
Book review:
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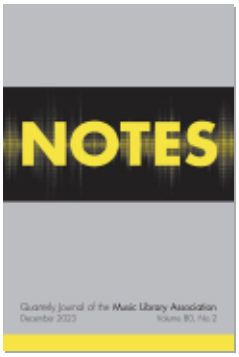
An Unnatural Attitude: Phenomenology in Weimar Musical Thought by Benjamin Steege (review)



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a contested maneuver. In the Leipzig mission (chap. 11), on the other hand, missionary Bruno Gutmann introduced to the Wachagga hundreds of Lutheran chorales translated into the local language. And for the Catholic missionaries (chap. 13), who believed that the local African populations were "on the same evolutionary level as Europeans in the Middle Ages or even earlier" (p. 205), the *motu proprio* forbade the use of anything but Latin, and thus they introduced plainchant.

The book affords numerous reasons for high praise. Berger's careful attention to understudied musical scenes, borne out through incredibly detailed archival research, provides a fresh and vital new angle on a familiar historiographical moment, namely the renewed interest in medieval music. While that moment is the central topic of the book, the investigatory lens is zoomed out, and the academic context of medieval music scholarship is nicely decentered, placed within a much broader international context of public music-making, mission work, and engagement with other disciplines. For a story that revolves around musicology's relation to these other disciplines, it is remarkably accessible to nonmusicologists and would provide a superb introduction to some of the major developments in musicological thought to scholars in other fields. And Berger's biographical studies, crafted not only as individual chapters but also as threads throughout the narrative, shed light on familiar actors and create a new context in which to view them; moreover, her meticulous discussions of the participants in this story give voice to several lesser-known individuals in both Europe and Africa. With regard to giving voice, though, the book still explores a Western phenomenon that stretched into colonial Africa, and the perspectives given are largely those of the Europeans (Ballanta and a few others aside).

Berger makes her awareness of Germany's colonial enterprise in Africa known throughout the book, but there are missed opportunities here to more deeply scrutinize colonialism's impact on the indigenous populations in question and to include their beliefs about their own musical traditions and their attitudes toward the German presence. Similarly, while race and racism are constant themes throughout the book, a framework for analyzing them across the three disparate populations—and across the chronological time covered—would have only strengthened Berger's analysis. The chimera has many siblings, and so the book's greatest contribution might be the number of doors it opens toward future scholarship: further work on (post)colonialism and racist ideologies, continued ethnographic study of the indigenous populations represented here, and connections to the broader early-music revival of the twentieth century, to the growth of musical medievalism in both concert and popular traditions, to the later development of academic medieval studies, and to other nations' missionary activities in Africa and elsewhere, would all find a firm foothold here.

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An Unnatural Attitude: Phenomenology in Weimar Musical Thought. By Benjamin Steege. (New Material Histories of Music.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021. [ix, 281 p. ISBN 9780226762982 (hardcover), $55; ISBN 9780226763033 (ebook), $54.99.] Music examples, illustrations, bibliography, index.

Times of transition are times of opportunity. Missed at one historical juncture, can those opportunities be recuperated at another? Would we, as historians confronted with the ideas,

emotions, and personal fates of figures long gone, not wish to be like "*that* historian" invoked by Walter Benjamin, who "has the gift of rekindling the spark of hope in that which is past"? ("Über den Begriff der Geschichte," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972], 1:2:695; my trans.) The messianic context of Benjamin's observation is not inappropriate to Benjamin Steege's book, which begins with the phenomenologist Max Scheler's grandiose hope that the very concept of "world" itself could be saved through the German struggle in World War I, and ends with Günther Anders (né Stern) and his 1956 prophecy that all human beings could hope for in the atomic age was a *kurze Frist*, a brief opportunity for self-reflection before the promise of apocalyptic finitude came to fruition. In between—a little music, with a few reflections on how it should be heard. But appearances to the contrary, perhaps more is at stake than that in the legacy of Weimar musical phenomenology. Steege seems to think so, and I would agree with him, though, as will be apparent in what follows, I disagree over why.

