Laurence Dreyfus

Mozart as early music: a Romantic antidote

How has the performance of Mozart's music fared in the hands of the early music movement? In answering this question there is a danger of ignoring the differences between many schools of playing and reducing them all into one 'historical tendency'.[1] By relying on generalities of potentially sweeping vacuousness, I run the serious risk of misrepresentation. And yet there is perhaps some value in stepping back both from journalistic criticism and from scholarly nitpicking in an attempt to formulate an admittedly extreme position that will contribute to the debate about the overall directions of Mozart interpretation today.

Since I shall scarcely dwell at all on the successes of early music in interpreting Mozart but will proceed immediately to voicing complaints about its inadequacies, let me cite at once what I take to be some significant achievements. First, this approach has helped excavate genres and styles so that musicians are more aware of the 'horizon of expectations' within and against which Mozart worked: dance styles, for example, now have a lilt and grace when deprived of practices that turned them into Prussian marches. Second, the revival of 18th-century instruments has introduced certain new musical timbres that convey a sense of intimacy encountered all too infrequently in mainstream performances. Finally, the accelerated tempos usually favoured by early music have done wonders for the weaker side of Mozart's musical output, so that the routine Andantes and Menuets from many early symphonies, for example, are dispatched with vigour and aplomb.

On the whole, though, my sense is that the early music movement has succeeded in performing Mozart only to the extent that Mozart amounts to no more than a mundane, if dextrous, representative of his age. In putting it this way, I think you get my drift. The failure of the early music approach, as I see it, is precisely a failure to probe deeply enough into what is so extraordinary about Mozart. This is not to say that early music performances have not produced moments of exceptional power and beauty—which they certainly have—but that the overall sense of the composer portrayed by these performances ignores the enormous gulf that separates Mozart from his run-of-the-mill contemporaries. I need hardly point out that 1991 has been spent celebrating Mozart, not Vanhal or Dittersdorf.

What has been forgotten is that the Mozart of the late 20th century is inescapably a Romantic Mozart. This is the Mozart whose exalted status in the history of music was first appreciated by the Romantics, those literati and philosophers who preached the metaphysical value of high art and the special role that music, especially instrumental music, played in creating this transcendent image.[2] An imagined return to an 18th-century understanding of Mozart—as in early music's project of restoration—is therefore a return to a culture that essentially misunderstood him. This was the age that by and large heard Mozart's most profound works as too complex and mercurial—'too many notes' in the reputed words of Emperor Joseph.[3] Our own high-culture view of Mozart can have nothing to do with such philistinism. We rather subscribe to a view that first arose at the turn of the 19th century which began to idealize and canonize great works of art. As E. T. A. Hoffmann put it in 1810, 'only a deep Romantic spirit will completely recognize the Romantic depth of Mozart; only one equal to his creative fantasy, inspired by the spirit of his works will, like him, be permitted to express the highest values of art.'[4] Although it might seem that this Romantic Mozart was a fanciful invention of Hoffmann and his peers, it is just as easy to argue the reverse: that it was Mozart's music that created its new Romantic audience, an audience that first understood what he and Beethoven were up to. A performance style committed to a Romantic Mozart is therefore one that—putting it somewhat too simplistically—subordinates the 18th-century idea of a 'jolly good' entertainment to the 19th-century realm of musical metaphysics.

Lionel Trilling proposed an elegant formulation of this new aesthetic in his Norton Lectures from 1970 entitled *Sincerity and Authenticity:* 'The artist—as he comes to be called—ceases to be the craftsman or the performer, dependent upon the approval of the audience. His reference is to himself only, or to some transcendent power which—or who—has decreed his enterprise and alone is worthy to judge it.'[5] This was the age, Trilling reminds us, that began by distinguishing

mere pleasure and beauty from the 'triumph' of the sublime (as in Schiller and Burke for example). While the initial effect of this philosophic shift denigrated the audience in favour of the artist—good taste ceding to genius—the 'new devotion now given to art [was] probably more fervent than ever before in the history of culture . . . Now that art [was] no longer required to please, it [was] expected to provide the spiritual substance of life.'[6]

As regards Mozart, it is relatively easy to distinguish between two receptions, one that greeted him in his lifetime and another that accompanied the shift in values shortly after his death. On the one hand it is Haydn's sober high praise of Mozart in his statement to Leopold in 1785:

> Before God and as an honest man I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by name. He has taste and, what is more, the most profound knowledge of composition.

On the other hand are the dying words given to a struggling composer in Richard Wagner's short story *Ein Ende in Paris* from 1841:

> I believe in God, Mozart, and Beethoven and likewise their disciples and apostles. I believe in the Holy Spirit and the truth of the one, indivisible Art . . . I believe that he who once has bathed in the sublime delights of this high Art, is consecrated to Her forever and never can deny Her.[7]

Although it would be idle to imagine anyone today actually uttering this Wagnerian credo in polite company, one must admit how much more appealing, though exaggerated, this Wagnerian formulation is when compared to Haydn's dour restriction of Mozart's talents to mere compositional dexterity and good taste.[8] Our cultural discomfort with late 18th-century aesthetic categories—with all due respect to Igor Stravinsky—therefore suggests that, when all is said and done, most of us must admit to being confirmed, if sometimes lapsed, Romantics of an entirely traditional denomination.

