed or tenor Lydian, and the full-toned or bass Lydian, and such like.

S: These then, must be banished; they are of no use, even to women who have a character to maintain, and much less to men.

G: Certainly.

S: In the next place, drunkenness and softness and indolence are utterly unbecoming the character of our guardians.

G: Utterly unbecoming.

S: And which are the soft or drinking harmonies?

G: The Ionian and the Lydian; they are termed “relaxed.”

S: Well, and are these of any military use?

G: Quite the reverse; and if so, the Dorian and the Phrygian are the only ones which you have left.

S: Of the harmonies I know nothing, but I want to have one warlike, to sound the note or accent which a brave man utters in the hour of danger and stern resolve, or when his cause is failing, and he is going to wounds or death or is overtaken by some other evil, and at every such crisis meets the blows of fortune with firm step and a determination to endure; and another to be used by him in times of peace and freedom of action, when there is no pressure of necessity, and he is seeking to persuade God by prayer, or man by instruction and admonition, or on the other hand, when he is expressing his willingness to yield to persuasion or entreaty or admonition, and which represents him when by prudent conduct he has attained his end, not carried away by his success, but acting moderately and wisely under the circumstances, and acquiescing in the event. These two harmonies I ask you to leave; the strain of necessity and the strain of freedom, the strain of the unfortunate and the strain of the fortunate, the strain of courage, and the strain of temperance; these, I say, leave.

G: And these are the Dorian and Phrygian harmonies of which I was just now speaking.

S: Then, if these and these only are to be used in our songs and melodies, we shall not want multiplicity of notes or a panharmonic scale?

G: I suppose not.

S: Then we shall not maintain the artificers of lyres with three corners and complex scales, or the makers of any other many-stringed, curiously harmonized instruments?

G: Certainly not.

S: But what do you say to flute-makers and flute-players? Would you admit them into our State when you reflect that in this composite use of harmony the flute is worse than all the stringed instruments put together; even the panharmonic music is only an imitation of the flute?

G: Clearly not.

S: There remain then only the lyre and the harp for use in the city, and the shepherds may have a pipe in the country.

G: That is surely the conclusion to be drawn from the argument.

S: The preferring of Apollo and his instruments to Marsyas and his instruments is not at all strange, I said.

G: Not at all

S: And so, by the dog of Egypt, we have been unconsciously purging the State, which not long ago we termed luxurious.

G: And we have done wisely.

S: Then let us now finish the purgation. Next in order to harmonies, rhythms will naturally follow, and they should be subject to the same rules, for we ought not to seek out complex systems of metre, or metres of every kind, but rather to discover what rhythms are the expressions of a courageous and harmonious life; and when we have found them, we shall adapt the foot and the melody to words having a like spirit, not the words to the foot and melody. To say what these rhythms are will be your duty—you must teach me them, as you have already taught me the harmonies.

G: But, indeed, I cannot tell you. I only know that there are some three principles of rhythm out of which metrical systems are framed, just as in sounds there are four notes^[36] out of which all the harmonies are composed; that is an observation which I have made. But of what sort of lives they are severally the imitations I am unable to say.

S: Then we must take Damon into our counsels; and he will tell us what rhythms are expressive of meanness, or insolence, or fury, or other unworthiness, and what are to be reserved for the expression of opposite feelings. And I think that I have an indistinct recollection of his mentioning a complex Cretic rhythm; also a dactylic or heroic, and he arranged them in some manner which I do not quite understand, making the rhythms equal in the rise and fall of the foot, long and short alternating; and, unless I am mistaken, he spoke of an iambic as well as of a trochaic rhythm, and assigned to them short and long quantities.^[37] Also in some cases he appeared to praise or censure the movement of the foot quite as much as the rhythm; or perhaps a combination of the two; for I am not certain what he meant. These matters, however, as I was saying, had better be referred to Damon himself, for the analysis of the subject would be difficult, you know?

G: Rather so, I should say.

S: But there is no difficulty in seeing that grace or the absence of grace is an effect of good or bad rhythm.

G: None at all.

S: And also that good and bad rhythm naturally assimilate to a good and bad style; and that harmony and discord in like manner follow style; for our principle is that rhythm and harmony are regulated by the words, and not the words by them.

G: Just so, they should follow the words.

S: And will not the words and the character of the style depend on the temper of the soul?

G: Yes.

S: And everything else on the style?

G: Yes.

S: Then beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity—I mean the true simplicity of a rightly and nobly ordered mind and character, not that other simplicity which is only an euphemism for folly?

G: Very true, he replied.

S: And if our youth are to do their work in life, must they not make these graces and harmonies their perpetual aim?

G: They must.

S: And surely the art of the painter and every other creative and constructive art are full of them—weaving, embroidery, architecture, and every kind of manufacture; also nature, animal and vegetable—in all of them there is grace or the absence of grace. And ugliness and discord and inharmonious motion are nearly allied to ill-words and ill-nature, as grace and harmony are the twin sisters of goodness and virtue and bear their likeness.

G: That is quite true.

S: But shall our superintendence go no further, and are the poets only to be required by us to express the image of the good in their works, on pain, if they do anything else, of expulsion from our State? Or is the same control to be extended to other artists, and are they also to be prohibited from exhibiting the opposite forms of vice and intemperance and meanness and indecency in sculpture and building and the other creative arts; and is he who cannot conform to this rule of ours to be prevented from practising his art in our State, lest the taste of our citizens be corrupted by him? We would not have our guardians grow up amid images of moral deformity, as in some noxious pasture, and there browse and feed upon many a baneful herb and flower day by day, little by little, until they silently gather a festering mass of corruption in their own soul. Let our artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful; then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving

breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason.

G: There can be no nobler training than that.

S: And therefore, Glaucon, musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten, imparting grace, and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful, or of him who is ill-educated ungraceful; and also because he who has received this true education of the inner being will most shrewdly perceive omissions or faults in art and nature, and with a true taste, while he praises and rejoices over and receives into his soul the good, and becomes noble and good, he will justly blame and hate the bad, now in the days of his youth, even before he is able to know the reason why; and when reason comes he will recognize and salute the friend with whom his education has made him long familiar.

G: Yes, I quite agree with you in thinking that our youth should be trained in music and on the grounds which you mention.

S: Just as in learning to read, we were satisfied when we knew the letters of the alphabet, which are very few, in all their recurring sizes and combinations; not slighting them as unimportant whether they occupy a space large or small, but everywhere eager to make them out; and not thinking ourselves perfect in the art of reading until we recognize them wherever they are found

G: True—

S: Or, as we recognize the reflection of letters in the water, or in a mirror, only when we know the letters themselves; the same art and study giving us the knowledge of both:

G: Exactly—

S: Even so, as I maintain, neither we nor our guardians, whom we have to educate, can ever become musical until we and they know the essential forms of temperance, courage, liberality, magnificence, and their kindred, as well as the contrary forms, in all their combinations, and can recognize them and their images wherever they are found, not slighting them either in small things or great, but believing them all to be within the sphere of one art and study.

G: Most assuredly.

S: And when a beautiful soul harmonizes with a beautiful form, and the two are cast in one mould, that will be the fairest of sights to him who has an eye to see it?

G: The fairest indeed.

Aristotle on Music and Education (from Politics, Book VIII, Ch. 5, 350 BCE)

With respect to music we have already spoken a little in a doubtful manner upon this subject. It will be proper to go over again more particularly what we then said, which may serve as an introduction to what any other person may choose to offer thereon; for it is no easy matter to distinctly point out what power it has, nor on what accounts one should apply it, whether as an amusement and refreshment, as sleep or wine; as these are nothing serious, but pleasing, and the killers of care, as Euripides says; for which reason they class in the same order and use for the same purpose all these, namely, sleep, wine, and music, to which some add dancing; or shall we rather suppose that music tends to be productive of virtue, having a power, as the gymnastic exercises have to form the body in a certain way, to influence the manners so as to accustom its professors to rejoice rightly? or shall we say, that it is of any service in the conduct of life, and an assistant to prudence? for this also is a third property which has been attributed to it.

Now that boys are not to be instructed in it as play is evident; for those who learn don't play, for to learn is rather troublesome; neither is it proper to permit boys at their age to enjoy perfect leisure; for to cease to improve is by no means fit for what is as yet imperfect; but it may be thought that the earnest attention of boys in this art is for the sake of that amusement they will enjoy when they come to be men and completely formed; but, if this is the case, why are they themselves to learn it, and not follow the practice of the kings of the Medes and Persians, who enjoy the pleasure of music by hearing others play, and being shown its beauties by them; for of necessity those must be better skilled therein who make this science their particular study and business, than those who have only spent so much time at it as was sufficient just to learn the principles of it. But if this is a reason for a child's being taught anything, they ought also to learn the art of cookery, but this is absurd. The same doubt occurs if music has a power of improving the manners; for why should they on this account themselves learn it, and not reap every advantage of regulating the passions or forming a judgment on the merits of the performance by hearing others, as the Lacedaemonians; for they, without having ever learnt music, are yet able to judge accurately what is good and what is bad; the same reasoning may be applied if music is supposed to be the amusement of those who live an elegant and easy life, why should they learn themselves, and not rather enjoy the benefit of others' skill.

