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Michelle Meinhart, Editor

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Bryan White. *Music for St Cecilia's Day: From Purcell to Handel*. Music in Britain, 1600–2000. Woodbridge, Suffolk and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2019. xx, 379 pp. ISBN: 978-1-78327-347-8 (hardback); 978-1-78744-503-1 (e-book).

The semi-secular “cult” of St. Cecilia is rightly deemed a manifestation of the English love of music, particularly in the early modern period. Whether playing instruments, singing, feasting, or contemplating the place of music in the pagan and Christian cosmos, English music lovers of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries found in the Cecilia myth a platform for the celebration of music, music-making, musical forms, and the affective power of sonority and harmony. So familiar are the contributions to the Cecilian genre made by Henry Purcell, John Dryden, and George Frideric Handel, among others, that it is easy to lose sight both of the profusion of Cecilian activities during this period and of the fact that those activities adumbrate a historical arc wherein the character of Cecilian celebrations shifted and transformed over time.



Bryan White's exhaustive study, the first book-length exploration of St. Cecilia celebrations to appear in 162 years, offers a welcome survey of the topic. White's thorough historical and textual research and his surefooted musical sensibilities make this a valuable piece of scholarship that materially enhances our understanding of the Cecilian phenomenon. Although comprised of six chapters, the book is effectively divided into three parts: Chapters 1 to 4 combine to produce a detailed examination of what might be deemed the classic period of Cecilian activities, which occurred in London between 1683 and 1700 and focused on a series of annual celebrations held on November 22, the saint's feast day. Following an initial historical survey, White explores the workings and personnel of the “Musical Society” that sponsored the activities; assesses the musical features of the extant odes; and delves into the rise, after the Glorious Revolution, of a parallel religious observance marked by performances of concerted canticles and anthems and the delivery of sermons advocating the use of orchestral music in Anglican worship. This section of the book is followed by two individual chapters surveying, respectively, the rise of Cecilian celebrations in various urban centers outside London and the continuation of, and developments related to, Cecilian compositions in London principally during the first four decades of the eighteenth century. Throughout the book, White delves deeply into the documentary record,

complementing well-known material with less familiar sources and using both to fuel informed speculation where possible. The level of detail is impressive, as is the range of White's critical approaches.

Thanks to the comprehensive and longitudinal character of his study, White is able to identify a number of trends in the history of the Cecilian movement. Chief among these is the ambivalent and shifting role of the saint herself. The obvious whiff of Popery associated with the celebration of a non-Biblical saint in Protestant England seems to have been compensated for by largely sidelining Cecilia's Christian pedigree in favor of her strictly musical attributes (none of which have any basis in her original martyrology). This is particularly notable after 1690 with the addition of a religious service on the morning of the feast day, replete with sacred music and a sermon, in which the saint was rarely if ever invoked. A further important trend White identifies is the gradual decoupling of St. Cecilia odes from the saint's particular day on the calendar, especially after 1700. Other insights relate to such things as the makeup of the original Musical Society; the change in the nature of the society's stewards over time; the numbers of performers used in the early odes; the impact of the Cecilian canticles of the 1690s on larger developments in English sacred music and, specifically, the innovations to the genre introduced by Purcell; and the creative ways in which panegyric verse could be repurposed from one monarch to the next. In a few instances, one wishes that White had followed up on some questions more fully, that certain localized arguments were better formulated, or that chains of surmise were more judiciously assembled. However, it is undeniable that the fragmentary nature of the evidence necessitates a good deal of speculation, and White generally handles this responsibility with care and, in the process, contributes materially to our understanding of the subject.

The only significant complaint that can be lodged against this otherwise solid and indeed impressive book is that it should have been subjected to more thorough proofreading. Many of the errors are easily corrected by the reader, although some, such as the misplaced items in Table 2.1, require rather more care to set right. Others, however, are more problematic: having found four instances of the spelling "muisck" in transcribed quotations, I was able quickly to determine that at least two of them represent nothing more than slips of the typist's fingers. A competent copyeditor should have caught them. But they are also symptomatic of a broader lack of care in the accurate transcription of quotations, names, and bibliographical references, for which only the author can be held responsible.