Let me distance my argument from certain philistine views that I do not hold. First, having used the word 'Romantic', I am not pledging allegiance to current-day performances of Mozart by the musical mainstream, which more often than not devolve into the routine, hacking or saccharine. Second, I am not arguing against the use of period instruments nor against the recovery of historical performance practices: quite to the contrary, I think these are excellent tools with which one can approach Mozart, though perhaps far from indispensable ones. I would rather like to imagine that one can arrive at an engaged interpretation of Mozart without, on the one hand, paying blind obeisance to current-day mainstream standards or, on the other, succumbing to a naive historicism that arrogantly pretends to 'speak the language of the 18th century'. By a Romantic approach I therefore mean an affective stance toward performing Mozart's works instead of, say, a historical methodology—an attitude that evokes an aura of intimate understanding without prescribing a set of performance conventions.

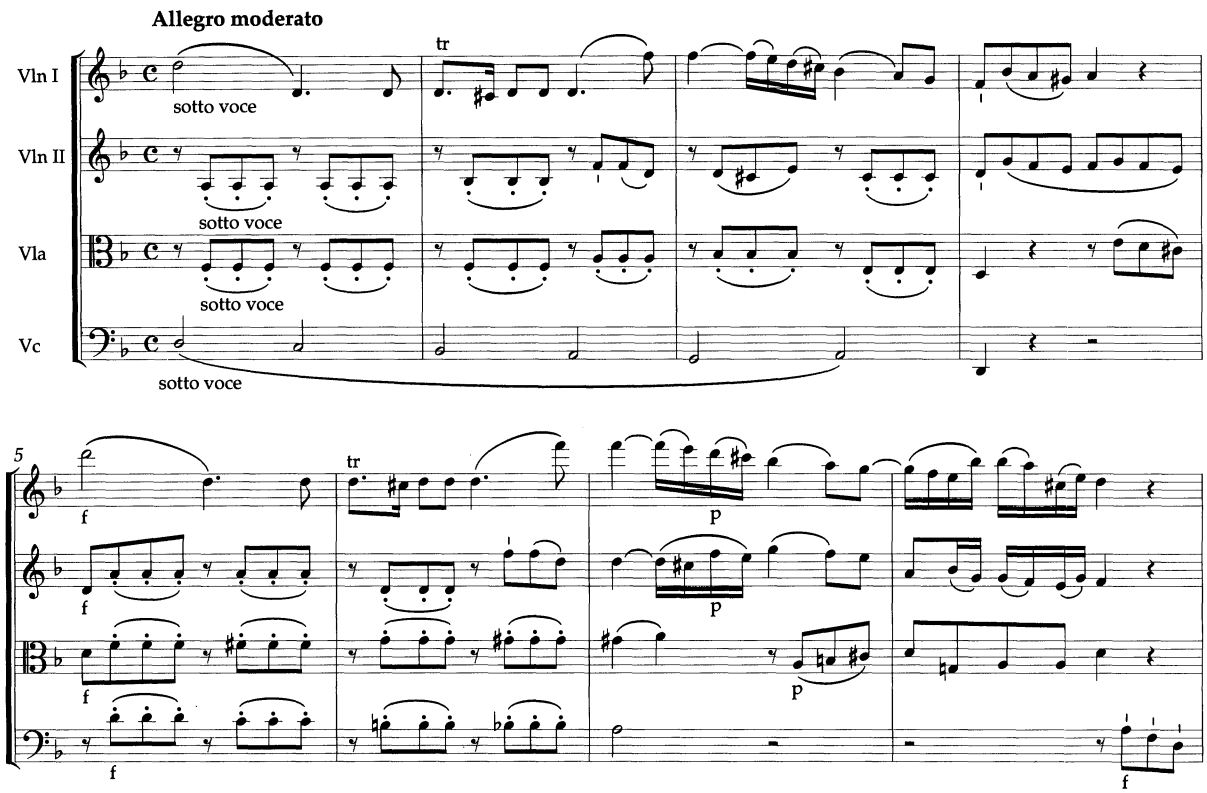
But what kind of Mozartean performance practice, one may well ask, fulfils these demands? For I am not speaking here so much about traditional subjects of historical reconstruction—tempo, articulation, phrasing, ornamentation, pedalling or vibrato—as much as about more elusive yet entirely perceptible categories of expression which have traditionally defined artistry in the Romantic mode. I am thinking about musicians who take time to let the music breathe, for whom music is made alternately to speak, dance and think; musicians who risk agogic displacements to effect an air of freshness, who are impatient with any kind of routine, who constantly vary attacks, note lengths and dynamics so as to lend individuality to a musical utterance, and who, above all, subscribe to a pervasive anti-literalism that sees the written text not as a sealed vessel of intentions but as an invitation to enunciate, and in so doing ensure the communication of meanings that are the special province of music.