The disproportion (or *Gefälle*, to use one of Anders's characteristic terms) between phenomenology's aims and its examples or results is one of its curious but, one could argue, almost constitutive features. In this approach, musical experiences are not simply empirical events with local causes (as for the psychologist) or aesthetic records in need of cultural interpretation (as for hermeneutics) but encounters that "show up" against a much broader background or "world," one that may be partly constituted by its members' shared aesthetic attitude (*Einstellung*). Steege's image of phenomenology's "outward turn" (p. 19), an antipsychologism that also rejected romantic inwardness, is a recurring criterion used throughout the book to adjudicate various writers' fidelity to the movement. It means "a return to the *things themselves*," in Edmund Husserl's slogan (p. 18), but not just as they might be given to us "naturally" or in immediate sensuous presence. Rather we must grasp that things are only accessible to us at all because of certain postures (say, concentrated, actively participatory, or open and expectant) that we have already adopted, a self-reflective stance that itself forms the "unnatural attitude" of Steege's title.

One consequence of this is that a certain kind of introspection actually becomes unavoidable in doing phenomenology. Another is that the collective choice involved in these attitudes or postures (for it is *we* who adopt them, not an abstract, individualized *subject*) makes phenomenology intrinsically political as well as open in its essence to questions about the diversity of subject positions it might support. Politics is a key context for Steege; meanwhile, the question of thematizing marginalized perspectives within early twentieth-century phenomenology is explored in greater depth by Tamara Levitz ("The Twentieth Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of Western Music and Philosophy*, ed. Tomás McAuley, Nanette Nielsen, and Jerrold Levinson [New York: Oxford University Press, 2021], 224–62), which can be read productively in tandem with Steege's book. Musical objects, experiential or aesthetic analysis, and politics/ethics thus form nodes in a wide-spanning network, its tension difficult to manage for the historical agents in 1920s debates, and no less so for the commentator a century later attempting, in Steege's phrase, to "complete the thought" (p. 23). Even if one might feel the tension differently oneself, there is no question that this text maintains and communicates it with tremendous skill and historical sensitivity, in both its main chapter sequence

and the translated essays that make up a rich set of appendixes.

An example of the productive tension that phenomenology brings to musical experience is Steege's summary in the first chapter of the *Theorie der Tonart* ([Theory of Key] Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1927) by Gustav Güldenstein, one of the book's most obscure figures. Güldenstein counters attempts to ground a theory of tonality in acoustics with the observation—familiar to the piano tuner—that acoustics and harmony involve quite different listening attitudes (*Haltungen*), and that far from acoustics offering a basis for harmony, it is our "harmonic attitude" that drives our interest in acoustics. This harmonic attitude is "dynamic," relational, and metaphor-driven. Indeed one possible expression for it would not even be sonic at all but kinetic—Dalcroze eurhythmics, of which Güldenstein was an early pedagogue and practitioner (p. 44), and which carried a liberatory aesthetic–political charge in its preference for the free bodily manifestation of musical experiences over their theoretical, typological definition. Elsewhere, though, Steege has to save Güldenstein from dissolving the phenomenological tension in favor of ontological idealism. The "immutable thing" sought behind a Mozart sonata is held to be "the *idea* of the sonata . . . the ideal object"—a foundationalist argument pursued down its various conceptual–analytical byways by Güldenstein's contemporary Roman Ingarden, but at the cost of the vital phenomenological "interest in the *various* ways that something ideal in turn enables subsequent experiences" (p. 49).