Fortunately, these faults do not detract substantially from what is otherwise a valuable and important study. White has boldly tackled a wide range of material, giving shape and substance to the often incomplete and anecdotal sources available to him. Perhaps more importantly, he has glossed his historical findings with a solid interpretive component. Indeed, White is at his very best when providing formal analysis of musical selections from the Cecilian corpus: Chapter 3, in particular, will serve as an indispensable guide, for scholars and students alike, to forms of musical expression in the extant odes of the late seventeenth century. This admirable achievement is complemented by additional analysis of the contemporaneous service music in Chapter 4, and of some of the extra-metropolitan and chronologically later Cecilian works in the last two chapters. Whatever minor solecisms might disrupt some of the historical sections, the analytical portions are alone sufficient to cement the book's place in the scholarly literature. White has performed a valuable service to British musicology, taking up with aplomb a topic that has lain largely moribund for well over a century, but which comprises a crucial window onto the broader subject of music-making in England from the 1680s to the end of the eighteenth century.

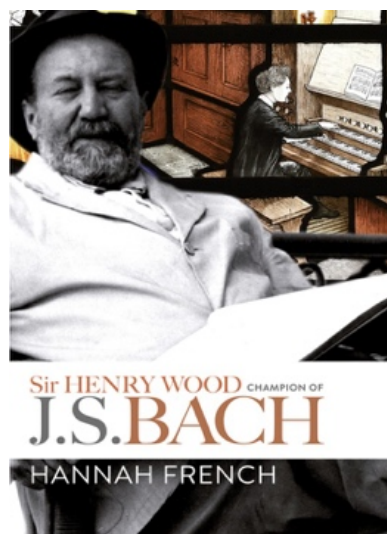
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Hannah French. *Sir Henry Wood: Champion of J.S. Bach*. Woodbridge UK: The Boydell Press, 2019. xxvi, 327 pp. ISBN: 9781783273850 (hardback).

Can you tell me that a man such as he, the father of twenty-one children, with many hundreds of compositions to his credit, always picking quarrels with the managements for having too few strings in his orchestra, a modern of the moderns of his time, was a man who merely jotted down notes on paper to be played as a sewing machine? Never!

Written by Sir Henry Wood (1869–1944) in his book, *About Conducting* (published in 1945) these telling words offer a glimpse into his interpretation of the music of J. S. Bach. Hannah French includes this quote in full (244) in the penultimate chapter of her detailed and absorbing study of this area of Wood's activities. Training the spotlight away from its usual focus on Wood seen through the lens of the Proms, French sheds new light on him as a “champion” of Bach. She deftly explores and illuminates Wood's



handling of issues of opportunity, practicality, and performance practice, and provides a thoughtful assessment of the contemporaneous reception and legacy created by this aspect of his career. Wood emerges from this richly-textured book as a forthright, passionate, and conscientious ambassador for Bach's music. He is revealed here as a musician of deeply-held convictions who sought to find a practical balance between sources, performance traditions, and logistics on the one hand, and his detailed study and developing experience of works he prized so highly on the other.

Published in the 150th anniversary year of Wood's birth, this study is a substantial and thoughtful examination of the nature and extent of Wood's vital role as an advocate for Bach's music. The book is arranged in five parts: I. “Contextualizing”; II. “Programming”; III. “Interpreting: Orchestral Works”; IV. “Interpreting: Vocal Works”; and V. “Influencing”. We move from the cogent introduction to the context for the English Bach revival in Part I; to Wood's enduring involvement with Bach and his players, and his programming of the orchestral works at the Proms (including structures, trends and critical opinions) in Part II; to the coverage of Wood's performance scores, recordings, his Boosey & Hawkes edition and his orchestral arrangements in Part III; to the discussion of the cantatas, the Passions, and the Mass in B minor in Part IV; and to the assessment of his reception and influence in Part V. The Epilogue—in which French uses Wood's stained-glass memorial window (1946) in the Musicians' Chapel of St Sepulchre's Church in London to reflect on the preceding discussion—is followed by nine appendices, a bibliography, a general index, and an index of Bach's works. The generous inclusion of fifty illustrations, nine graphs, and two music examples affords direct access to images of Wood's markings and annotations, bringing arguments and observations made in the narrative vividly to life.