In enumerating these values I am referring to practices realized essentially by individual musicians and copied only imperfectly by larger ensembles. Yet it is a curious fact that early music's Mozart is predominantly an orchestral affair, embracing by and large the symphonies and piano concertos and placing far less emphasis on sonatas and the string chamber music.[9] This is of course a curious situation concocted not only by enterprising recording companies which have rushed into marketing popular works from the mainstream repertory. For though one encounters in passing a sampling of chamber music, the great quartets and quintets, for example, have played only a secondary role in early music's dissemination of Mozart for the simple reason that these performances and recordings have not really said anything significantly new. This situation is, by the way, precisely the reverse of the path by which early music approached Baroque music: first came the solos and chamber music and only much later came the 'big bands'.

The problem is that early music's suppression of the Romantic tradition is doomed from the start to produce inferior artistic results. For no matter how many libertine declarations to the contrary, historical performers are still in mortal dread of 'getting it wrong'—playing, that is, in a way that cannot be historically verified. The chronic mistake here is to imagine that we cannot really know Mozart until we rid ourselves of our modern prejudices, an attitude that leads to naysaying and reactive thinking. It is as if the early music Mozartean believes that mainstream musical training is the root of all evil, and that the musical slate must be wiped clean.[10] The so-called fresh start then pieces together scattered bits of performance practices from scratch, pretending all the while that the sum total will amount to a coherent model of musical interpretation.[11] But this incremental thinking, geared as it is toward producing a complete if implicit 'how-to' manual, is in fact a repressive apparatus. Instead of appeals to evocative metaphors and to flashes of intuition, one observes a performance style in which legato, sostenuto, rubato, portamento and tempo variation—signs pointing to Hoffmann's notion of the Romantic sensibility—are considered 'later historical developments' merely because they do not figure prominently in 18th-century performance manuals pitched chiefly at dilettantes.[12] As a result, phrasing proceeds piecemeal from a patchwork of detached gestures, a pronounced anxiety disrupts musical lines, and a primitive notion of topic freezes musical signs into a string of reified units, effectively stalling the interpretive moment. The historical enterprise of early music need of course not be like this: it can, as I have argued elsewhere,[13] rather be an invitation to a renewed form of expression, but only if musicians call a halt to puritanical *ressentiment* and begin to entertain how artists from the Romantic traditions made sense of Mozart. The charge is therefore that we reclaim Mozart, not for the 18th century, but to ensure that his musical insights speak to us anew.

One important way to undertake this kind of rethinking is to discard the naive dichotomy that pits early music performance against a monolithic mainstream tradition.[14] I can think of no better approach than to listen with an open mind to recordings from the first part of the 20th century, a musical 'Golden Age' (if ever there was one) when the ideological dispute about historical fidelity vs. subjective expression had not yet reared its ugly head. In this connection, let me take a recording from this period—a 1929 recording of Mozart's String Quartet in D minor, K421, by the Flonzaley Quartet (sadly unavailable at present)[15]—and com-

Ex.1 String Quartet, K421, i, bars 1–8



pare it with a 1977 mainstream recording by the Alban Berg Quartet and a 1985 release by the Salomon Quartet on period instruments.[16] Though all three recordings are appealing in different ways, I will try to explain in part why the Flonzaley performance is especially exemplary and the other two much less so.

The remarkable qualities of the Flonzaleys—whom I shall dub 'Romantic' for purposes of this discussion—are evident in their reading of the very first bars of this great quartet: they are already anticipating the heightened pathos of the opening theme in bars 5–8, so that the *sotto voce* exposition in bars 1–4 begins with a hushed urgency (ex.1). This 'breathy' pathos comes about by an inspired local 'rushing' of the off-beat quavers in the second violin and viola, a kind of minute rhythmic displacement that depicts, not just the subjective distress of the melody, but the anguished disruption of the musical microcosm.

Here is string playing attuned to nuance and gesture. Rather than being hoodwinked by the demand to produce an unfailingly even tone—a feature shared, curiously enough, by both the mainsteam and the early music schools—the Flonzaleys use their nimble bow arms, delicately applied vibrato, ubiquitous sliding portamenti, and above all their fertile imaginations to imitate the human voice, especially the great singers contemporary with them. When the melody jumps up the interval of a 10th for the second time in bar 6, for example, Adolfo Betti, the first violinist, delays slightly, shifting upwards with a delicate and mournful slide that speaks directly from the heart.[17] The sense of unaffected sincerity evoked by the such gestures is perhaps the most touching aspect of the Flonzaley performance and it is all the more moving to realize how these gestures are communicated as if self-evident, without fuss or fanfare.