Phenomenology and ontology were interwoven throughout this period, of course, but it is the tendency of the former to collapse into a specifically "object-oriented" version of the latter that is concerning. Steege notes "the risk of a critical misfire" due to "the pressure [on phenomenology] of an affiliated but ultimately rather different project of antisubjectivism" (p. 51), and Levitz more specifically highlights how "philosophers of music . . . move[d] away from explorations of the *experience* of music towards approaches that highlighted the musical *work*" (Levitz, 244). How phenomenology should position itself in between experience and musical work or object goes up for debate in the latter half of Steege's first chapter, where a sequence of mid-1920s interventions by Hans Mersmann, Helmuth Plessner, Moritz Geiger, Paul Bekker, and Herbert Eimert is summarized, evaluated, and supported by translations of many of these texts as appendixes. (The lesser-known work of Arthur Wolfgang Cohn also features, though as something of a chronological outlier, since Cohn died young in 1920 in his mid-twenties.) Continuing the recent tradition of "energetics" stemming from the work of August Halm and Ernst Kurth, Mersmann presents the most musically detailed and systematic, but also philosophically problematic, account of what musical phenomenology might be. His "striving for the greatest possible objectivity" and attempt "to detach [phenomenological] observation from all relations to the observer. . . . all 'ego-relations' [and] associative factors" (p. 52) sets him up, not unfairly, as the fall guy for subsequent critique—not only from professional phenomenologists, but also from those who identified with late romantic hermeneutics, such as Arnold Schering (see my article " 'A Heap of Broken Images'? Reviving Austro-German Debates over Musical Meaning, 1900–36," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 138, no. 1 [2013]: 129–74, esp. 154–56), and critics interested in phenomenology, such as Bekker.

Bekker's 1925 position—which I held up a decade ago as "the most incisive and least well-known intervention in

the philosophy of music during the whole Weimar era" ("A Heap of Broken Images," 161), though Steege's translation ought now to make it better known than it was—seems to flirt dangerously with naturalism in founding itself on the natural phenomenon of "sonority" (*Klang*), thereby threatening to erase Güldenstein's distinction between "acoustic" and genuinely musical attitudes. The more philosophically erudite Eimert did not miss his chance to finesse Bekker on this point. But rather than being an isolated, "promissory" sketch unfulfilled in later writings (p. 61), the position Eimert sets out at this juncture already points toward a confluence of the values of modernism and musicology that would later acquire enormous institutional power. It was precisely because of this development that the transitional hopes invested in Weimar musical phenomenology would be irrecoverably dashed—including those presented by Bekker's work. Bekker's primary reason for prioritizing *Klang* was not philosophical naturalism but long-standing opposition to the "sterility" of academic musicology (Andreas Eichhorn, *Paul Bekker—Facetten eines kritischen Geistes* [Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2002], 291, n. 25) and the unthinking preeminence it assigned to composed scores over the live sonic impression with which he worked as a critic. Bekker's "On the Natural Domains of Sonority" (1925) forecasts both Richard Taruskin's critique of early music "authenticity" and the relativizing, anti-evolutionist tendencies of late twentieth-century ethnomusicology in insisting that any musical tradition beyond the reach of direct, contextualized experience (whether because of historical or geographical distance) could neither be reliably evaluated nor "objectively" understood (Paul Bekker, *Von den Naturreichen des Klangs: Grundriss einer Phänomenologie der Musik* [Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1925], 59–60). Eimert's pair of 1926 articles "On the Phenomenology of Music" (pp. 191–97, trans. Steege) and "Confession and Method: On the Current Situation of Musicology" ("Bekenntnis und Methode: Zur gegenwärtigen Lage der Musikwissenschaft," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 2, no. 9 [1926]: 95–109) together constitute a response that vigorously defends the tradition of positivistic, style-critical musicology descending from Guido Adler against both Bekker's challenge and the bolder claims of "energetic" analysis. "This is a statistical, typologizing method," Eimert declares, one making use of "the predicate of objectivity" (pp. 194–95) and a scientific approach: Adler's *Methode der Musikgeschichte* is even praised as the epoch-defining musicological equivalent of René Descartes's *Discours de la méthode* (Eimert, "Bekenntnis," 98). Eimert's own dissertation on musicology reinforced this defense of objectivity and simultaneously located it in a new category of far-reaching consequence for postwar modernist composition—not conventional form but *Formstruktur*, or simply *Struktur*, which "possesses a certain lawfulness. . . . Such structures [*Strukturen*] exist within music as part of music itself, independent of musical experience and of psychological acts; if and how one inquires about them does not in the least disturb their existence" (Herbert Eimert, *Musikalische Formstrukturen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert: Versuch einer Formbeschreibung* [Augsburg: Benno Filser, 1932], 1; my trans.). If Eimert ever properly executed an authentically phenomenological "pivot away from . . . the qualities of the musical 'object' toward . . . the character of perceptual acts" (p. 61), it was one he also did more than almost anyone else to reverse.