The appendices provide fascinating sets of data. For example, Appendix E lists the soloists who performed for Wood in Bach's Orchestral Suites and Brandenburg Concertos from 1895 to 1944, foregrounding the patterns of programming, networks, and connections that developed across Wood's long career. Like many of the other appendices, it marshals data to explicate continuities and discontinuities. Here, individual and collective associations are highlighted, giving the reader



a sense of the familiarity that must have developed between performers and conductor over time. The names of these flautists, oboists, and violinists personalize the impact that Wood had on individual careers. As discussed in Chapter 4, “Wood’s Bach Players,” he put his orchestral players in the spotlight by often making them soloists. All of this appended material provides an invaluable source of reference for scholars of concert life, performance practice, and reception history.

As French remarks in the Epilogue, Wood wanted to be remembered as more than the “Conductor of the Proms” (271). His access to that powerful platform came through his big break in 1895 when Robert Newman took a risk in appointing him as the 26-year-old conductor of the inaugural Queen’s Hall Promenade Concert season. Wood grasped and shaped this exceptional opportunity. He used it to educate and familiarize audiences with a wide range of music by highlighting the inclusion of “novelties” and by introducing and embedding lesser-known repertoire strategically over time. But his concert-giving reach extended beyond London. In Chapter 10 of this study, we learn more about his first performances of the *St. Matthew Passion* and the Mass in B minor within the Sheffield Musical Festival. French argues persuasively that these performances were “particularly noteworthy” and that “these interpretations infused and informed all his subsequent performances” (215). Using the surviving conducting score of the *St. John Passion*, French suggests what Wood’s markings in his copy of the *St. Matthew Passion* might have been. Here, and elsewhere, she depicts Wood as a disciplined and meticulous disciple of Bach, as well as someone who remained aware of approaches taken by other conductors and of specific practical issues created by working conditions (including changes of venue and numbers of performers).

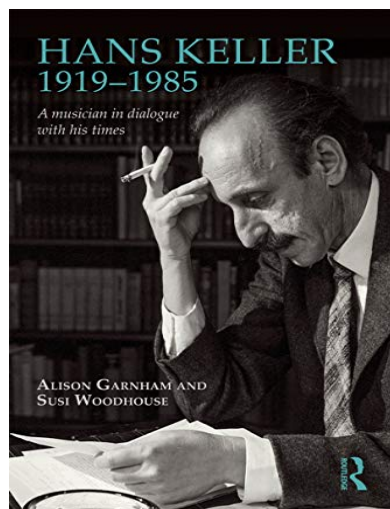
A central question is the extent to which Wood elevated Bach to a higher position than his “other passions: the promotion of Russian or British music or the popularisation of Wagner or Sibelius” (3). French convincingly makes the case that Bach occupied a special place in Wood’s life. She does so by building her arguments and findings on very firm foundations, drawing on forensic analysis and consideration of mainly previously unexamined printed and manuscript materials contained in the “Wood Archive” (Royal Academy of Music, London) and the “Boosey & Hawkes Archive” (British Library, London). French brings insights as a musicologist and a performer to these sources and demonstrates an ability to probe the nooks and crannies without losing direction and purpose in carrying arguments through the discussion. French shows how, thanks to Wood’s advocacy, the Brandenburg Concertos and orchestral suites became core works in England’s concert life. She charts and evaluates Wood’s role as an advocate through live performances, recordings, writings, lectures, and editions and also examines and assesses his interpretative decisions, contextualizing them not only in his own time but also in terms of his legacy for performers and audiences today.

Sir Henry Wood: Champion of J.S. Bach is a fascinating book which, through its judicious synthesis and consideration of rich sources, fulfils its brief admirably. It establishes new understandings of Wood’s vital role in the revival of Bach’s music in England.

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Allison Garnham and Susi Woodhouse. *Hans Keller 1919-1985: A Musician in Dialogue with His Times*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2018. 422 p. ISBN: 9781138391048 (Hardback).



an impressive number of publications on Keller's life and work, and their sheer knowledge shows.