Let us here consider what is our belief of the immortal gods in this particular. Now we find the poets never represent Jupiter himself as singing and playing; nay, we ourselves treat the professors of these arts as mean people, and say that no one would practise them but a drunkard or a buffoon. But probably we may consider this subject more at large hereafter. The first question is, whether music is or is not to make a part of education? and of those three things which have been assigned as its proper employment, which is the right? Is it to instruct, to amuse, or to employ the vacant hours of those who live at rest? or

may not all three be properly allotted to it? for it appears to partake of them all; for play is necessary for relaxation, and relaxation pleasant, as it is a medicine for that uneasiness which arises from labour. It is admitted also that a happy life must be an honourable one, and a pleasant one too, since happiness consists in both these; and we all agree that music is one of the most pleasing things, whether alone or accompanied with a voice; as Musseus says, "Music's the sweetest joy of man;" for which reason it is justly admitted into every company and every happy life, as having the power of inspiring joy.

So that from this any one may suppose that it is necessary to instruct young persons in it; for all those pleasures which are harmless are not only conducive to the final end of life, but serve also as relaxations; and, as men are but rarely in the attainment of that final end, they often cease from their labour and apply to amusement, with no further view than to acquire the pleasure attending it. It is therefore useful to enjoy such pleasures as these. There are some persons who make play and amusement their end, and probably that end has some pleasure annexed to it, but not what should be; but while men seek the one they accept the other for it; because there is some likeness in human actions to the end; for the end is pursued for the sake of nothing else that attends it; but for itself only; and pleasures like these are sought for, not on account of what follows them, but on account of what has gone before them, as labour and grief; for which reason they seek for happiness in these sort of pleasures; and that this is the reason any one may easily perceive.

That music should be pursued, not on this account only, but also as it is very serviceable during the hours of relaxation from labour, probably no one doubts; we should also inquire whether besides this use it may not also have another of nobler nature--and we ought not only to partake of the common pleasure arising from it (which all have the sensation of, for music naturally gives pleasure, therefore the use of it is agreeable to all ages and all dispositions); but also to examine if it tends anything to improve our manners and our souls. And this will be easily known if we feel our dispositions any way influenced thereby; and that they are so is evident from many other instances, as well as the music at the Olympic games; and this confessedly fills the soul with enthusiasm; but enthusiasm is an affection of the soul which strongly agitates the disposition. Besides, all those who hear any imitations sympathise therewith; and this when they are conveyed even without rhythm or verse. Moreover, as music is one of those things which are pleasant, and as virtue itself consists in rightly enjoying, loving, and hating, it is evident that we ought not to learn or accustom ourselves to anything so much as to judge right and rejoice in honourable manners and noble actions. But anger and mildness, courage and modesty, and their contraries, as well as all other dispositions of the mind, are most naturally imitated by music and poetry; which is plain by experience, for when we hear these our very soul is altered; and he who is affected either with joy or grief by the imitation of any objects, is in very nearly the same situation as if he was affected by the objects themselves; thus, if any person is pleased with seeing a statue of any one on no other account but its beauty, it is evident that the sight of the original from whence it was taken would also be pleasing; now

it happens in the other senses there is no imitation of manners; that is to say, in the touch and the taste; in the objects of sight, a very little; for these are merely representations of things, and the perceptions which they excite are in a manner common to all. Besides, statues and paintings are not properly imitations of manners, but rather signs and marks which show the body is affected by some passion. However, the difference is not great, yet young men ought not to view the paintings of Pauso, but of Polygnotus, or any other painter or sculptor who expresses manners.

But in poetry and music there are imitations of manners; and this is evident, for different harmonies differ from each other so much by nature, that those who hear them are differently affected, and are not in the same disposition of mind when one is performed as when another is; the one, for instance, occasions grief and contracts the soul, as the mixed Lydian: others soften the mind, and as it were dissolve the heart: others fix it in a firm and settled state, such is the power of the Doric music only; while the Phrygian fills the soul with enthusiasm, as has been well described by those who have written philosophically upon this part of education; for they bring examples of what they advance from the things themselves. The same holds true with respect to rhythm; some fix the disposition, others occasion a change in it; some act more violently, others more liberally. From what has been said it is evident what an influence music has over the disposition of the mind, and how variously it can fascinate it: and if it can do this, most certainly it is what youth ought to be instructed in. And indeed the learning of music is particularly adapted to their disposition; for at their time of life they do not willingly attend to anything which is not agreeable; but music is naturally one of the most agreeable things; and there seems to be a certain connection between harmony and rhythm; for which reason some wise men held the soul itself to be harmony; others, that it contains it.

Ovid's writing of Orpheus and the Magical Powers of Music (from *Metamorphoses*, 8 CE)

Hymen, clad in his saffron robes, was summoned by Orpheus [to his wedding], and made his way across the vast reaches of the sky to the shores of the Cicones. But Orpheus' invitation to the god to attend his marriage was of no avail, for though he was certainly present, he did not bring good luck. His expression was gloomy, and he did not sing his accustomed refrain. Even the torch he carried sputtered and smoked, bringing tears to the eyes, and no amount of tossing could make it burn. The outcome was even worse than the omens foretold: for while the new bride was wandering in the meadows, with her band of water nymphs, a serpent bit her ankle, and she sank lifeless to the ground. The Thracian poet mourned her loss; when he had wept for her to the full in the upper world, he made so bold as to descend through the gate of Taenarus to the Styx, to try to rouse the sympathy of the shades as well. There he passed among the thin ghosts, the wraiths of the dead, till he reached Persephone and her lord, who hold sway over these dismal regions, the king of the shades. Then, accompanying his words with the music of his lyre, he said:

“Deities of this lower world, to which all we of mortal birth descend, if I have your permission to dispense with rambling insincerities and speak the simple truth, I did not come here to see the dim haunts of Tartarus, nor yet to chain Medusa's monstrous dog, with its three heads and snaky ruff. I came because of my wife, cut off before she reached her prime when she trod on a serpent and it poured its poison into her veins. I wished to be strong enough to endure my grief, and I will not deny that I tried to do so: but Love was too much for me. He is a god well-known in the world above; whether he may be so here, too, I do not know, but I imagine that he is familiar to you also. I beg you, by these awful regions, by this boundless chaos, and by the silence of your vast realms, weave again Eurydice's destiny, brought too swiftly to a close. We mortals and all that is ours are fated to fall to you, and after a little time, sooner or later, we hasten to this one abode. We are all on our way here, this is our final home, and yours the most lasting sway over the human race. My wife, like the rest, when she has completed her proper span of years will, in the fullness of time, come within your power. I ask as a gift from you only the enjoyment of her, but if the fates refuse her a reprieve, I have made up my mind that I do not wish to return either. You may exult in my death as well as hers!”

As he sang these words to the music of his lyre, the bloodless ghosts were in tears. Tantalus made no effort to reach the waters that ever shrank away, Ixion's wheel stood still in wonder, the vultures ceased to gnaw Tityus' liver, the daughters of Danaus rested from their pitchers, and Sisyphus sat idle on his rock. Then for the first time, they say, the cheeks of the Furies were wet with tears, for they were overcome by his singing. The king and queen of the underworld could not bear to refuse his pleas. They called Eurydice. She was among the ghosts who had but newly come, and walked slowly because of her injury. Thracian Orpheus received her, but on condition that he must not look back until he had

emerged from the valleys of Avernus or else the gift he had been given would be taken from him.

Up the sloping path, through the mute silence they made their way, up the steep dark track, wrapped in impenetrable gloom, till they had almost reached the surface of the earth. Here, anxious in case his wife's strength be failing and eager to see her, the lover looked behind him, and straightway Eurydice slipped back into the depths. Orpheus stretched out his arms, straining to clasp her and be clasped, but the hapless man touched nothing but yielding air. Eurydice, dying now a second time, uttered no complaint against her husband. What was there to complain of, but that she had been loved? With a last farewell which scarcely reached his ears, she fell back again into the same place from which she had come.

Early writings on Polyphony

Bishop of Sherborne (640-709)

Chanting in voices blending happily together, they sang, "Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord." And we in our humble way, relying on the unquestioned authority of the men of old, observe the same practice with due solemnity: on the holy festival of Palm Sunday we divide into two groups, singing with melodious voices and crying out "Hosanna" with two bodies of singers, in joyful and triumphant melody.

Reginald of Prüm (d. 915)

When one hears two strings at once, and once of them sounds a low note and the other a high one, and the two sounds are mixed in one sweet sound, as if the two voices had blended into one, then they are making what one calls a consonance.

Giraldus Cambrensis (1198)

Among these people I find a commendable diligence on musical instruments, on which they are more skilled than any nation we have seen. For among them, the execution is not slow and solemn as on the English instruments to which we are accustomed, but it is rapid and lively, though the sound is soft and pleasant. It is astonishing that, with such a rapid plucking of the fingers, the musical rhythm is preserved, and with art unimpaired in spite of everything, the melody is finished and remains agreeable, with such smooth rapidity, such unequaled evenness, such mellifluous harmony throughout the varied tunes and the many intricacies of the part music.

