

Preface

Festschriften. . . are usually printed on deluxe paper and adorned by a touched-up photograph of the person showing him or her as bespectacled and corrugated by age and scholarly concentration, suggesting that learned pursuits are physiologically deadening. The contents of such volumes are usually grab bags, if not indeed garbage containers, of discarded Ph.D. theses on jejune subjects, aborted parerga, fetid paralipomena, and fulsome fecundities, laden with footnotes that frequently retract statements made in the text, and couched in a stupefyingly pedestrian style that is often grammatically and syntactically indigestible. Such materials are usually intellectual elucubrations contributed by the students of the person so honored. Unintentionally, such editions put in doubt the ability of the master to enlighten or instruct. (Nicolas Slonimsky, *Lectionary of music*, 1989)

While a few of the books documented in RILM's three-volume retrospective Festschrift project may answer to Slonimsky's description, the many forms that the others take belie its generalizations. For example, an 1892 commemorative volume for Christopher Columbus's first voyage to America (entry 116 in this book) presents hundreds of contributions from diplomats, scholars, and others, including a few handwritten bars of music from Verdi; a profusely illustrated 1940 memorial volume for the pioneering modern dancer and choreographer Etel Nagy (425) collects tributes from her wide circle of artistic and intellectual colleagues and friends; and six Festschriften for Albert Schweitzer (575–580) provide rare meetings of luminaries in the fields of theology, philosophy, music, and medicine, reflecting his work in these four areas.

Some of these books are very beautiful, produced with a care for detail that evokes a bygone era. An abundance of high-quality color plates, tipped-in facsimiles of correspondence and programs on specially chosen papers, dedicated poems and musical works, use of fonts as specialized as those of Egyptian hieroglyphs in the bodies of texts, or even the simple elegance of a red border framing each page attest to the esteem accorded to the dedicatee, and to the belief that a tribute in the form of a book is a high honor, comparable to a statue or a named institution.

At the other end of the spectrum, some of these books are diminutive and cheaply printed, but—according to our judgment—of sufficient potential historical interest to merit inclusion; for example, a pamphlet containing the text of an address given on the 100th anniversary of the birth of the musicologist and critic François-Joseph Fétis (164) underscores his influence on 19th-century European musical life. The wide middle ground between the lavish and humble examples is largely occupied by volumes that resemble Slonimsky's satirical description only in its most general outlines: books presenting articles by students and colleagues on topics of interest to the dedicatee on the occasion of some milestone—most often a birthday or some other anniversary.

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The term *Festschrift* coalesced around the concept in 19th-century Germany, and the genre remains a primarily Teutonic phenomenon: A wide majority of the volumes documented herein are from Germany. Curiously, while parallel terms have been developed in some other languages, the only English-language terms for the genre and its plural are *Festschrift* and *Festschriften*, capitalized as borrowed terms rather than lower-cased as assimilated ones.

The retrospective project

Unlike our last retrospective project, *Speaking of music: Music conferences, 1835–1966*, which was based on substantial preliminary work done in the 1970s, the present one was undertaken almost entirely at RILM's International Center in New York City from July 2006 through February 2008. Our starting point was the most complete single source available, Walter Gerboth's indexed bibliography.¹ During his lifetime, Gerboth—who was the Head Librarian at Brooklyn College's Music Library—amassed an impressive personal collection of music-related *Festschriften*. This collection was given to Brooklyn College upon his death, and Marguerite Iskenderian, the Head Librarian at what is now the Walter W. Gerboth Music Library, kindly allowed us to borrow these books to ensure bibliographic accuracy and allow editors to write abstracts at our office. She also gave us useful notes that Gerboth left for a second edition of his book that never materialized.

We also included items not covered by Gerboth from articles by Imogen Fellingner,² Ernst C. Krohn,³ Marc-André Roberge,⁴ and Nigel Simeone.⁵ Additionally, the RILM national committees were sent a list of all the *Festschriften* that we identified within the scope of this project that were published in their countries, with a request that they search for items missing from the lists; this effort resulted in the addition of about 20 *Festschriften*.

Further, we managed to add substantially to this composite list through creative database and Internet searching. When we began this project we had every reason to believe that almost all of the applicable materials had been covered by Fellingner, Gerboth, Krohn, Simeone, and Roberge, so the idea that we might discover about 60 sources that they had missed seemed to be a generous estimate. However, our in-house searches ultimately added over 1500 sources.