Hans Keller was perhaps the most influential music critic on British soil in the 20th century. Never known for his diplomacy, he communicated widely and passionately in provocative and to-the-point prose. It is fitting that in this, the “first full biography,” authors Alison Garnham and Susi Woodhouse capture Keller through his own arresting style, quoting extensively from primary source material. As a rough and unsubstantiated guess (to which kind, Keller would doubtlessly objected), I would suggest that a fifth or more of the book consists of quotations. For the most part, the authors draw on excerpts from letters, as well as other texts, such as drafts intended for publication or radio broadcasts. This richness of primary source materials is undoubtedly what will draw researchers to the book: they will be tempted to use it almost as a one-stop-shop to Keller's vast archive. Garnham and Woodhouse know Keller's papers and archive inside out, boast

Given such meticulous attention to archival detail, the structure of the narrative at times meanders, rather than being organized alongside strict topical and thematic areas. For example, Chapter 1 explores interwar Jewish culture, post-Habsburg Vienna, Keller's contributions to the Paris-based German exile newspaper, *Das Neue Tagebuch*, his studies in psychology, his internment as an enemy alien, his admiration of Benjamin Britten and W. A. Mozart, his interests in film music, and more. Closer biographical focus looms large, too. The book opens with Keller landing at Croydon Airport, and sees him make numerous acquaintances, including his first meetings with his future wife as well as Britten. As such, the chapters are treasure troves, which reveal their secrets incrementally to the alert reader. For the most part, the authors resist the temptation to zoom out and seek for wider contextualizations, instead adopting a historicist approach that prioritizes primary, archival sources. It is perhaps telling that the book does not have an introduction as such, instead prefacing each chapter with a very short text that explicitly encourages readers to find their own route through Keller's work.

In some ways, this strategy mirrors the almost circuitous route that led Keller to write about music. The authors' supposition that Keller may never have become a music critic were it not for his forced migration to Britain is, as they readily admit, pure speculation. But it is a plausible one. Chapter 2 describes Keller's initial years as a music critic, with publications in *Music & Letters*, *The Music Review*, and elsewhere. More often than not, Keller seems to have been at loggerheads with one or other of his contemporaries. If his outspoken prose provoked criticism, and sometimes hostility, however, his detailed and well-researched texts resulted in an ever-growing reputation as a sharp critic in British musical circles. Growing friendships are chartered, too, such as that with Donald Mitchell, who may have contributed to Keller's growing interest in and subsequent advocacy of Arnold Schoenberg—a figure whose Continental renown was not matched in Britain.

Throughout the book, it is clear how irate Keller became when he encountered what, to him, seemed like sloppiness. Keller's image is of a man who was obsessed with acquiring as detailed an understanding of any piece of music he engaged with as possible. Perhaps this is why Keller



sometimes warmed only slowly to certain composers, Schoenberg being a case in point. Beyond that, it may be that Keller's dissatisfaction with the state of British musical criticism drew him towards working on a more solid and methodically sound analysis. The resulting wordless functional analysis, for which Keller is well known, stands at the center of Chapter 5, and pays special attention to a repertoire dear to Keller, namely Mozart's and Joseph Haydn's string quartets. While the British musical establishment took little notice in Keller's invention at first—NDR, the North German Radio Station, conversely, showed enthusiastic interest—it did eventually become a success, especially through programs broadcast on the BBC.

Indeed, the BBC became the platform through which Keller undoubtedly reached his largest audiences, first on radio, and then on TV. Keller's appointment came on the heels of William Glock's as Controller of Music in 1959 and may be seen as a sea change. Both, Glock and Keller, seized on the appetite for radical innovation that brought them into power. Garnham and Woodhouse dedicate a whole chapter, the sixth of the book, to Keller at the BBC. As elsewhere, Keller did not shy away from controversy and never hesitated to see feathers ruffled. For example, when the appointment of Austrian-born naturalized Brit Rudolf Schwarz as conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra in 1959 met a xenophobic response, Keller wrote in the *News Chronicle* that he "felt for a moment I was back under rule." Now in a position of power with musical circles, however, Keller's voice began to carry more weight. Garnham and Woodhouse are correct, I think, when they point out the significance of the BBC position for Keller, who, having arrived as a refugee, relished his move to one of the institutional epicenters of British cultural life. To me, this chapter is the most successful of the book, as Garnham and Woodhouse provide detailed accounts of Keller continuously and proactively questioning the workings of the institution, which, overall, regarded him highly.