The political dimension of phenomenology is somewhat tucked away in

Steege's first chapter but now returns to the foreground. In chapter 2, he gives deserved attention to José Ortega y Gasset as a phenomenologist of music, complementing his writing on Claude Debussy with a text by Anders. But Ortega is a politically controversial and complex figure, and Steege's attempts to counter Taruskin's critique of him slide toward the tendentious in suggesting that Ortega is simply an opponent of liberal "mass culture," "not fundamentally antidemocratic" but at most a proponent of "what might be called aristocratic democracy" (p. 69). The opening of the 1921 essay that Steege rightly highlights, "Musicalia," whose association of new music with deliberate (and in Ortega's eyes entirely justified) social division is indeed, to reaffirm Taruskin's diagnosis, "barefaced elitism" of the most antidemocratic sort (*Oxford History of Western Music* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2005], 4:477). Ortega writes:

> The truth is that the public at large [*gran público*] always hates the new for the mere fact of being [new] . . . . Whatever is worth something on earth has been done by a few select men, in spite of the public at large, in a bold struggle against the stupidity and rancor of the multitude. With no little justification, Nietzsche measured the value of each individual according to the amount of solitude he could bear, that is, according to the distance from the multitude at which his spirit was situated. After 150 years of permanent flattery of the masses of society, it smacks of blasphemy to affirm that, if we imagined the world without a handful of select personalities, the planet would stink of pure ignorance and low egoism. (Ortega y Gasset, "Musicalia," in *Obras completas*, 7th ed. [Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1966], 2:235; my trans.)

This outburst is prompted by Ortega's "observation" that the Spanish concert public hisses Debussy but applauds Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy—a diagnosis that, as Carol Hess has established, does not actually correspond to Debussy's critical reception in Spain during and after World War I (which was generally positive) but rather reflects what Ortega and his allies, such as Manuel de Falla, would have *liked* to be the case (Carol A. Hess, *Manuel de Falla and Modernism in Spain, 1898–1936* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001], 80–83). Modern art and the "distance" imposed by phenomenological aesthetics here served, almost paradoxically, a sociological function—that of creating an elite where one did not exist. The reason for that putative (and we are exhorted to believe, unfortunate) absence of social hierarchy in Ortega's homeland was explored at greater length in the exactly contemporaneous tract "España invertebrada" (Invertebrate Spain; 1921). Other European nations' Germanic ancestors bred successful feudal elites, but after their 130-year journey from the Carpathian mountains to the Iberian peninsula, "the Visigoths, who arrive already exhausted, degenerate, do not possess that select minority" (Ortega y Gasset, *Obras*, 3:117; my trans.), and this lack of racial "backbone" hampers Spain forever after. Andrew Dobson's careful assessment (*An Introduction to the Politics and Philosophy of José Ortega y Gasset* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 99) identifies "España invertebrada" as the source of Ortega's most "inflammatory," nationalist, and militarist pronouncements, and an acknowledged influence on José Antonio Primo de Rivera. It may have been an outlier in its extremism—though Steege fails to mention that Ortega later privately supported Franco's nationalists for about a decade (Dobson, 34–38)—but it is one whose proximity

to the genesis of Ortega's aesthetics, with its declared ambition to fashion a "new aristocracy" through art (Ortega y Gasset, *Obras*, 2:241), is surely worrying.