Upon first hearing of these three recordings, one might think—given the gut strings and more sparing vibrato—that the early music performance has more in common with the Romantic than with the Mainstream one. Certainly, many early music devotees will be surprised to hear how articulations practised early in our own century, for example, are far more variegated and interesting than those heard in mainstream performances today. On the other hand, it is striking how many values the early music performance shares with the mainstream. For both the Salomon and Berg recordings

take pains to preserve the effect of a damnably 'Classical' repose, a stylistic posture anxious to avoid Romantic expression and depth. The Berg players achieve this by avoiding rubato and slides, the Salomon by observing the letter of 18th-century performance practices, but both emit a stifling air when compared to the wit and grace of the Flonzaleys. The liner notes on the Salomon recording (written by Stephen Johnson) even go so far as to assure listeners that, although the D minor quartet:

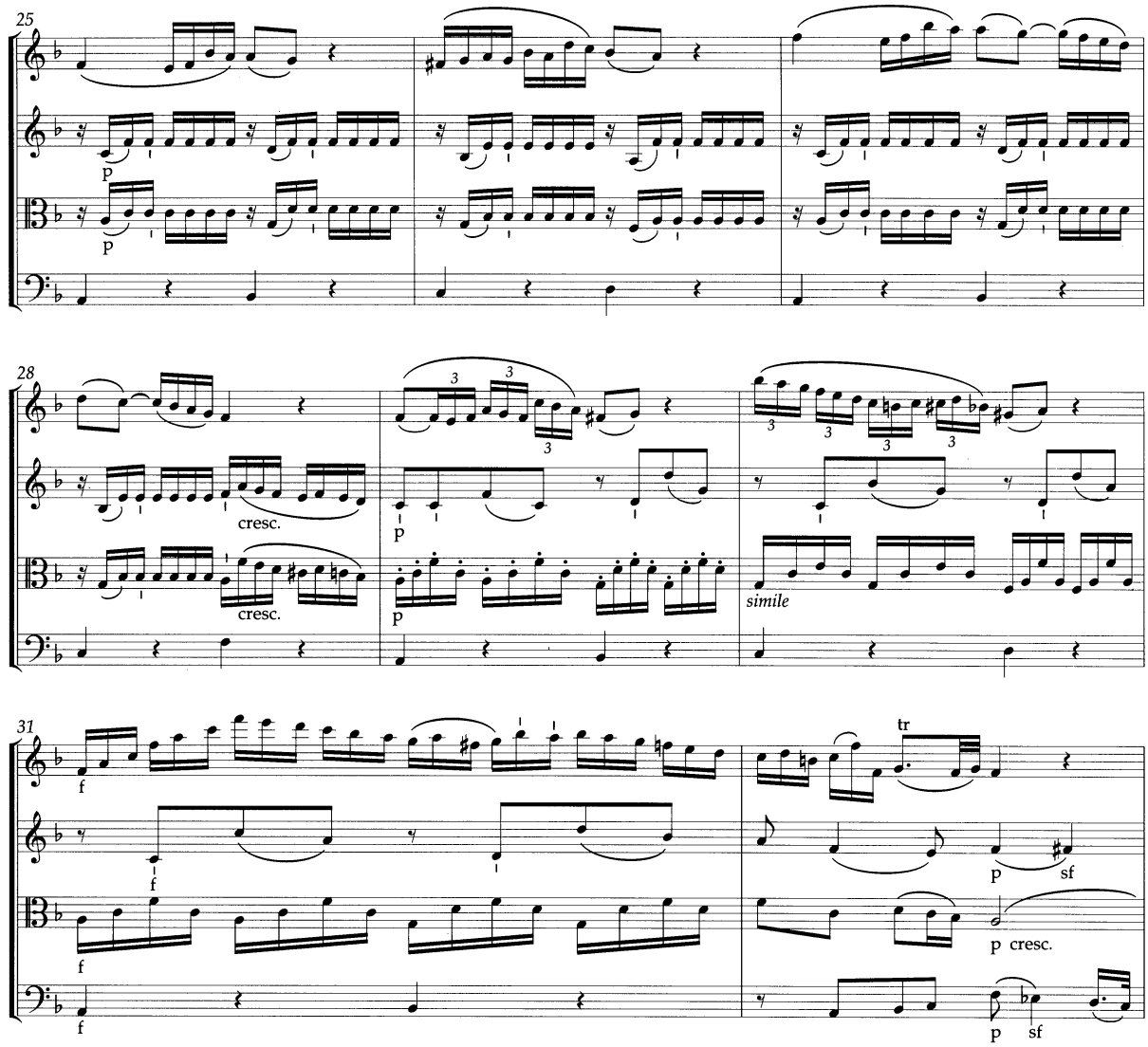
> may sound more troubled than any of its companions, [its] expression still has an objective quality . . . a long way from the 'confessional' outpourings of some of the later romantics. The opening theme of the first movement is certainly highly expressive, but the music's elegance and concision make any attempt at personal dramatic interpretation sound faintly ludicrous.

This remarkable bit of propaganda, with its puritanical disapproval of personalized renditions of Mozart, makes sorry reading. But can one take seriously the implication that the D minor Quartet is about 'elegance and concision'? Although it is dangerous to impose the views of a writer of liner notes on the recording artists, a reaction against 'confessional outpourings' and a decided prohibition on 'personal dramatic interpretation' is sadly evident in the recording as well. One wonders, though, if the musicians approved such an explicit apologia for an anti-Romantic approach, this in one of Mozart's most compellingly tragic works.