In the 1970s, Keller's last decade at the BBC, his relationship with the corporation soured, as the authors explore in Chapter 7. This was also the time when Keller addressed his past as a political refugee publicly, notably in a 1973 broadcast in which he recalled his imprisonment by the Nazis in 1938 Vienna and which, as the book explores, drew many empathetic and positive responses from friends, colleagues, and listeners. The eighth and final chapter, "Beyond Broadcasting," draws together a number of strands from Keller's life from the mid-1970s onwards: his book *1975*, a cautionary and dystopian collection of essays, visits to Israel in the late 70s, interactions with various British composers and performers, several teaching activities, his almost fanatical love of football, and, despite the chapter's title, more on his increasingly tense connection with the BBC.

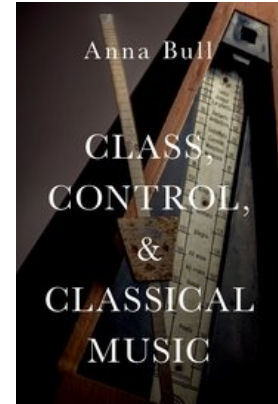
Given such an almost overpowering wealth of topics, it is surely pedantic to point out what is *not* in the book. Garnham and Woodhouse focus overwhelmingly on British musical life and include very little of Keller's interaction with the international music scene. Almost entirely absent is Keller's engagement with popular music. Keller's famous interview with Pink Floyd, for example, which showcases his complete incomprehension of, and blatant unwillingness to engage with, popular music is not mentioned. Views as to whether this predominant focus on British classical music is a disadvantage will inevitably vary from reader to reader. Overall, then, the book is extraordinarily rich in detail and shines with an impressive inclusion of primary source materials, in which the authors did not aim to provide overall narratizations or conceptualizations, instead leaving it to the reader to combine the various strands.

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Anna Bull. *Class, Control, & Classical Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. 193 pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-084435-6 (hardback).

The 2019 publication of Anna Bull's *Class, Control & Classical Music* feels prescient in light of the climate of social protest that has emerged in 2020. As music departments across the globe are recognizing the importance of decolonizing the canon and the curriculum, and as institutions of higher education are under increased pressure to pay attention to Black Lives Matter, it is significant to see the publication of a book that categorically illustrates the history of classical music in Britain as one that is inherently bound up within ideologies of gendered and imperial whiteness. As such, this important book may function as an account of "how we got here"—and, by extension, will help to pave the way for more productive dialogues, which, of course, are only possible if we reconcile with the aesthetic justifications for our imperialist pasts.



The "Introduction" outlines Bull's unique position for undertaking the study—coming from a conservatoire education and having worked professionally as a cellist, Bull eventually migrated to sociology, and it is from a sociological perspective that she undertook her fieldwork with young musicians in England for her PhD (2015). This doctoral fieldwork forms the basis of the book. Based on interviews and observations of rehearsals, Bull's evocative writing switches back and forth between conversations with young music students, and sets these against a backdrop of critical sociological theory and historical musicological research on the Victorian origins of classical music as building up a mode of "virtuous" bourgeois whiteness. The personal story, for example, of young Owen (28), who sees classical music, rather than football, as a way to transcend his working-class upbringing, will ring true for anyone who has taught music to working-class students in the UK: that the hierarchical system of classical music performance provides a social pathway for young musicians that offers transcendence from the problems of the real world through the aesthetic autonomy of its music, but, at the same time, only provides access to that community by training the young musician to adhere to the disciplined social codes of middle-class whiteness.

As Bull's coherent and compelling chapters explore, disciplinary norms are placed on classical music students in Britain on multiple levels, from the ritual of paying for the standardized music exam (Chapter 2), to the myth of classical music as a form of bourgeois, virtuous self-improvement (Chapters 3 and 4), to the gendered discipline of the (male, white) conductor (Chapters 5 and 6), to the hallowed halls of the UK music institutions (all founded by white, male Victorians) that themselves came to represent middle-class "respectability" (Chapter 2). This "respectability" is rehearsed under the conductor and performed onstage, perpetuating the idea that classical music is only possible through the continuation of gendered and racial identities (Chapter 7). As Bull describes it in a subtitle for Chapter 8, classical music thus becomes a "Technology for Knowing the Bourgeois Self" (159). In sum, Bull constructs the culture of twenty-first-century British classical music as a location where participants, particularly teenage students, are lured in through the ideology of a community and history that gives them the identity of being privileged and aesthetically knowledgeable musicians. As Bull determines, "Classical music is, in this way, hugely valuable for those who experience it, but its ideas of aesthetic beauty both require and simultaneously camouflage the exclusionary mechanisms that are at work" (173).