Ortega's Spanish context is not the only source for the "aristocratic" character of his phenomenology, as Steege acknowledges. It was there in his German sources too, especially Moritz Geiger, who argued that "the disciplines which rely on phenomenological method are aristocratic in nature" (p. 56). One reason for that was the tinge of asceticism and personal distinction picked up through Geiger's and Ortega's impulse to reject romantic or psychologistic "inner concentration" (*Innenkonzentration*; *concentración hacia adentro*) for the more phenomenological and aesthetically superior attitude of "outer concentration" (*Außenkonzentration*; *concentración hacia afuera*) (p. 70). Pleasure in one's *own* emotions in front of the work of art, as opposed to those that could be identified "in" the work of art, was aesthetically unjustified, as well as facile, self-satisfied, and bourgeois. One can bracket the politics of this move for a minute and simply entertain the attraction of what was, on one level, a fresh set of "emergent possibilities for aesthetic engagement" (p. 71).

Steege's choice of Debussy's etude "Pour les sixtes" (1915) as a case study is excellent. It is a piece that plays the textural resource of the sixth for its romantic resonances but at the same time insists so stubbornly on its object-like identity that an empathetic relaxation into romantic—or even "impressionist"—pleasure becomes impossible. The "stylization" (p. 78), or to use Ortega's more pointed and notorious term, "dehumanization," of the piece's brittle fabric seems designed to keep one alert, "outwardly attentive." It is not hard to value the careful embodiment of this attitude in Steege's writing. The phenomenological tension tips again, however, when a stretch of more detailed music analysis leads Steege to describe one particular passage "as involving a game-like preoccupation with the formal possibilities of the sixth" (p. 80), which seems to bring us back to a more familiar kind of formalist analysis. More intrinsically poised between romantic sentiment and modernist objectivity is Anders's creative use of Geiger's virtually untranslatable term *Zuständlichkeit* (Steege gives "statefulness" [p. 84]) to describe Debussy. As in impressionist painting, this music—say a passage from *Pelléas et Mélisande*—utilizes the "objective" less for itself than for the state of being it sustains, floating like an atmosphere in between subjective affect and musical concretion. The sensitivity of the discussion here surely has something to do with how, in comparison with Ortega, Anders "softens the moralistic tenor and . . . the very conceptual framework" of inner versus outer concentration to produce a "surprising and original perspective" (p. 72).

A different set of phenomenological possibilities embodied in musical texture crops up in chapter 3, "Hearing-With," its title a translation of Heinrich Besseler's *Mithören*. Steege also renders this as "participatory" or (even more interestingly) "lateral" listening. His detailed reading, going well beyond Besseler's 1925 position statement "Fundamental Questions of Musical Listening" into his performance criticism and musicological work, brings out the difference between Besseler's particular engagement of "community" in performance and more romantic or republican conceptions, such as Bekker's, in which a mass of listeners all hear the "same thing" (p. 122). The point of Besseler's concern with premodern forms such as the thirteenth-century motet is that listeners, who are also performers, are *not* all hearing the same thing but are so close to the musical fabric and conscious of

their particular standpoint within it that the meaningfulness of their participation is more or less completely detached from any sense of a closed, autonomous musical "whole." In a motet from the Montpellier Codex, each voice's "immediate aural coordination with other voices really only works in terms of adjacent pairs" (p. 129). These work together with each other through reference to what Besseler calls an *Abstandskonsonanz* ("spacing consonance," p. 130), keeping each pair in tune through a local and "lateral" auditory orientation. The acoustic fact of consonance (*Klangkonsonanz*) is less significant here than the sense of distance or spacing between voices that it fosters, which serves as a means of coordinating social (inter)action. Taking an image from Sartre (pp. 136–37), the relationship resembles that between rowers in a crew more than that between the acoustically consonant strands of a "false polyphony," the state into which instrumental imitations of contrapuntal texture would degenerate by the seventeenth century (p. 114). This provides us with "a way to apprehend music that does not require an object-like work to begin with, but where the mere possibility of the work might rather be preceded by the grounding value of . . . the living community of people engaged in the act of music-making" (p. 132).