What prevents the Salomon and the Berg Quartets from a more engaged dialogue with this profound work? For one thing they mostly play in strict time, another sign of an anti-Romantic attitude: one can almost hear the careful counting of the quavers throughout much of the first movement. In the opening four-bar phrases, for example, there is no 'give' in the semiquaver passing notes in bars 3 and 7–8; marching quavers dictate the character of the accompaniment, and, predictably, expressive portamenti are avoided at all costs. When the first violin in the Salomon begins the *forte* restatement on the high d''' in bar 5, his instrument can only shriek with the shrill insensibility so often encountered in the string playing of early music. It is a moment that could stand as an emblem for Nietzschean *ressentiment:* avoid too much sentiment or risk 'selling out' to Romantic expression.[18] Elsewhere, though, the Salomon appear fixated on a consort-like ensemble sound to the exclusion of vivid characterization and fluid phrasing; as a result they seem unaffected by the emotive paths traversed by the music.

The Berg players also concentrate on their individ-

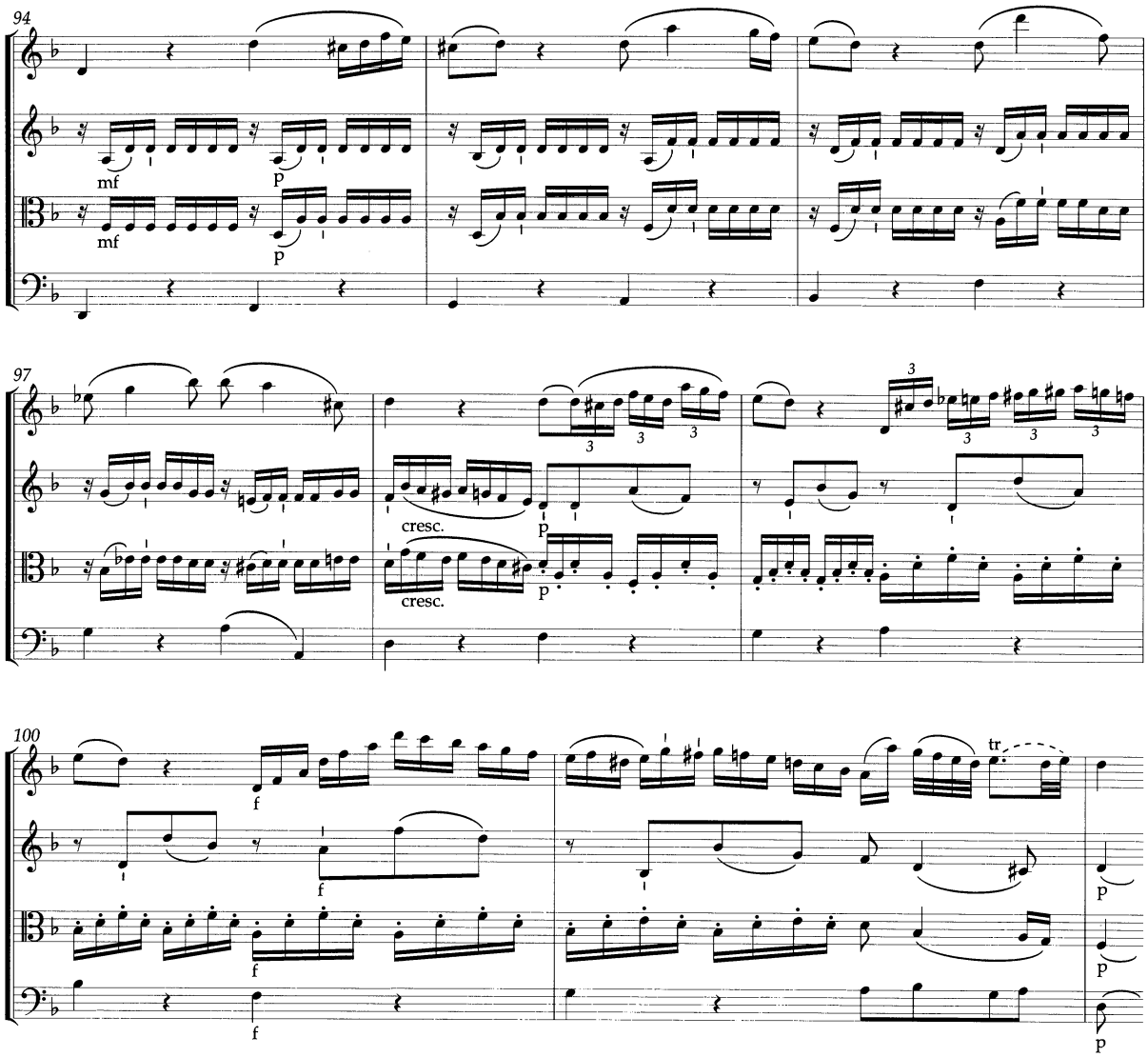
Ex.2 String Quartet, K421, i, bars 25–32



ually beautiful sounds, but their wide vibratos—which often mimic a saxophone-like wailing—preclude even the possibility of a confessional *sotto voce* that opens the piece. (And why else does one speak *sotto voce* if not to confess?) This nervous intensity—so emblematic of mainstream string playing—makes it difficult for them, moreover, to vary the emotional temperature of the movement. They can scarcely heighten the drama of the development section if, from the very outset, they have been speaking in hyperbole. Their interpretation suffers as well from the baleful influence of metrical subdivision—happily absent from the Flonzaley performance. This compulsive counting places an equally overbearing weight on every quaver and is closely allied with the dreaded portato ('wah-wah') effect that is the downfall of any flowing legato. The problem with these frequently encountered mainstream mannerisms is that they can only pose as signs of emotional depth rather than being superseded by a musicality that actually experiences it. The resulting expression, exquisitely crafted as it is, remains decidedly second-hand.