When they make music together, they sing their tunes not in unison, as is done elsewhere, but in parts with many simultaneous modes and phrases. Therefore, in a group of singers (which one very often meets with in Wales) you will hear as many melodies as there are people, and a distinct variety of parts; yet, they all accord in one consonant and properly constituted composition. In the northern districts of Britain, beyond the Humber and round about York, the inhabitants use a similar kind of singing in harmony, but in only two different parts, one singing quietly in a low register, and the other soothing and charming the ear above. This specialty of this race is no product of trained musicians, but was acquired through long-standing popular practices.

Letter from Hildegard von Bingen to Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux (1146)

O venerable father Bernard, I lay my claim before you, for, highly honored by God, you bring fear to the immoral foolishness of this world and, in your intense zeal and burning love for the Son of God, gather men into Christ's army to fight under the banner of the cross against pagan savagery. I beseech you in the name of the Living God to give heed to my queries.

Father, I am greatly disturbed by a vision which has appeared to me through divine revelation, a vision seen not with my fleshly eyes but only in my spirit. Wretched, and indeed more than wretched in my womanly condition, I have from earliest childhood seen great marvels which my tongue has no power to express but which the Spirit of God has taught me that I may believe. Steadfast and gentle father, in your kindness respond to me, your unworthy servant, who has never, from her earliest childhood, lived one hour free from anxiety. In your piety and wisdom look in your spirit, as you have been taught by the Holy Spirit, and from your heart bring comfort to your handmaiden.

Through this vision which touches my heart and soul like a burning flame, teaching me profundities of meaning, I have an inward understanding of the Psalter, the Gospels, and other volumes. Nevertheless, I do not receive this knowledge in German. Indeed, I have no formal training at all, for I know how to read only on the most elementary level, certainly with no deep analysis. But please give me your opinion in this matter, because I am untaught and untrained in exterior material, but am only taught inwardly, in my spirit. Hence my halting, unsure speech.

When I hear from your pious wisdom, I will be comforted. For with the single exception of a certain monk in whose exemplary life I have the utmost confidence, I have not dared to tell these things to anyone, since there are so many heresies abroad in the land, as I have heard. I have, in fact, revealed all my secrets to this man, and he has given me consolation, for these are great and fearsome matters.

Now, father, for the love of God, I seek consolation from you, that I may be assured. More than two years ago, indeed, I saw you in a vision, like a man looking straight into the sun, bold and unafraid. And I wept, because I myself am so timid and fearful. Good and gentle father, I have been placed in your care so that you might reveal to me through our correspondence whether I should speak these things openly or keep my silence, because I have great anxiety about this vision with respect to how much I should speak about what I have seen and heard. In the meantime, because I have kept silent about this vision, I have been laid low, bedridden in my infirmities, and am unable to raise myself up.

Therefore, I weep with sorrow before you. For in my nature, I am unstable because I am caught in the winepress, that tree rooted in Adam by the devil's deceit which brought about his exile into this wayward world. Yet, now, rising up, I run to you. And I say to you: You are

not inconstant, but are always lifting up the tree, a victor in your spirit, lifting up not only yourself but also the whole world unto salvation. You are indeed the eagle gazing directly at the sun.

And so I beseech your aid, through the serenity of the Father and through His wondrous Word and through the sweet moisture of compunction, the Spirit of truth, and through that holy sound, which all creation echoes, and through that same Word which gave birth to the world, and through the sublimity of the Father, who sent the Word with sweet fruitfulness into the womb of the Virgin, from which He soaked up flesh, just as honey is surrounded by the honeycomb. And may that Sound, the power of the Father, fall upon your heart and lift up your spirit so that you may respond expeditiously to these words of mine, taking care, of course, to seek all these things from God—with regard to the person or the mystery itself—while you are passing through the gateway of your soul, so that you may come to know all these things in God. Farewell, be strong in your spirit, and be a mighty warrior for God. Amen.

Excerpt from *chansonniers* on the troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras (1180-1207)

Rambaut was the son of a poor knight from the castle of Vaqueiras in Proensa, called Peirols, who owned no land. And so, Raimbaut became a jongleur and served many a year with William of Baux, Prince of Orange [Guillaume IV, 1182-1218]. He knew well the art of song and could make shapely stanzas and praise his master in verse. The Prince of Orange rewarded him with substantial favors and great honors and brought his poetry into high esteem among great personages, but then Raimbaut left his service and went instead to Montferrat in Italy, to his lordship the Marquis Boniface, and remained there a long time. He became so adept at the arts of war that the Marquis made him his knight and brother in arms.

And then did Raimbaut fall in love with Beatrice, the Marquis's sister, who was married to Enrico, lord of Carreto. For her he made his finest songs. And in them he called her Bel-Cavalier, because of an incident which he observed through the crevice of the door to Beatrice's chamber, when she thought herself alone. One day, when the Marquis returned from the hunt, paid her his usual visit, he left his sword in her apartment. And the lady Beatrice pulled off the long robe she wore, and girding on the sword like a knight, she drew it from the scabbard, tossed it in the air, caught it again with skill and wheeled about to the right and to the left. And Raimbaut, observing this through the crevice in the door as has been said, ever after gave her the name of Bel-Cavalier in his songs.

Then one day, as he had a favorable access to Beatrice, he said to her, "Vouchsafe, my lady, to give me your advice; I stand in great need of counsel. I love a gentle lady, full of grace and merit. I converse with her continually, without daring to let her know my affection; so much do I stand in awe of her virtue. For heaven's and for pity's sake, tell me whether I ought to die for love, from the fear of making it known."

"Every loyal lover," replied Beatrice, "who attaches himself to a lady of merit, whom he fears as well as respects, always explains his sentiments before he suffers himself to die for her sake. I advise you to declare your love, and to request your lady to retain you as her servant and her friend. If she is wise, and courteous, she will neither take it amiss, nor think herself dishonored; for you are so good, that there is no lady in the world, who ought not freely to receive you as her knight."

And Raimbaut, on hearing this advice and the assurance that she gave him, told her that she was indeed the lady whom he so adored. And the lady Beatrice said to him, "Welcome, my new-found lover! Try more and more, by your speech and by your deeds, to make yourself worthy to serve me. I retain you for my knight." And then straightaway did Raimbaut celebrate his felicity in a song.

But then commenced a time of sadness for Raimbaut. The more did Beatrice favor her knight, the more desirous were the envious to ruin him in her esteem. "Who is this Raimbaut

de Vaqueiras, then, though the Marquis has made him a knight, that he should presume to love so exalted a lady as yourself? Know, that this does honor neither to you nor to the Marquis." And so much evil gossip was spread about that the lady Beatrice became enraged with Raimbaut. And when Raimbaut besought her for her love and begged her for mercy, she told him that he ought to carry his love to other ladies who were made for him, and that she would never have anything more to say to him. And such became Raimbaut's sorrow as was related above. He ceased to sing of love or to laugh or enjoy any pleasurable thing. But the lovers were reconciled by a song. Marquis's court two jongleurs from France, who knew how to play surpassingly well upon their fiddles. And one day they were fiddling an estampie which gave great pleasure to the Marquis and to all the knight and ladies. Only Raimbaut enjoyed it not, which did not escape the notice of the Marquis. He said, "What ails you, Sir Raimbaut, that you do not sing but are so sad in the presence of the sweet sound of the fiddles and also so beautiful a lady as my sister who has taken you for her knight and who is the most estimable lady in the world?" But Raimbaut answered that he could do nought else. The Marquis knew well the reason and said to his sister, "My lady Beatrice, for love of me and of all the company, I would have you deign to bid Raimbaut, for love of you and for your grace, to cheer up and sing merrily as was his wont." And lady Beatrice showed Raimbaut her mercy and forgiveness, and bade him make her a new song. And straightaway Raimbaut fashioned this song cleverly to the very strains of the fiddlers' estampie:

Kalenda maya
 Ni fuelhs de faya
 Ni chanz d'auzelh
 Ni flors de glaya
 Non es que'm playa,
 Pros domna guaya
 Tro qu'un yselh
 Messatgier aya
 De vostre belh
 Cors qu'em retraya
 Plazer novelh
 Qu'amors m'atraya
 E jaya
 E'm traya
 Na vos domna veraya.
 E chaya
 De playa
 'L gelos
 Ans que'm n'estraya.

The first of May
 neither leaf of beech
 nor song of bird
 nor gladiolus bloom
 pleases me,
 lady noble and gay,
 until I receive
 a speedy messenger
 from your fair self
 who will tell me
 the new delight
 which love brings me,
 and joy;
 and which draws me
 toward you, true lady.
 And may he
 die of his wounds,
 the jealous one,
 Before I take my leave.