That summary and the concluding sentence of the chapter make it clear that Steege finds value in Besseler's approach. Nevertheless, its specific reliance on an idea of "community," he argues, is much more double-edged, "as corrupting as it [is] invigorating" (p. 142). Looking ahead to his later career as a Nazi party member, Besseler's hope for the "restoration" of this community ideal in the mid-1920s is characterized as "baldly authoritarian" and "quasi-fascist" (p. 140)—here on the basis of a quotation from a 1924 concert review whose sentiments would arguably have been shared by much of the neo-Thomist Catholic revival across Europe. Undertaking the first translation of his 1925 "Fundamental Questions of Musical Listening" (*Twentieth-Century Music* 8, no. 1 [2011]: 49–70), neither I nor my cotranslator Irene Auerbach, with her German-Jewish roots, imagined the essay's author as anything other than an unpleasant and politically suspect individual, but the themes Besseler broached and the influence he exerted were too important to be ignored. To move from his unquestionable "personal-political failings" to the assertion that "any celebration of 'community' in the immediate historical context is tainted by all manner of value commitments made in fairly obvious bad faith" is quite a leap (p. 141). How about this contemporary "celebration of community," for instance, citing a very Besselerian range of examples:

> Music has always and explicitly been a community art. It arose from physical work undertaken together (work songs, which ensured a regular rhythm of work), from festivals, religious and cultic behavior, and from dances.
>
> The heyday of music as a community art was in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
>
> The [present] decay of bourgeois culture expresses itself in the arts most powerfully through music. In spite of all its technical finesses, it is running dry, bereft of ideas and of community. An art that loses its community loses itself.

Its author is Hanns Eisler ("Über moderne Musik" [1927], in *Gesammelte Schriften 1921–1935*, ed. Tobias Fasshauer und Günter Mayer [Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2007], 47–48; my trans.). I take it *his* politics, at least, require no further comment. Unless, perhaps, one follows Steege's

surprising endorsement of Helmuth Plessner's *Grenzen der Gemeinschaft* ([Limits of Community] Bonn: F. Cohen, 1924), a polemic aimed at both radical left and right that defended what he took to be the mainstream values of modern society (*Gesellschaft*) against the rebel proponents of community (*Gemeinschaft*). The values of society for Plessner included "coolness," tact, formality, or the ability to put on an anonymous persona in order to fulfill one's social functions (p. 139)—all notions familiar from later Anglophone sociologists such as Erving Goffmann or Richard Sennett. But they also included an emphatic affirmation of imperialism, Bismarckian machtpolitik, elitism à la Ortega, the White man's burden, and the dominance of the earth by Western technology: "this is the real strength that counts, not as virtue for all, but the ethos of the rulers [*Herrscher und Führer*]. The majority remains, as it should be, unaware; only thus can it serve" (Helmuth Plessner, *Macht und menschliche Natur* [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981], 38–39; my trans.). Historically speaking, this is "liberalism" too. If the choice in politics really is between the "ethic of community" and the "ethic of mastery," between hope for a "utopia of nonviolence" and Plessner's cynical, *abgeklärt* (detached) "duty to power," I know which side I would pick. But more likely the problem is one of recognizing both the present limits and the utopian potential of "community" while discovering the most promising arenas in which to cultivate that potential. False binaries and equivalences—such as Steege makes between antipathy to the concert hall and a rejection of due legal process—are not going to help much (p. 141).

With Steege's final chapter 4, we move out of the Weimar era, following two of its phenomenological protagonists, Anders and Eimert, into the atomic age. Anders's *Die Antiquiertheit des Menschen* ([The Obsolescence of the Human] Munich: Beck, 1956) attempts to reshape the dominant scientific-cultural category of the "test" or "experiment" against a background of the apocalyptic dangers of nuclear testing (the 1954 Bikini Atoll tests), giving it an urgently necessary human, emotional, and aesthetic meaning. Steege rejects Anders's own choice of musical resource to help achieve this experimental reorientation of feeling—a Bruckner symphony—and substitutes Eimert's *Epitaph für Aikichi Kuboyama* (1962), its sonic material drawn from a recited text composed by Anders himself. The sensitivity of Steege's analysis and the close attention he gives to the articulation of emotions in sound—something uncommon in musical phenomenology generally, perhaps because of its roots in Weimar reaction against romanticism—are admirable, and in its own terms, the short chapter provides an effective conclusion to the book's narrative of methodological hope.