The expressive depth of the Flonzaleys, by contrast, lies with the changing moods that they portray so insightfully. Consider the second theme group (bars 15ff.) in F major (ex.2). Here the slight rubato in the first violin's semiquavers (bars 15–18) evoke a delicacy and

Ex.3 String Quartet, K421, bars 94–102



wistfulness, while the ornamented triplet figures and the paired duplets in the second violin (bars 19–22) suggest playful high jinks. The closing material culminates with what the players seem to hear as a brief *buffa* patter-song sung, perhaps, by elfin-like spirits.

When the recapitulated transformation of this very same material occurs in the minor (ex.3) the Flonzaleys effect a tone of unfathomable adversity. Betti refuses, tellingly, to overplay the moment; instead he introverts it. The gesture is personal, intimate, yet desperate (*verzweifelt*) in the manner of the Pamina's 'Ach, ich fühl's'. His airy legato phrase, sweet yet unsentimental, slides dolefully to the harmonic on *a″*, creating the effect of a miniature, heaven-bent *preghiera*. The foursome, in turn, react to this inevitable turn for the worse. High jinks revert to frenzied struggle. The players rush precipitously toward the close, taking time only momentarily for the somber, concluding reflections by the cello. While this is surely not the only way to play this movement, the vividness of the Flonzaley performance seems to presage a warning: banish Mozart to a remote stylistic realm, and his works will speak only from a distance.

It might seem from this discussion that I am advocating an intentionally anachronistic performance practice for Mozart, thereby mounting an attack both on reconstructive scholarship and on performance informed by a

historical consciousness. This is not the case. What I am suggesting instead is threefold: (i) that research on 18th-century performance practice has severe limits in addressing the most profound issues of musical interpretation—far less is known about alleged stylistic anachronisms than it often appears; (ii) that the appeal to an 18th-century Mozart may inhibit an intimate *rapprochement* with his music; and (iii) that we look beyond traditional musicological sources for nurture and inspiration—good ideas are welcome regardless of their source. An inspired rethinking of interpretive fundamentals, not a rote imitation of any particular tradition is the kind of agenda I am contemplating. This is why I stress the implications of the Romantic idealization of Mozart—still, in my view, the fundamental basis for his late 20th-century reception—instead of idealizing Romantic performance practice *per se.* Rather than participating in the musicological debate about the prognosis for—or the impossibility of—a 'historical performance' of Mozart, my aim is to suggest ways to enhance and enliven these performances.

I shall conclude these polemical ruminations on a hopeful note by invoking one of the 19th-century texts that captures so brilliantly the aura of the Romantic Mozart. Eduard Mörike's *Mozart on the Journey to Prague* (1853) recounts the composer on the way to Prague, where he is to produce *Don Giovanni.* Taking a break from his journey in an elegant garden in the Moravian countryside, Mozart unthinkingly plucks an orange from a tree and is immediately confronted with his theft by the gardener of the local Count von Schinzburg. The Count, once Mozart's identity is made known, invites him and Constanze to join an engagement party that will shortly be under way at the castle. Mozart performs an excerpt from a piano concerto for the assembled guests as well as accompanies the Count's niece, Eugenie, who sings Susanna's aria from the garden scene in *Figaro,* in which, Mörike writes, 'the stream of sweet passion breathes like the spiced air of a summer night'. The young singer is herself 'transfigured' by 'the uniqueness of the moment' and is even more overcome when, late in the evening, Mozart plays through the apocalyptic penultimate scene from *Don Giovanni.* Transfixed by this captivating personality and his artistic vision, Eugenie reflects on her experience at the very end of the story after the Mozarts have departed.

She feels, Mörike writes:

> inwardly seized by a slight foreboding for the man whose charming presence gave her such delight; this foreboding persisted at the back of her mind during the whole of Mozart's recital, behind all the incredible fascination and the music's mystery and awe; finally she was startled and shaken by how he had casually talked about himself in the same vein. She had a conviction, an absolute conviction, that this man would rapidly and inexorably be consumed in his own flame, that his presence on earth was fleeting and ephemeral because this world was, in truth, not capable of enduring the overwhelming riches which he would lavish upon it. This and many other things weighed on her heart after she had gone to bed that evening, while the echoes of *Don Giovanni* continued to ring confusedly in her head. Only towards daybreak, exhausted, she fell asleep.[19]

It is a commonplace of Romantic aesthetics that music does not merely imitate the world but rather penetrates to the deepest cores of meaning without, as Wackenroder put it, 'any painstaking detour through words: feeling, fantasy, and the power of thought are one'.[20] Musical performance, according to this nearly inescapable model, amounts therefore to a cipher of meaning: it paradoxically portrays musical sense while embodying it at the very same time. Mörike's dream-like account of Eugenie's experience aims not at containing the meaning embodied in Mozart's music but rather tries to evoke its haunting power; only sleep, long delayed, furnishes respite and escape.