Letter from Machaut to Peronelle D'Armentières (c. 1363)

My sovereign lady,

A knight must have no calling or science other than: arms, lady, and conscience. Therefore I swear to you and promise that I shall serve you loyally and diligently to the best of my power with all I do and can do, and all to your honor, as Lancelot and Tristram never served their ladies; and have your likeness as my earthly deity and as the most precious and glorious relic that ever I did see in any place. And henceforth it shall be my heart, my castle, my treasure, and my comfort against all ills in truth. If it please God, I shall see you before Pentecost; for you and your sweet likeness have brought me to such a point that, the Lord be thanked, you have healed me completely. And I should have left before now; but there is a great company of soldiers a few leagues from us; therefore riding is most perilous. I send you my book, Morpheus, which they call La Fontaine amoureuse, in which I have made a song to your order, and by God it is long since I have made so good a thing to my satisfaction; and the tenors are as sweet as unsalted pap. I beg therefore that you deign to hear it, and learn the thing just as it is, without adding or taking away; and it is to be sung in a goodly long measure; and if anyone play it on the organ, bagpipe, or other instrument, that is its right nature. I am also sending you a ballade, which I made before receiving your sweet likeness; for I was a little hurt because of some words that had been said to me, but as soon as I saw your sweet likeness I was healed and free from melancholy. My most sovereign lady, I would have brought you my book to amuse you, wherein are all the things I have ever made, but it is in more than twenty portions, for I had it made for one of my lords; and so I am having the notes put to it, and that is why it has to be in portions. And when the notes will have been put to it, I shall bring it or send it to you, if it pleases God. My most sovereign lady, I pray God that he may give you your heart's desire and such honor as I wish you may have; and God give you solace and joy, such as I may wish for myself.

Printer Ottaviano Petrucci's petition for a patent on music printing (1498)

Most serene Prince and most illustrious Signory:

There being a most widespread report that your Serenities, through your grants and privileges, invite and inspire all men of mettle to think upon new inventions that add to comfort and to the adornment of public life, Ottaviano dei Petrucci of Fossombrone, an inhabitant of this illustrious City, a very ingenious man, has, at great expense and with most watchful care, executed what many, not only in Italy but also outside of Italy, have long attempted in vain, which is, with the utmost convenience, to print Figured Music. And still more easily, as a result of this, Plainchant: a thing very important to the Christian religion, a great embellishment, and exceedingly necessary: wherefore the above-named petitioner seeks relief at the feet of your Most Illustrious Signory, pleading that the Signory, through its accustomed clemency and benignity, deign to accord him as first inventor, the special grace that, for twenty years no other be empowered to print Figured Music in the land subject to Your Signory, nor tablatures for organ or lute, nor to import said things, printed outside in any other place whatsoever, nor cause them to be imported or sold in the territories or places belonging to Your Sublime Signory, on pain of confiscation of said works—printed by others, or imported from outside—and a fine of ten ducats for each copy thereof: of which sum half shall be applied to the hospital of St. Anthony, and the other half to the benefit of the new municipal pawnshop, and this he asks as a special grace from Your Illustrious Signory to which he commends himself forever.

1498, the 25th day of May

Dedication and Introduction to John Dowland's First Book of Songs and Ayres (1597)

To the right honorable Sir George Cary, of the most honorable order of the Garter Knight, Baron of Hunsdon, Captain of her Majesty's Gentlemen Pensioners, Governor of the Isle of Wight, Lieutenant of the County of Southt: Lord Chamberlain of her Majesty's most Royall House, and of her Highness's most honorable private Counsel:

That harmony which is skillfully expressed by Instruments, albeit, by reason of the variety of number & proportion of itself, it easily stirs up the minds of the hearers to admiration & delight, yet for higher authority any power has been ever worthily attributed to that kind of Music, which to the sweetness of instrument applies the lively voice of man, expressing some worthy sentence or excellent Poem. Hence (as all antiquity can witness) first grew the heavenly Art of musicke: for Linus Orpheus and the rest, according to the number and time of the Poems, first framed the numbers and times of music: So that Plato defines melody to consist of harmony, number and words; harmony naked of itself: words the ornament of harmony, number the common friend and uniter of them both.

This small book containing the consent of speaking harmony, joined with the most musical instrument the Lute, being my first labour, I have presumed to dedicate to your Lordship, who for your virtue and nobility are best able to protect it, & for your honorable favors towards me, best deserving my duty and service. Besides your noble inclination and love to all good Arts, and namely the deuine science of musicke, doth challenge the patronage of all learning, then which no greater title can be added to Nobility. Neither in these your honours may I let pass the beautiful remembrance of your virtuous Lady my honorable mistress, whose singular graces towards me have added spirit to my unfortunate labours. What time and diligence I have bestowed in the search of Music, what travel in foreign countries, what success and estimation even among strangers I haue found, I leave to the report of others. Yet all this in vain were it not that your honourable hands have vouchsafe to uphold my poor fortunes, which I now wholly recommend to your gracious protection, with these my first endeavors, humbly beseeching you to accept and cherish them with your continued favours.

Your Lordship's most humble servant,

John Dowland

To the courteous Reader:

How hard an enterprise it is in this skilful and curious age to commit our private labors to the public view, my own disability, and others' hard successes do too well assure me: and

were it not for that love I bear to the true lovers of music, I had concealed these my first fruits, which how they will thrive with your taste I know not, however the greater part of them might have been ripe enough by their age.

The Courtly judgement I hope will not be secure against them, being itself a party, and those sweet springs of humanity (I mean our two famous Universities) will entertain them for his sake, whom they have already graced, and as it were enfranchised in the ingenuous profession of Music, which from my childhood I have ever aimed at, sundry times leaving my native country, the better to attain so excellent a science. About sixteen years past, I travelled the chiefest parts of France, a nation furnished with great variety of Music: But lately, being of a more confirmed judgement, I bent my course toward the famous provinces of Germany, where I found both excellent masters, and most honorable Patrons of music: Namely, those two miracles of this age for virtue and magnificence, Henry Julio Duke of Brunswick, and learned Mauritius Landgrave of Hessen, of whose princely virtues & favors towards me I can never speak sufficiently. Neither can I forget the kindness of Alexandro Horologio, a right learned master of music, servant to the royal Prince the Landgrave of Hessen, & Gregorio Howett, Lutenist to the magnificent Duke of Brunswick, both whom I name as well for their love to me, as also for their excellency in their faculties. Thus having spent some months in Germany, to my great admiration of that worthy country, I passed over the Alps into Italy, where I found the Cities furnished with all good Arts, but especially music.

What favour and estimation I had in Venice, Padua, Genoa, Ferrara, Florence, & divers other places I willingly suppress, least I should in any way seem partial in my own endeavours. Yet can I not dissemble the great satisfaction I found in the proffered amity of the most famous Luca Marenzio, whose sundry letters I received from Rome, and one of them, because it is but short, I have thought good to set downe, not thinking it any disgrace to be proud of the judgement of so excellent a man:

My Very Magnificent Lord

Through a letter from M. Alberigo Maluezi I learned how much with courteous affection you desired to be linked to me in friendship, for which I infinitely thank you, and I offer to meet with you if I can help you with anything, since the merits of your virtues and qualities deserves that everyone around me should admire and observe you; and to this end I kiss your hands. Rome, July 13th, 1595

Your Affectionate Servant
Luca Marenzio.

Not to stand too long upon my travels, I will only name that worthy master Giovanni Crochio, Vicemaster of the chapel of S. Mark's in Venice, with whom I had familiar

conference. And thus what experience I could gather abroad, I am now ready to practise at home, if I may but find encouragement in my first assays. There have been various Lute-lessons of mine lately printed without my knowledge, false and vmp perfect, but I purpose shortly myself to set forth the choicest of all my Lessons in print, and also an introduction for fingering, with other books of Songs, whereof this is the first: and as this finds favor with you, so shall I be affected to labor in the rest. Farewell.

John Dowland

From Thomas Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* (1597)

All music for voices is made either for a ditty or without a ditty [i.e., with or without words]. If it be with a ditty it is either grave or light; the grave ditties they have still kept in one kind, so that whatsoever music be made upon it is comprehended under the name of a Motet.

A Motet

A Motet is properly a song made for the church, either upon some hymn or anthem or such like, and that name I take to have been given to that kind of music in opposition to the other which they called Canto Fermo and we do commonly call Plainsong. This kind of all others which are made on a ditty requireth most art and moveth and causeth most strange effects in the hearer, being aptly framed for the ditty and well expressed by the singer, for it will draw the auditor (and especially the skillful auditor) into a devout and reverent kind of consideration of Him for whose praise it was made. If you compose in this kind you must cause your harmony to carry a majesty, taking discords and binding as often as you can, but let it be in long notes, for the nature of it will not bear short notes and quick motions which denotate a kind of wantonness.