These "exclusionary mechanisms" are built up and perpetuated by classical music's institutions, performance norms, and the ideology of autonomous music that leads young people to believe



that playing classical music somehow makes you “better” than those who perform other types of music (i.e.: less middle-class, less-white, less “academic,” musical practices). This naturally comes as a huge challenge to the institutions that preserve and conserve classical music today. By extension, this challenge is for musicologists, too, who often take for granted the aesthetic ideologies that perpetuate forms of physical disciplining that can sometimes lead to social, psychological and physical traumas for young music students. To that end, Bull is able to build the case that she does because of her insider status within the classical music world (clearly, she has working contacts within a variety of institutions who are happy to facilitate the observations and interviews), balanced by the critical distance of approaching the study through the lens of sociology. While she does draw upon relevant musicological names to establish the Victorian histories of British musical institutions (McGuire; Wright), Bull’s chief theoretical allegiance is sociology (Born; Scharff; Bourdieu). As such, what is refreshing here is that Bull’s arguments are not tied up within the allegiances that often form within musicology: because of this, her observations read as fresh and bold, and tell those of us from within academic music studies plainly what we might otherwise over-theorize: that there are class and race issues within the education and industry of classical music, and that little will change without acknowledging this from inside the tradition.

Bull readily admits that more flexible changes and diversifications are underway—her “Conclusion” provides several examples of new modes of creative education, and recent shifts in cultural policy. She extends the challenge to cultural and education institutions to publish their data on inequalities, and to rethink their selection processes, curricula, and pedagogies. The model of the Art Council England’s Creative Case for Diversity (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity/creative-case-diversity>) is offered as a progressive initiative, but Bull notes that there are particular challenges for classical musicians in addressing this kind of creative diversification, given that classical musicians have been culturally conditioned to believe that the technical extremes required to be a proficient are only achievable through exclusionary and hierarchical education. To challenge this, Bull concludes by citing a growing number of initiatives for social dialogue that could start to break these boundaries down, while remaining adamant that it is going to take a lot of deeper, structural transformation to really bring about change, such as the democratizing of state funding, and a direct acknowledgement of the imperialist histories of classical music culture as a way to explain the stark economic inequalities that surround the students who are drawn into classical versus popular performance traditions.

The strength of Bull’s book is that it is the first of its kind to systematically make the case for classical music as a culture of racial, gendered, and classed control, specifically through the lens of the “sacralization” of art music. As such, the book is groundbreaking, and I envision that it may become a staple of undergraduate reading lists. The next step is to bring these conversations into a more global, comparative context. While Bull does specify in her “Introduction” that the remit of her fieldwork is young musicians in the UK, and while she convincingly sets up the Victorian institutions that created UK classical music culture as part of a culture of British imperialism, there is little in the book to open up cross-cultural, postcolonial or transatlantic comparisons. The discussion of graded exams in the UK as a taken-for-granted practice, for example, is entirely inevitable for anyone who has grown up learning classical music within the UK or the British Commonwealth, but would be a foreign concept for American readers (or readers outside of the British Commonwealth): a fact that Bull glosses over. Indeed, that Bull appears to take for granted that readers will understand just how central British graded music examinations are to the culture of classical music unwittingly perpetuates the neo-imperialistic legacy of the exams in the British Commonwealth. Perhaps a subtitle narrowing the scope of the study to the UK context would have been helpful: due to the broad title, one might be forgiven for confusing “Britain” with the



practice of classical music around the world as a whole, which would only reinforce the totalizing myths that the book tries to break down.

But perhaps cross-cultural comparative endeavors are projects for future studies. *Class, Control, & Classical Music* is a truly exciting and thought-provoking publication that will be essential reading for all students and scholars of classical music who are working towards a more diverse and inclusive future where constructive, self-aware dialogue about institutionalized privilege is finally possible.

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