Why do I cite such a remarkable passage? Because I think the poignant experience it conveys is not limited to some distant period of cultural history but rings true as an authentically Mozartean moment, a moment that musicians of whatever persuasion can revive as they make Mozart intelligible to us today. There is clearly no one demonstrable path that will lead to this kind of genuine encounter, but I suspect that being attuned to its existence will enhance the incalculable value of playing and hearing Mozart this way.

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Discussion

MALCOLM BILSON If I had time, I would try and refute almost everything you had to say, but the thing that has to be refuted at once is the accusation that those of us who play on period instruments think that great old players should be dismissed. *Who has said that?* I have worked with John Eliot Gardiner and Christopher Hogwood and I know Steven Lubin and Melvyn Tan and many others; I cannot think of one of them who would say you should throw out Dinu Lipatti and Edwin

Fischer. This music is huge; it is big enough to take what we do to it *and* what Rachmaninov did to it.

LAURENCE DREYFUS But even if you personally admire players from earlier in the 20th century, Mr Bilson, I think it's fair to say that the musical insights of such players have been essentially ignored in the ideological pronouncement of early music performance as well as in its practice and pedagogy. My point is that the historicism of early music has no obvious way to incorporate the audible refinements of great musicians into its imagined reconstruction of the 18th century.

NEAL ZASLAW It's easy to parody the excesses of both sides and I would prefer that we only deal with those on each side who make serious points about music. But I feel quite certain that I am not the only one who strongly prefers Haydn's characterization of Mozart's gifts as 'taste and the most profound knowledge of composition' to Wagner's romantic fantasizing.

ROBERT LEVIN Taste for a human being is a completely randomly assembled group of prejudices. Mozart's taste was randomly assembled from all those influences he heard around him, and those prejudices of his turned into a style which we now think was one of the most remarkable happenings in Western culture. I think Larry Dreyfus is right, because at an early stage in this process there were people who did say that a performance on old instruments was better than one on modern instruments, period. These were not performances at all, but demonstrations of what certain bow strokes and timbres and instruments could do. Now we have to formulate a different position, and say that the deepest issue is, of course, whether our art is expressive and communicative. I believe that there are propitious ways in which to convey very specific rhetorical devices in Mozart's music on period instruments. I would say that it should be possible on a modern instrument to realize those things too, but it may be significantly more difficult in certain ways!

[FROM THE FLOOR] We cannot find a single tradition of Homer that exhausts all the possibilities of those texts, nor a single production of a Shakespeare play. Surely this applies to music, and suggests that all performances are valid views of the work.

LAURENCE DREYFUS But if all performances were valid views of the work, then music criticism of any kind is superfluous. In fact, I am not arguing for a uniform point of view nor suggesting that early music performances of Mozart are invalid. Instead, I want us to re-examine the assumptions under which the performance of Mozart operates and rethink them if we like.

[FROM THE FLOOR] Well, every generation asks different questions, and one reason for the extreme popularity of Mozart just now is maybe that he provides answers to the particular questions our generation asks. We look for what we want, and find what we get.

LAURENCE DREYFUS What I'm proposing is a kind of paradigm shift that will reawaken a traditional aesthetic need and then help us fill it.

[1]I wish to thank Karol Berger, Lewis Lockwood and Richard Taruskin for their helpful criticisms of this essay.

[2]The alternative would be to hear Mozart's deepest creations as a brilliantly executed game. Yet even a demystifying, ostensibly anti-Romantic play like Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* (1981) or an ironically detached biography like Wolfgang Hildesheimer's *Mozart* (1977) merely serves to reinforce the common perception that Mozart's greatest musical works are removed from his bawdy and scatological persona, that they are, in fact, manifestations of another realm, that of pure spirituality made accessible only by an old friend, Romanticism.

[3]This is not to say that Mozart did not have admirers—even passionate ones—in his own day, but that their regard lacked the ecstatic enthusiasm (*Schwärmerei*) of the first generation of Romantics. For although new notions of both the sublime and the centrality of instrumental music were being formulated nearly under Mozart's nose, the actual critical reception of the composer's music during his lifetime never seems to have embraced the newly emerging aesthetic. As late as 1796 the influential critic Johann Friedrich Reichardt bemoans the great loss of Mozart at such a young age, and yet views his music as lacking in propriety and natural feeling: 'Whoever wants to warm his heart on Mozart's works; whoever wants to seek a connective sequence of feelings [*Empfindungen*], an organically emerging passion; in short, whoever awaits in Mozart tenderness [and] sentiment [must realize] that Mozart is not his man.' All the limitless melodic invention and remarkable orchestration—everything that we prize in Mozart—Reichardt sees as 'betraying nothing other than a spirited, troubled genius, who hurries along and tires himself out dancing, and because of this finally collapses when his glutted imagination has wandered about long enough . . . in the endless realm of possibilities'. Johann Friedrich Reichardt, 'Über das grosse Mozartsche Theaterkonzert im Berlinischen Opernhause', *Deutschland* (1796), ii, pp.363–7; cited in H.-G. Ottenberg, ed., *Der Critische Musicus an der Spree: Berliner Musikschrifttum von 1748 bis 1799, Eine Dokumentation* (Leipzig, 1984), pp.341–2.