There is, however, another relevant narrative, of institutional hegemony, into which Steege's subjects fit—Eimert above all. The historical trend away from phenomenology's concern with experience toward an ontological insistence on objectivity has already been mentioned. For Eimert, the advent of electronic music presented itself as a realization of long-cherished dreams, those of "world realization" described by his philosophical mentor, the "critical realist," ontologist, and friend of Scheler and Plessner, Nicolai Hartmann. As paraphrased by Christian Blüggel, Hartmann's reality was a "being-in-itself" (*Ansichseiendes*) that was there purely to be discovered, ordered, and manipulated: "it was down to man to win power over the . . . world with the aid of values he would discover, to intervene in the course of nature, and to form it after his will" (Blüggel,

E.= Ethik + Ästhetik: Zur Musikkritik Herbert Eimerts [Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2002], 18–19; my trans.). Eimert saw electronic music in parallel terms. Culturally variable factors of performance and notation could be abolished, and the scientific control of musical material, the creation of binding "structure," established at the level of the basic building blocks of sound itself: the sine wave, overtones, white noise. Any reminiscences of an intuitive, affective, cliché-laden, all-too-human musical idiom would be a betrayal of "these startlingly wonderful, almost nuclear [*atomar*] musical processes," sullying an "extra-human music" that existed—via the ultimate extension of phenomenological *Außenkonzentration*—"more cosmically than in human interiority" (Herbert Eimert, "Was ist elektronische Musik?" *Melos* 20 [1953]: 1–5; my trans.). The realization embodied in the 1962 *Epitaph* that there might be fateful consequences to the progress of technological power and control over nature came late to Eimert, whose consistent espousal of an *atomistische Musik* (atomistic music) "existing on the vanguard of technical proficiency and defined by the careful, isolated consideration of each of its constituent elements" dated back to 1925 (Max Erwin, *Herbert Eimert and the Darmstadt School: The Consolidation of the Avant-Garde* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020], 26). It was influenced, as we have seen, as much by the objective scientific preoccupations of Eimert the musicologist as by avant-garde experimentalism. If, as Erwin argues, Eimert's secularist, rationalist, technocratic, and antihumanist linear narrative of *neue Musik* (new music) rose to a dominant position both in the avant-garde and then in the musicological academy, it is perhaps because he always had a foot in both camps. The prophetic side of his achievement had less to do with nuclear crisis, and more with how compositional and musicological elites would conspire to crush the life out of philosophically informed debate over the meaningfulness of musical experience across the following decades. From this point of view, Steege's decision to conclude a book on Weimar phenomenology with Eimert's musical picture of hope is quite a historical irony. But then times of transition are full of such ironies.

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COMPOSERS, PERFORMERS, AND TEACHERS

Clara Schumann Studies. Edited by Joe Davies. (Cambridge Composer Studies.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. [xx, 307 p. ISBN 9781108489843 (hardcover), $99.99; ISBN 9781108779531 (ebook), $99.99.] Music examples, illustrations, bibliography, index.

The 2019 bicentennial of Clara Schumann's birth year saw wide-ranging reflections on her musical life. Celebrations abounded, expanding our understanding of the artist, recontextualizing nineteenth-century historical narratives, and, perhaps most importantly, reappraising women's musical contributions. Based on the International Bicentenary Conference, "Clara Schumann (née Wieck) and Her World," held at Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford, *Clara Schumann Studies* brings together essays from a wide range of international scholars and performers. Centering itself within the pioneering scholarship of Nancy Reich, Jane Bowers, Marcia Citron, Judith Tick, and Ruth Solie, this new edited collection offers innovative