We found a few books listed by the previous bibliographers that turned out to be simply biographies or dedicated volumes rather than *Festschriften*, and articles that—despite

¹ Walter W. Gerboth, *An index to musical Festschriften and similar publications* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969).

² Imogen Fellingner, "Fest- und Gelegenheitsschriften", *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Sachteil*, ed. by Ludwig Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter; Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995) vol. 3, 426–34, translated into English herein (pp. xix–xxvii).

³ Ernst C. Krohn, "Musical Festschriften and related publications", *Notes: Journal of the Music Library Association* 21/1–2 (winter 1963–spring 1964) 94–108.

⁴ Marc-André Roberge, "Focusing attention: Special issues in German-language music periodicals of the first half of the twentieth century", *The Royal Musical Association research chronicle* 27 (1994) 71–99.

⁵ Nigel Simeone, "Festschriften", *The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie (2nd edition, London: Macmillan, 2001) vol. 8, 744–45.

promising-sounding titles—were not really about music. These we omitted. Still, we ended up with a much larger collection than we had anticipated, and we have no doubt that it is still incomplete; not every Festschrift has the word *Festschrift* or one of its equivalents in its title, and there are numerous other ways that books can elude detection. Nevertheless, the overall project now stands at over 11,500 records, close to twice the number that we anticipated.

Faced with such an unexpectedly large amount of material, we realized that we were working on what would be an impossibly unwieldy tome. Therefore we decided to split the material into three thematic volumes: the present volume, which documents Festschriften for music scholars and nonmusicians (including scholars and artists in other fields); a second volume for books celebrating milestones of composers and performing musicians; and a third volume for Festschriften marking anniversaries of institutions (including schools, performing organizations, societies, and instrument-building firms) and other nonpersonal entities such as cities and countries.

The Interlibrary Loan staff at the Mina Rees Library at the City University of New York's Graduate Center was extremely helpful, and at times the RILM International Center was awash with books. Every effort was made to consult the original sources, including making trips to the New York Public Library's Special Reserve section and other noncirculating collections. In the great majority of cases, RILM editors held the books and periodicals documented here, or complete photocopied or microfilmed copies of them, in their hands—including the seven unpublished Festschriften that we covered.

Festschriften in musical life

Festschriften enact visions of order in both synchronic and diachronic domains. In the synchronic realm, they depict order within, and among, disciplines and institutions. They represent diachronic order in their images of history—also within disciplines and institutions, as well as within the overarching history of music. For the most part, Festschriften do not quarrel: The world of the *liber amicorum* is indeed a world of friends.

This is not to say that all Festschriften are benign. For example, the Nazi propaganda machine made much use of the genre, from carefully coded celebrations of the 250th anniversary of Mozart's death in 1941 to two Festschriften for Hitler himself (243 and 244) celebrating his 50th birthday. Such currents of history are also felt in juxtapositions; for example, a Festschrift for Wilibald Gurlitt (215), who was removed from his position teaching music history at Universität Freiburg between 1937 and 1945, appears alongside three for his replacement, Joseph Müller-Blattau (414–416).

The heyday of the music Festschrift appears to have peaked in the 20th century; this volume reflects its growth. Perhaps books now carry less symbolic weight due to the increasing dominance of mass media. Further, interest in Festschriften among academic publishers is waning, since their eclectic nature makes them difficult to market.

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Perhaps, also, there is less certainty about visions of order today. By 1966 postmodern irony had not yet become fashionable, nor had the new-music world splintered completely. The narrative of contemporary music still related it directly to a salutary evolution from antiquity onward. Some of the rhetoric of the serialists was downright utopian, and, especially after they had Stravinsky on board, many people assumed that they indeed represented the future of Western music. The academy was also more unified, and while ethnomusicologists were not universally welcomed into music departments, the cutthroat culture wars were yet to be fought.

The earliest music Festschriften commemorated composers: Händel, Beethoven, and Bach. The impulse to celebrate such people with books may be viewed in relation to the tradition of dedicated pieces of music, a tradition that is reflected in the special index that ends this book, “Compositions included in Festschriften”. Like musical works, and unlike pictures, statues, or other static tributes, books present guided experiences—the truths that words and music tell and the wisdom that they share are to be similarly savored. Perhaps the future will bring a different, but comparably analogous, development: Already, forward-looking people have begun experimenting with the Webfestschrift.

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