[4]E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Schriften zur Musik* (Berlin, 1988), p.59

[5]L. Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), p.97

[6]Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity,* p.98

[7]Richard Wagner, *Stories and Essays,* trans. Osborne (London, 1973), p.111; German in Wagner, *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen* (Leipzig, 1888), i, pp.114–35. While I do not mean to suggest that all Romantic attitudes, particularly those held by musicians and composers in the 19th century, were uniform in their idealization of Mozart, it seems to me that one can demonstrate a more or less continuous tradition dating from the beginning of the 19th century that placed the composer definitively within the pantheon of musical giants whose metaphysical significance was never in jeopardy.

[8]Trilling, in a lengthy footnote (p.98) goes so far as to assert that 'the faculty of "taste" has re-established itself at the centre of the experience of art', which no longer can 'be said to make exigent demands on the audience'. Though Trilling is right to lament the loss of these 'good old days', there are surely many for whom great music still makes 'exigent demands'.

[9]My guess is that, given the little time devoted to rehearsals in Mozart's day, we would probably be deeply dissatisfied to hear orchestral performances from the 18th century; we would also be justified in

our dissatisfaction, especially today when the standards for auditioning orchestral players nearly approach those of soloists and when the parley of conductors routinely appeals to the values and practices of chamber music.

[10]A commonly encountered sign of this reactive thinking is the pedagogical attitude that presupposes an adversarial relationship between period style, asserted as historically ascertainable, and mainstream style, pitied as hopelessly anachronistic.

[11]Examples of such clean slates are notated accents and dynamic markings that are exaggerated in an aggressive manner irrespective of character and context, *sforzando* and *fp* markings that are mercilessly attacked without preparation, and sets of adjacent duplet slurs that are uniformly clipped and separated regardless of the overall shape of the phrase.

[12]Neither is there evidence that good musicians played with invariable tempos, observed articulation marks uniformly, avoided the use of the pedal, or resisted the temptation to slide for purposes of expression.

[13]L. Dreyfus, 'Early Music Defended against its Devotees', *MQ*, lxix (1983), pp.297–322, esp. pp.300–304, 320–22

[14]See Richard Taruskin's illuminating contribution in this issue on the question of changing traditions and their transmission. I might add that when early music is thought of as an evolving cultural practice in its own right—rather than merely a progressive program of historical reconstruction—it makes more sense to dip more freely into neighbouring traditions for inspiration and nurture.

[15]There was also an earlier 'acoustic' Flonzaley issue (recorded in 1920) of the final movement of K421 on Victor 74652 (Matrix B-23551-4). This equally fascinating performance was with violist Louis Bailley (1882–1974) rather than with Nicolas Moldavan (1891–1974), who plays in the 1929 release. The Flonzaleys also recorded movements from K387 (1922), K499 (1923), K575 (1918 and 1927). See J. M. Samuel, 'A Complete Discography to the Recordings by the Flonzaley Quartet', *ARSC Journal*, xix (1987), pp.28–62. (I am grateful to Richard Koprowski of the Stanford Archive for Recorded Sound for locating this discography for me). The other members of the quartet, founded in 1902, included Adolfo Betti (1873–1950), Alfred Pochon (1878–1959) and Iwan d'Archambeau (1879–1955). They last appeared together in public in March 1929. See also another discussion of a Flonzaley recording in J. W. Finson, 'Performing Practice in the late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the Music of Brahms', *MQ*, lxx (1984), pp.457–75, esp. pp.468–73.

[16]Mozart, D minor String Quartet, Flonzaley Quartet, RCA Victor 7607-A/7608B (Camden, N.J., 1929); Mozart, Die 10 großen Streichquartette, Alban Berg Quartett Wien, Telefunken 6.35485 (Hamburg, 1977 [1979]); Mozart String Quartets: D minor, K421—C Major, K465, The Salomon String Quartet, Hyperion A 66170 stereo LP (London, 1985)

[17]The early 19th-century theorist J.-J. de Momigny (1762–1838) may have overextended his hermeneutic licence when, as an example of an analysis of expression, he supplied a poetic text to the first movement of K421 with verse representing a scene between Dido and Aeneas, but he certainly understood the elevated tragic tone in which the musical discourse of the first movement is conducted. The analysis is found in his *Cours complet d'harmonie et de composition* (Paris, 1803–6), iii, pp.109ff., and is cited in I. Bent, 'Analysis', *New Grove*, pp.348–9.

[18]The gut strings cannot be at fault, as one is often assured, since the Flonzaleys play on them as well. Indeed, early music players could learn volumes from the Flonzaley's refined use of gut strings, which invariably sound sweet and human, and never harsh or strident.

[19]Eduard Mörike, *Mozart's Journey to Prague*, trans. L. von Loewenstein-Wertheim (London, 1957), pp.40, 91–92; original German text in *Gesammelte Erzählungen* (Leipzig, 6/1902)

[20]Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, *Werke und Briefe* (Heidelberg, 1967), cited in L. Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), p.184