A Madrigal

But the best kind of it is termed Madrigal, a word for the etymology of which I can give no reason (nor can we today); yet use showeth that it is a kind of music made upon songs and sonnets such as Petrarch and many poets of our time have excelled in. This kind of music were not so much disallowable if the poets who compose the ditties would abstain from some obscenities which all honest ears abhor, and sometimes from blasphemies which no man (at least who hath any hope of salvation) can sing without trembling. As for the music it is, next unto the Motet, the most artificial and, to men of understanding, most delightful. If therefore you will compose in this kind you must possess yourself with an amorous humor (...), so that you must in your music be wavering like the wind, sometime wanton, sometime drooping, sometime grave and staid, otherwhile effeminate, you may show the very uttermost of your variety, and the more variety you show the better shall you please.

Alfonso Fontanelli's report of Don Carlo Gesualdo (1594)

I met the Prince at the ferry. ON leaving the boat he decided to get into a carriage since he wanted to escape the mud so as not to have to change his clothes. He has it in mind to beseech Your Highness most warmly that tomorrow evening you will permit him to see Signora Donna Leonora [Gesualdo's bride]. In this he shows himself extremely Neapolitan. He thinks of arriving at eleven P.M., but I doubt this because he does not stir from his bed until extremely late. With respect to this I shall not send another courier. Suffice it to say that we will come by boat as far as Gaibana, and then we shall go in the direction of the road which Orazio reports to be good for this purpose.

The Prince, although at first view he does not have the presence of the personage he is, becomes little by little more agreeable, and for my part I am sufficiently satisfied with his appearance. I have not been able to see his figure since he wears an overcoat as long as a nightgown; but think that tomorrow he will be more gaily dressed. He talks a great deal and gives no sign, except in his portrait, of being a melancholy man. He discourses on hunting and music and declares himself an authority on both of them. On hunting he did not enlarge very much since he did not find much reaction from me, but about music he spoke at such length that I have not heard so much in a whole year. He makes open profession of it and shows his works in score to everybody in order to induce them to marvel at his art. He has with him two sets of music books in five parts, all his own work, but he says that he only has four people who can sing for which reason he will be forced to take the fifth part himself, although it seems that he is confident that Reinaldo will enter into the singing and do well.

... This evening after supper he sent for a harpsichord so that I could hear Scipione Stella [a musician in Gesualdo's entourage] and so that he could play on it himself along with the guitar, of which he has very high regard. But in all Argenta we could not find a harpsichord, for which reason, so as not to pass an evening without music, he played the lute for an hour and a half. Here perhaps Your Highness would not be displeased if I were to give my opinion, but I would prefer, with your leave, to suspend my judgment until more refined ears have given theirs. It is obvious that his art is infinite, but it is full of attitudes, and has himself served in a very grand way and with some little Spanish ceremonies, for example, having the lighted torch brought in before the cup, covering his plate while he drinks, and similar things.

Your most faithful and devoted servant,
Alfonso Fontanelli
Argenta, 18 February 1594

Dedication of Barbara Strozzi's First Book of Madrigals, 1644

[To the Grand Duchess of Tuscany]

Most Serene Highness,

I have so frequently received such affectionate aid through the generosity of one scholar-vassal of your Highness in guiding me to the use of these, and of other most harmonious compositions. Therefore, I must reverently consecrate this first opus, which I, as a woman, too rashly bring to the light, to the most august Name of Your Highness, in order that under an Oak-tree of gold it rests protected from the lightning-bolts of slanders prepared for it.

The choice of the lyric verses will help me somewhat, which are all trifles of he who from my girlhood has given me his surname and material comfort. These will relieve the boredom of anyone who does not remain entirely pleased with the poor harmonies of my songs.

But favored by the protection of Your Highness, I flatter myself to believe that you will harbor none who vilify these, my works, if they come to be seen in those royal hands, and to be heard by those most discerning ears, which never do other than hear with Heroic kindness when receiving others' devotion. In this regard I profess myself not to be last in the line of affection, I am not inferior to any who revere the great worth of your Highness. Thus, bowing deeply, I pray for the sublime privileges of the divine wisdom of Your Highness, each additional one a more suitable bliss.

From Venice on the 12th of October, 1644

For Your Most Serene Highness.

Your Most Humble and Devoted Servant.

Barbara Strozzi

Bach at Leipzig (1723)

Their worships, the Council of this town of Leipzig, having accepted me to be Cantor of the School of St. Thomas, they have required of me an agreement as to certain points, namely:

1. That I should set a bright and good example to the boys by a sober and secluded life, attend school, diligently and faithfully instruct the boys.
2. And bring the music in the two chief churches of this town into good repute to the best of my ability.
3. Show all respect and obedience to their worships the Council, and defend and promote their honor and reputation to the utmost, and in all places; also, if a member of the Council requires the boys for a musical performance, unhesitatingly to obey, and besides this, never allow them to travel into the country for funerals or weddings without the fore-knowledge and consent of the burgomaster in office, and the governors of the school.
4. Give due obedience to the inspectors and governors of the school in all they command in the name of the Worshipful Council.
5. Admit no boys into the school who have not already the elements of music or who have no aptitude for being instructed therein, nor without the knowledge and leave of the inspectors and governors.
6. To the end that the churches may not be at unnecessary expense I should diligently instruct the boys not merely in vocal but in instrumental music.
7. To the end that good order may prevail in those churches I should so arrange the music that it may not last too long, and also in such wise as that it may not be operatic, but incite the hearers to devotion.
8. Supply good scholars to the New Church.
9. Treat the boys kindly and considerately, or, if they will not obey, punish such in moderation or report them to the authority.
10. Faithfully carry out instruction in the school and whatever else it is my duty to do.
11. And what I am unable to teach myself I am to cause to be taught by some other competent person without cost or help from their worships the Council, or from the school.
12. That I should not quit the town without leave from the burgomaster in office.
13. Should follow the funeral processions with the boys, as is customary, as often as possible.
14. And take no office under the University without the consent of their worships.

And to all this I hereby pledge myself, and faithfully to fulfill all this as is here set down,

under pain of losing my place if I act against it, in witness of which I have signed this duplicate bond, and sealed it with my seal.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Given in Leipzig, May 5, 1723

J.S. Bach remembered by C.P.E. Bach (1774)

He understood the whole building of organs in the highest degree. Organists were terrified when he sat down to play on their organs and drew the stops in his own manner, for they thought that the effect could not be good as he was planning it; but then they heard an effect that astounded them. (These sciences perished with him.) The first thing he would do in trying an organ was this: he would say, in fun, "Above all I must know whether the organ has good lungs," and, to find out, he would draw out every speaking stop, and play in the fullest and richest possible texture. At this the organ builders would often grow quite pale with fright. The exact tuning of his harpsichords as well as of the whole orchestra had his greatest attention. No one could tune and quill his harpsichords to please him. He did everything himself. The placing of an orchestra he understood perfectly. He made good use of any space. He grasped the sound properties of any place at first glance. A remarkable illustration of that fact is the following: He came to Berlin to visit me; I showed him the new opera house. He perceived at once its virtues and defects (that is, as regards the sound of music in it). I showed him the great dining hall. He looked at the ceiling, and without further investigation made the statement that the architect had here accomplished a remarkable feat, without intending to do so, and without anyone knowing about it: namely, that if someone went to one corner of the oblong-shaped hall and whispered a few words very softly upwards against the wall, a person standing in the corner diagonally opposite, with his face to the wall, would hear quite distinctly what was said, while between them, and in the other parts of the room, no one would hear a sound. A feat of architecture hitherto very rare and much admired! This effect was brought about by the arches in the vaulted ceiling, which he saw at once. He heard the slightest wrong note even in the largest combinations. As the greatest expert and judge of harmony, he liked best to play the viola, with appropriate loudness and softness.

In his youth, and until the approach of old age, he played the violin cleanly and penetratingly, and thus kept the orchestra in better order than he could have done with the harpsichord. When he listened to a rich and many-voiced fugue, he could soon say, after the first entries of the subjects, what contrapuntal devices it would be possible to apply, and which of them the composer by rights ought to apply, and on such occasions, when I was standing next to him and he had voiced his surmises to me, he would joyfully nudge me when his expectations were fulfilled. He had a good penetrating voice of wide range and a good manner of singing. In counterpoints and fugues no one was as happy as he in all kinds of taste and figuration, and variety of ideas in general.

From Johann Adolph Scheibe's *Der critische Musicus*, 1737-40

True art always seeks that which is natural, while too much art exceeds nature, leading one into bombast and confusion. Even public speakers and poets are careful to avoid too much art just as they seek to avoid what is common, flat, and vulgar. Although it takes great effort and patience to write artfully, all one gets for one's pains is that one exceeds nature and consequently becomes disordered, unnatural, and confused. When has anyone ever been moved or convinced by something unnatural? When has such a thing expressed emotions and captivated the listener? Excessive art and unnatural contrivance have never been known to advance the sciences that concern the soul and arouse within us those tender feelings which, being a pleasant product of reason, distinguish us from the unreasoning animals.

Art must imitate nature. As soon as this imitation is exceeded, however, art is to be condemned. It is not art that endows nature with beauty but nature that endows art. Nature already possesses everything of merit and need borrow no rouge from art. The more extravagant art becomes, the further it goes along its own way, the more it alienates itself from nature. It is therefore a fact that too much art obscures true beauty.

In the past, the style of concerted music was altogether unlike today's. In melody, in harmony, and in form it differed greatly from what is being written now. Melody was neither as free nor as natural, and consequently less lively and flowing. More attention was paid to working out a full texture. Music thus artificially and laboriously fashioned could not hope to embody the affections the way today's music does. It was neither as pleasant nor as moving and expressive. Owing to the polyphonic texture, contrivance gained the upper hand over nature. Melody, that is to say pure song, was suppressed and such music was unable to achieve that degree of expression which is the specialty of today's music. Composers of the past who strove to exhibit their skill at counterpoint had to find room for all kinds of devices; their music was laced through with fugues, canons, and similarly artificial imitative procedures. The instruments weaved in and out and lost themselves amid incessant suspensions. How could a free and intelligible melody find employment under such conditions?

But now consider the music of today. We certainly find different qualities. By striving for a flowing, expressive, lively melody, the only kind that can call nature its mother, composers achieve very different effects, much to be preferred over those of old. Even though a few particularly serious works may still contain severely contrapuntal sections, even extensive passages of imitation, the overall form of the work and the way its sections succeed one another show that everything is geared towards emphasizing the melody and bringing out its natural beauty, emotion, and dignity. Through melody one can arouse and express all sorts of affections and passions, which proves that melody is the primary and

most worthy element in music and is to be preferred to harmony. Any attempt to give harmony the place of honor that belongs to melody alone is doomed to failure.

Sonata Form Described by A.F.C. Kollmann (1799)

In its outlines, a long movement is generally divided into two sections. The first, when the piece is in major, ends in the fifth of the scale, and the second in the key; but when the piece is in minor, the first section generally ends in the third of the scale, and the second in the key. These two sections are either separated by a double bar or repeat, or not distinguished by any particular mark; which latter commonly is the case in concertos or those pieces which would become too long by a repetition. But though pieces are not calculated for a repetition, the above distinction of two sections is required in them, if they shall create an expectation at the beginning, and give a satisfaction at the end; without which they cannot be truly entertaining.

In regard to other particulars, the said two sections admit, besides a regular setting out, and a return, three sorts of elaboration, all of which may be distributed in the following manner, viz.:

Each section may be divided into two subsections; which in the whole makes four subsections.

The first subsection must contain the setting out from the key towards its fifth in majore, or third in minor; and it may end with the chord of the key note or its fifth, but the latter is better. The second subsection comprehends a first sort of elaboration, consisting of a more natural modulation than that of the third subsection; it may be confined to the fifth or third of the key only, or also touch on some related, or even non related keys if only no formal digression is made to any key but the said fifth in major, or third in minor. The third subsection or beginning of the second section, comprehends a second sort of elaboration, consisting of digression to all those keys and modes which shall be introduced besides that of the fifth (or third); and being the place for those abrupt modulations, or enharmonic changes, which the piece admits or requires. The fourth subsection contains the return to the key, with a third sort of elaboration, similar to that of the first subsection.

The above is the plan of modulation, which will be found attended to in most sonatas, symphonies, and concertos, as well as elaborate airs and choruses, of all great Composers, because it is the most reasonable one, and the most adapted to the nature of our attention, and our feeling, hitherto known. But it may be varied almost to the infinite. For, the different sections and subsections of a piece may be of any reasonable variety of length, and the said sorts of modulation and elaboration may be diversified without end, as it also appears from the composition of great Composers, and will require no demonstration.

In pieces of three and more movements, the first and last should be set in the same key, to preserve the impression of one and the same piece, but they may be different in mode, the same as in those of two movements. And the one or more movements between the first

and last, may be set in any variety of related keys and modes; which a judicious fancy can suggest. Fine examples of pieces of four movements are most of Haydn's Symphonies.

Beethoven's Heiligenstadt Testament (1802)

For my brothers Carl and Johann Beethoven:

O ye men who think or declare that I am hostile stubborn or Misanthropic, how you wrong me you do not know the secret motive of what seems thus to you, from Childhood my Heart and Mind were inclined to the Gentle Feeling of goodwill, indeed I was ever disposed to accomplish great Feats, but only reflect that for the last 6 years an incurable condition has seized me, worsened by senseless physicians, cheated from year to year in the Hope of improvement, finally compelled to the prospect of a lasting Ailment (whose Curing may perhaps take years or indeed be impossible). Born with a fiery Lively Temperament susceptible even to the Diversions of Society, I soon had to keep to myself, pass my life in solitude, if I attempted from time to time to rise above all this, o how harshly then was I repulsed by the doubly sad Experience of my bad Hearing, yet I could not say to People: speak louder, shout, for I am deaf, alas how could I then acknowledge the Weakness of a Faculty which ought to be more perfect in me than in others, a Faculty I once had to the highest degree of Perfection, such Perfection as only few of my Calling surely have or have had—o I cannot do it. Therefore forgive me if you see me withdrawing when I should gladly join you. My misfortune afflicts me doubly, since it causes me to be misunderstood.

Diversion in Human Society, civilized Conversation, mutual Effusions cannot take place for me. All but alone, I enter society no more than is required by the most urgent Necessity. I must like a Banished man; if I approach a company, a hot anxiety invades me, because I am afraid of being exposed to the Danger of letting my Condition be noticed—and thus has it been this half-year too, which I have spent in the country, my wise Physician having ordered me to spare my Hearing as much as possible. He nearly met my present Disposition, even though I have sometimes let myself be led astray by an Urge for Society. But what Mortification if someone stood beside me and heard a flute from afar and I heard nothing; or someone heard a Shepherd Singing, and I heard nothing. Such Happenings brought me close to Despair; I was not far from ending my own life—only Art, only art held me back. Ah, it seemed impossible to me that I should leave the world before I had produced all that I felt I might, and so I spared this wretched life—truly wretched; a body so susceptible that a somewhat rapid change can take me from the Best Condition to the worst. Patience—so now I must choose Her for my guide, I have done so—I hope that my decision to persevere may endure until it please the inexorable Fates to break the Thread; perhaps I will improve, perhaps not. I am resigned—to be forced already in my 28th year to become a Philosopher is not easy, and harder for an Artist than for anyone else. Deity, thou lookest down into my innermost being; thou knowest it, thou seest that charity and benevolence dwell within,—o Men, when you read this some day, think then that you have wronged me, and let any unhappy man console himself by finding another one like himself, one who, despite Nature's Impediments, yet did what was in his Power to do to be admitted to the Ranks of worthy Artists and Men. And so it is done—I hasten with joy towards my

death—should it come before I have had an Opportunity to disclose all my Artistic Capacities, then it shall still have come too soon despite my Hard Destiny, and I should indeed wish it came later—yet even then an I content. Does it not free me from an endless Suffering State? Come when you will, I'll meet you bravely—farewell and do not wholly forget me in Death. I have deserved it of you, for in Life I thought of you often, in order to make you happy, so may you be—

Ludwig van Beethoven
Heiligenstadt, 6th October 1802

Heiligenstadt, 10th October 1802

And so I bid you farewell—and sadly too—yes the cherished Hope—which I brought here with me, that I might be cured at least up to a Point—it must abandon me completely now, as Autumn Leaves fall away, with; so has—it too wilted for me, I go from here—much as I came—even the High Courage—that often inspired me during the Lovely Days of Summer—has vanished—o Providence—grant me one day of pure Joy—the inner reverberation of true Joy has so long been a stranger to me—o when—o when, o Deity—may I feel it once more in the Temple of Nature and Mankind,—Never?—no—o it would be too hard.

Reaction to Beethoven's Third Symphony **(*Der Freymüthige*, 1805)**

[...] Some, Beethoven's particular friends, assert that it is just this symphony which is his masterpiece, that this is the true style for high-class music, and that if it does not please now, it is because the public is not cultured enough, artistically, to grasp all these lofty beauties; after a few thousand years have passed it will not fail of its effect. Another faction denies that the work has any artistic value and professes to see in it an untamed striving for singularity which has failed, however, to achieve in any of its parts beauty or true sublimity and power. By means of strange modulations and violent transitions, by combining the most heterogeneous elements, as for instance when a pastoral in the largest style is ripped up by the basses, by three horns, etc, a certain undesirable originality may be achieved without much trouble; but genius proclaims itself not in the unusual and the fantastic, but in the beautiful and the sublime. Beethoven himself proved the correctness of this axiom in his earlier works. The third party, a very small one, stands midway between the others—it admits that the symphony contains many beauties, but concedes that the connection is often disrupted entirely, and that the inordinate length of this longest, and perhaps most difficult, of all symphonies wearies even the cognoscenti, and is unendurable to the mere music lover; it wishes that Mr. Beethoven would employ his acknowledgedly great talents in giving us works like his symphonies in C and D, his ingratiating Septet in E-flat, the intellectual Quintet in C, and others of his early compositions that have placed B. forever in the ranks of the foremost instrumental composers. It fears, however, that if Beethoven continues on his present path both he and the public will be the sufferers. His music could soon reach the point where one would derive no pleasure from it, unless well trained in the rules and difficulties of the art, but rather would leave the concert hall with an unpleasant feeling of fatigue from having been crushed by a mass of unconnected and overloaded ideas and continuing tumult by all the instruments. The public and Mr. Beethoven, who conducted, were not satisfied with each other on this evening; the public thought the symphony too heavy, too long, and himself too discourteous, because he did not nod his head in recognition of the applause which came from a portion of the audience. On the contrary, Beethoven found that the applause was not strong enough.

Josef v. Spaun Remembers Schubert (1858)

I once found him alone in the music room sitting at the piano which, with his little hands, he already played quite nicely. He was just trying through a Mozart sonata, and said that he liked it very much but that he found Mozart very difficult to play well. At my request and aware of my sympathy, he played me a minuet of his own invention. He was shy about it and blushed, but my approval pleased him. He told me that secretly he often wrote down his thoughts in music, but his father must not know about it, as he was dead against his devoting himself to music. After that I used to slip manuscript paper into his hands from time to time.

During the first days of September 1809 I left Vienna to start my career. At the end of March 1811 my fate took me back to Vienna. In 1812 he composed twelve minuets and trios, which were of extraordinary beauty.

About this time people began to pay attention to his talent. The old Court organist Ruzicka was engaged to give Schubert lessons in thorough bass. After only the second lesson the worthy old man, quite stirred by emotion, said to me in Schubert's presence: "I can teach him nothing, he has learnt it from God himself"

Now the barriers had fallen. The father recognized his son's great talent and let him have his own way, and now began the series of his songs and sonatas. Some quartets, too, date from this early period.

One day when he sang me some little songs [he had composed to poetry] by Klopstock, and I was utterly delighted with them, he looked me frankly in the eyes and said, "Do you really think something will come of me?" I embraced him and said, "You have done much already and time will enable you to do much more and great things too." Then he said quite humbly: "Secretly, in my heart of hearts, I still hope to be able to make something out of myself, but who can do anything after Beethoven?"

Greatly as the circle now increased of those who admired Schubert's extraordinary talents and bestowed the greatest applause on his songs, he nevertheless remained without any substantial provision, and his position was a truly depressing one. No publisher could be found who would have dared to risk even a little for his magnificent creations. He remained for years a victim of many troubles, indeed he who was so rich in melodies could not even afford the rent for the hire of a piano. Yet the difficulties of his position did not check his industry in the least; he had to sing and compose, it was his life.

He ought to have given piano lessons in order to make a living, but that was a bitter task for him. In the morning he felt the urge to compose, and in the afternoon he wanted to rest and, in the summer, go out of doors.

Finally, at the instigation of some kind friends, an edition of the "Erlkönig" was brought out at their own expense. The undertaking was a great success and yielded Schubert a not inconsiderable profit as the first fruit of his talent. Now the spell was broken and the publishers gradually accepted his compositions, but the modest Schubert (who, in money

matters, was an absolute child) was satisfied with whatever they gave him, and so he still could not even earn the barest necessities of existence.

Once when he was invited, with Baron Schönstein (who has an excellent tenor voice), to a princely house in order to perform his songs before a very aristocratic audience, the enraptured audience surrounded Baron Schönstein with the most ardent appreciation and with congratulations on his performance. But when no one showed any sign of granting so much as a look or a word to the composer sitting at the piano, the noble hostess, Princess Kinsky, tried to make up for this neglect and greeted Schubert with the highest praise, at the same time suggesting that he overlook the fact that the audience, quite carried away by the singer, complimented only him. Schubert replied that he thanked the Princess very much but she was not to bother herself in the least about him, he was quite used to not being noticed, indeed he was really very glad of it, as it caused him less embarrassment.

Many people thought, and perhaps still think, that Schubert was a dull fellow with no feeling, but those who knew him better know how deeply his creations affected him and that they were conceived in suffering. Anyone who has seen him of a morning occupied with composition, aglow, with his eyes shining and even his speech changed, like a sleepwalker, will never forget the impression. And how could he have written these songs without being stirred to the depths by them!...

Schubert did not get the recognition he deserved in Vienna. The great majority of people remained, and still remain, uninterested.

Nor are his songs suited to the concert hall or stage. The listener, too, must have a feeling for the poem and enjoy the lovely song together with it; in a word, the public must be quite a different one from that which fills the theatres and concert halls.

When publishers told him that people found the accompaniment to his songs too hard and the keys often so difficult, and that, in his own interest, he ought to pay attention to this, he always replied that he could not write differently and that anyone who could not play his compositions should leave them alone, and a person to whom one key was not as easy as another was, anyhow, not in the least musical..

Schubert was an affectionate son and brother, and a loyal friend. He was a kind, generous, good man. May he rest in peace, and thanks be to him for having beautified the lives of his friends by his creations!

Berlioz's Program Note for *Symphonie fantastique* (1845)

Note

The composer's intention has been to develop various episodes in the life of an artist, in so far as they lend themselves to musical treatment. As the work cannot rely on the assistance of speech, the plan of the instrumental drama needs to be set out in advance. The following programme* must therefore be considered as the spoken text of an opera, which serves to introduce musical movements and to motivate their character and expression.

*This programme should be distributed to the audience at concerts where this symphony is included, as it is indispensable for a complete understanding of the dramatic plan of the work. [HB]

I: Daydreams, passions

The author imagines that a young musician, afflicted by the sickness of spirit which a famous writer has called the vagueness of passions (*le vague des passions*), sees for the first time a woman who unites all the charms of the ideal person his imagination was dreaming of, and falls desperately in love with her. By a strange anomaly, the beloved image never presents itself to the artist's mind without being associated with a musical idea, in which he recognises a certain quality of passion, but endowed with the nobility and shyness which he credits to the object of his love.

This melodic image and its model keep haunting him ceaselessly like a double *idée fixe*. This explains the constant recurrence in all the movements of the symphony of the melody which launches the first allegro. The transitions from this state of dreamy melancholy, interrupted by occasional upsurges of aimless joy, to delirious passion, with its outbursts of fury and jealousy, its returns of tenderness, its tears, its religious consolations – all this forms the subject of the first movement.

II: A ball

The artist finds himself in the most diverse situations in life, in the tumult of a festive party, in the peaceful contemplation of the beautiful sights of nature, yet everywhere, whether in town or in the countryside, the beloved image keeps haunting him and throws his spirit into confusion.

III: Scene in the countryside

One evening in the countryside he hears two shepherds in the distance dialoguing with their '*ranz des vaches*'; this pastoral duet, the setting, the gentle rustling of the trees in the wind, some causes for hope that he has recently conceived, all conspire to restore to his

heart an unaccustomed feeling of calm and to give to his thoughts a happier colouring. He broods on his loneliness, and hopes that soon he will no longer be on his own... But what if she betrayed him!... This mingled hope and fear, these ideas of happiness, disturbed by dark premonitions, form the subject of the adagio. At the end one of the shepherds resumes his 'ranz des vaches'; the other one no longer answers. Distant sound of thunder... solitude... silence...

IV: March to the scaffold

Convinced that his love is spurned, the artist poisons himself with opium. The dose of narcotic, while too weak to cause his death, plunges him into a heavy sleep accompanied by the strangest of visions. He dreams that he has killed his beloved, that he is condemned, led to the scaffold and is witnessing his own execution. The procession advances to the sound of a march that is sometimes sombre and wild, and sometimes brilliant and solemn, in which a dull sound of heavy footsteps follows without transition the loudest outbursts. At the end of the march, the first four bars of the idée fixe reappear like a final thought of love interrupted by the fatal blow.

V: Dream of a witches' sabbath

He sees himself at a witches' sabbath, in the midst of a hideous gathering of shades, sorcerers and monsters of every kind who have come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, outbursts of laughter; distant shouts which seem to be answered by more shouts. The beloved melody appears once more, but has now lost its noble and shy character; it is now no more than a vulgar dance tune, trivial and grotesque: it is she who is coming to the sabbath... Roar of delight at her arrival... She joins the diabolical orgy... The funeral knell tolls, burlesque parody of the Dies irae; the dance of the witches. The dance of the witches combined with the Dies irae.

George Sand's account of Chopin (1810-1849)

His creation was spontaneous and miraculous. He found it without seeking it, without foreseeing it. It came on his piano suddenly, complete, sublime, or it sang in his head during a walk, and he was impatient to play it to himself. But then began the most heart-rending labor I ever saw. It was a series of efforts, of irresolutions, and of frettings to seize again certain details for the theme he had heard; what he had conceived as a whole he analyzed too much when wishing to write it, and his regret at not find it again, in his opinion, clearly defined, threw him into a kind of despair. He shut himself up for whole days, weeping, walking, breaking his pens, repeating and altering a bar a hundred times, writing and erasing it as many times, and recommencing the next day with a minute and desperate perseverance. He spent six weeks over a single page to write it at last as he had noted it down at the very first.

I had for a long time been able to make him consent to trust to this first inspiration. But when he was no longer disposed to believe me, he reproached me gently with having spoiled him and with not being severe enough for him. I tried to amuse him, to take him out for walks; but it was not always possible to prevail upon him to leave that piano which was much oftener his torment than his joy, and by degrees he showed temper when I disturbed him. I dared not insist. Chopin when angry was alarming; and as, with me, he always restrained himself, he seemed almost to choke and die.

Wagner's program notes to *Tristan und Isolde* (c. 1860)

An old, primeval love poem, imperishably reborn in ever-new forms and repeated in the poetry of all the languages of medieval Europe, tells us of Tristan and Isolde. For his king the trusty vassal had wooed a maid he dared not tell himself he loved, Isolde; as his master's bride she followed him, powerless to do otherwise than to follow the suiter. The goddess of love, jealous of her suppressed rights, avenged herself: the love potion intended by the prudent mother for the partners in this marriage contracted (as was then the custom) for purely political reasons, the goddess foists on the youthful pair by means of an imaginative oversight; suddenly aflame, they must confess they belong only to each other. No end, now, to the yearning, the desire, the bliss, the suffering of love: world, power, fame, splendor, honor, knighthood, loyalty, friendship—all scattered like an empty dread; one thing alone still living: yearning, yearning, unquenchable, ever-regenerated longing—languishing, thirsting; the only redemption—death, extinction, eternal sleep!

The musician who chose this theme as introduction to his love drama, feeling himself in the presence of the essential, boundless element of music, could have only one concern: how to limit himself, since the theme is inexhaustible. And so he let the insatiable longing well up one time only, but in a long-drawn-out progression, from timid avowal, gentlest attraction, through hesitant sighs, hopes and fears, laments and wishes, joys and torments, up to the mightiest compulsion, the most powerful effort to discover a breach, opening for the heart the way to the sea of endless rapturous love. In vain! Its power spent, the heart sinks back to pine of its desire—unfulfilled desire, since fulfillment only sows the seed of fresh desire; till to the faltering eye, in utmost exhaustion, there dawns a glimmer of the most rapturous fulfillment: it is the rapture of dying, of being no more, of ultimate release into that wondrous realm from which we stray the furthest when we strive to penetrate it by the most impetuous force. Shall we call it death? Or is it not night's wonder-world, out of which, as the saga tells us, an ivy and a vine sprang up in locked embrace over Tristan's and Isolde's grave?

Debussy in conversation with his teacher Ernest Guiraud

Debussy: [I have] no faith in the supremacy of the C major scale. The tonal scale must be enriched by other scales. Nor am I misled by equal temperament. Rhythms are stifling. Rhythms cannot be contained within bars. It is nonsense to speak of “simple” and “compound” time. There should be an interminable flow of both. Relative keys are nonsense, too. Music is neither major nor minor. Minor thirds and major thirds should be combined, modulation thus becoming more flexible. The mode is that which one happens to choose at the moment. It is inconstant. There must be a balance between musical demands and thematic evocation. Themes suggest their orchestral coloring.

Guiraud: [Debussy having played a series of chords on the piano] What’s that?

Debussy: Incomplete chords, floating. One can travel where one wishes and leave by any door. Greater nuances.

Guiraud: But when I play this [a “French sixth” chord on A-flat, evidently one of the chords Debussy had played] it has to resolve.

Debussy: I don’t see that it should. Why?

Guiraud: Well, do you find this lovely? [He plays a series of parallel triads]

Debussy: Yes, yes, yes!

Guiraud: I am not saying that what you do isn’t beautiful, but it’s theoretically absurd.

Debussy: There is no theory. You merely have to listen. Pleasure is the law.

Guiraud: I would agree with you in regard to an exceptional person who has discovered a discipline for himself and who has an instinct which he is able to impose. But how would you teach music to others?

Debussy: Music cannot be learned.

Guiraud: Come now, you are forgetting that you yourself were ten years at the Conservatoire.

Debussy: [He agrees and admits that there can after all be a doctrine.] Yes, this is silly. Except that I can't reconcile all this. True enough, I feel free because I have been through the mill, and I don't write in the fugal style because I know it.

On Schonberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 16 (1909)

Schonberg to composer Richard Strauss

The greatest difficulty in performing these pieces is that this time it is really impossible to read the score. It would be almost imperative to perform them through blind faith. I can promise you something really colossal, especially in sound and mood. For that is what they are all about—completely unsymphonic, devoid of architecture or construction, just an uninterrupted change of colors, rhythms and moods.

Schonberg's program notes (1912)

This music seeks to express all that swells in us subconsciously like a dream; which is a great fluctuant power, and is built upon none of the lines that are familiar to us; which has a rhythm, as blood has its pulsating rhythm, as all life in us has its rhythm; which has a tonality, but only as the sea or the storm has its tonality, which has harmonies, though we cannot grasp or analyze them nor can we trace its themes. All its technical craft is submerged, made one and indivisible with the content of the work.

Review by the London Daily Mail, 7 September 1912

Arnold Schonberg evidently revels in the bizarre. According to Dr. Anton von Webern, his music "contains the experience of his emotional life," and that experience must have been of a strange, not to say unpleasant character. Is it really honest music or merely a pose? We are inclined to think the latter. If music at all, it is music of the future, and we hope, of a distant one.

Critic Ernest Newman, September 1912

It is not often that an English audience hisses the music it does not like; but a good third of the people the other day permitted themselves that luxury after the performance of the five orchestral pieces of Schonberg. Another third of the audience was not hissing because it was laughing, and the remaining third seemed too puzzled either to laugh or to hiss. Nevertheless, I take leave to suggest that Schoenberg is not the mere fool or madman that he is generally supposed to be. May it not be that the new composer sees a logic in certain tonal relations that to the rest of us seem chaos at present, but the coherence of which may be clear enough to us all some day?

Excerpt from Satie's "Memoirs of an Amnesiac" c. 1912

Who I Am

Everyone will tell you that I am not a musician. That is correct. From the very beginning of my career I have classed myself among the phonometrographers. My work has been pure phonometrics. One need only take the *Fils des Étoiles*, or the *Morceaux en forme de poire*, *En habit de cheval*, or the *Sarabandes*, in order to see that no musical ideas attended the creation of these works. It is scientific thought that rules them. For the rest, I take greater pleasure in measuring a sound than in hearing it. Phonometer in hand, I work happily and confidently. What have I not weighed or measured? All of Beethoven, all of Verdi, etc. it's very strange.

The first time I used a phonoscope, I examined a B flat of medium size. I assure you I have never seen anything more revolting. I called in my servant so that he might see it too. On the phonoscales an ordinary F sharp, very common, reached 214 ½ pounds. It came from a very fat tenor whom I also weighed.

Do you know how to clean sounds? It's rather dirty business. Sorting them is neater; to be able to classify them is very exacting and takes very good eyesight. Here we are in the realm of phonotechnics. As for explosions of sound, often so unpleasant, cotton placed in the ears will attenuate them quite handily. Here we are in the realm of pyrophonics.

In order to write my *Pieces froides*, I used a kaleidophonic recorder. It took seven minutes I called in my servant so that he might hear it. I feel I can say that phonology is better than music. It is more varied. The pecuniary rewards are greater. I owe my fortune to it. In any case, a phonometrist working only moderately hard can easily note down more sounds on the motodynamophone than the most skillful musicians can do in the same time and with the same effort. It is thanks to this that I have written so much. The future therefore belongs to philophony.

A Musician's Day

An artist must regulate his life. Here then is the precise schedule of my daily activities.

I get up at 7:18 a.m. I am inspired from 10:23 to 11:47.

I have lunch at 12:11 and leave the table at 12:14.

I ride on my horse for my health's sake, at the rear of my estate, from 1:19 p.m. until 2:53.

Another bout of inspiration from 3:12 to 4:07.

Different occupations (fencing, reflection, immobility, visiting, contemplation, dexterity, swimming, etc.) from 4:21 until 6:47.

Dinner is served at 7:16 and over at 7:20. Then come symphonic readings (aloud) from 8:09 until 9:59.

My bedtime is regularly at 10:37. Every week I awaken with a start at 3:19 a.m. (Tuesdays).

I only eat white foods: eggs, sugar, ground bone, the fat of dead animals, veal, salt, coconuts, chicken boiled in white water, fruit mold, rice, turnips, bleached pudding, dough, cheese (white), cotton salad, and certain kinds of fish (without skin).

I have my wine boiled, and drink it cold with fuchsia juice. I have a good appetite, but I never speak while eating for fear of choking.

I breathe carefully (a little at a time). I dance very rarely. When walking I hold my sides and look straight behind me.

Very serious in demeanor, if I laugh it is without meaning to. I apologize all the time and quite affably.

I only close one eye when sleeping; my sleep is very sound. My bed is round, with a hole provided for putting the head through. Every hour my servant takes my temperature and gives me another.

I am a longtime subscriber to a fashion magazine. I wear a white hat, white stockings, and a white vest.

My doctor has always told me to smoke. To this advice he adds, "Smoke, my friend. If you don't, someone else will smoke in your place."