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JOURNALS + DIGITAL PUBLISHING

AMS AMERICAN
MUSICOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair by Annegret Fauser

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Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Summer 2008), pp. 438-445

Published by: [University of California Press](#) on behalf of the [American Musicological Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jams.2008.61.2.438>

Accessed: 14/09/2015 00:33

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compensation for what opera, in contrast to film, cannot do: move the eye. Instead, he suggests that *Fanciulla* offers the audience a “giant ear,” one “capable of hearing the action beyond the fixed field of visibility—an ear capable of ‘seeing’ the action that the eye cannot see” (p. 255). And since the dramaturgy of sonic space “allow[s] us to hear beyond reality,” it has, according to Senici, nothing to do with a “naturalist, *verismo* aesthetic” (p. 259). We could, however, argue with equal justification that seen in the context of earlier operas, especially the ones covered in this book, the dramaturgy of a somewhat oversized ear departs from conventions of mid-nineteenth-century *melodramma* and as such is fully compatible with nineteenth-century concepts of *verismo*.¹³ In any case, the earliest critics of *Fanciulla* objected not to its exploration of sonic space but its inability to satisfy anyone. As Alexandra Wilson has shown, for the Americans it was too Italian, for the Italians insufficiently Italian; for the conservatives it was too modern, for the progressives insufficiently modern.¹⁴

Whether one ultimately agrees with the interpretations offered in this book seems less important than following the author through his rich web of literary, philosophical, psychological, political, and feminist contextualization. A review cannot recreate the experience, but it can encourage readers to venture into the web and undertake their own journey. Although this may on occasion be strenuous, it will also be thought-provoking, sophisticated, and engaging.

ANDREAS GIGER

Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair, by Annegret Fauser. Eastman Studies in Music. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005. xviii, 391 pp.

On a fresh Parisian morning in late spring 1889, a well-dressed *bourgeoise*, high above the fairgrounds and seated beneath a statue proudly representing the arts, work, and industry, marvels at the impressive display below. She smiles pensively as she gazes toward the crowds milling about, the temporary buildings in motley architectural styles, together with the Eiffel Tower, an *arc de triomphe* of the modern age.¹ The illustration on the dustjacket beautifully

13. See Andreas Giger, “Verismo: Origin, Corruption, and Redemption of an Operatic Term,” this *Journal* 60 (2007): 271–315, at 290–300.

14. Alexandra Wilson, *The Puccini Problem: Opera, Nationalism and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 161–66.

1. Roland Barthes discusses Gustave Eiffel’s concept of his structure and the possible scientific uses he envisaged in *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979), 6.

captures the tone of *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair*: wonder and respectful fascination. Like Roland Barthes who once wrote, “to perceive Paris from above is to imagine a history,”² the *bourgeoise* also announces the book’s synchronic organization, which is defined by the Fair. The depth and intensity of Annegret Fauser’s engagement with her subject, however, go far beyond what the painting and title convey, as does the originality of her focus on sound as central to visitors’ experience of the Fair, “sound-as-noise and sound-as-music” (p. 8).

In this well-researched, wide-ranging, and richly illustrated study of the “soundscape” of the 1889 Universal Exhibition, Fauser imagines not only what visitors may have sonically encountered, but also how they may have listened to what they heard. She systematically reviews concerts by the major Parisian orchestras and foreign ensembles, early music on period instruments, folk music, and entertainment in the cafés of the foreign pavilions. Because she loves mining the archival record for interesting detail, we’re invited to imagine a piano transported to the third floor of the Eiffel Tower for a private recital featuring Liszt’s “Soupir,” performed in a silence that “simple mortals” could never have “on earth” (p. 11). She recounts operatic performances piped over the telephone in ten-minute segments, experienced with stereophonic earphones, while musing about fellow listeners’ distress when one woman clapped, forgetting the context. To communicate how “spellbound” audiences were by the Javanese dancers, she cites Judith Gautier’s enjoyment of their performance as “the foam of the beer withered and the sorbet melted under distracted spoons” (p. 171). Part of the success of the Javanese *kampung*, Fauser explains, was due to its relative isolation at the edge of the fairground, “an enclave of calm in terms not just of visitors but also of sonic intrusions” (p. 167). Thanks to extensive press reporting, the reader is treated to a wide range of critical sources, sometimes in long citations and always in good vernacular English alongside the French. Engravings, caricatures from the illustrated press, and period photographs complement the musical examples. Together with Fauser’s ability to read nuance in the critical discourse, these bring the Fair remarkably alive.

The thoughtful structure of *Musical Encounters* frames the issues in constructive and illuminating ways. The book begins with the national context—French music presented by Parisian orchestras—and the sonic otherness of four early music concerts, their historicism signaling the Ancien Régime. The next two chapters delve more deeply into French opera and ballet, Revolutionary predecessors of *opéra comique*, and the only French works premiered during the Fair—Jules Massenet’s *Esclarmonde* at the Opéra-Comique on 15 May, Ambroise Thomas’s *La tempête* at the Opéra on 23 June, and Augusta Holmès’s *Ode triomphale*, written for the Fair’s closing ceremony on

2. *Ibid.*, 11.

11 September, a contemporary attempt to reimagine Revolutionary festivals.³ If Massenet was the most popular opera composer of the day, ironically Holmès, foreign and female, became a symbol of the nation. These three chapters establish the Western perspectives visitors would have brought to all performances. Chapters 4 and 5 turn to the little-known music of the Far East and Africa, then the folk traditions of Eastern Europe and the French regions, exotic zones within the West. Chapter 6, on the “marvels of technology,” builds on this gradual shift from the familiar to the unfamiliar, the expected to the unexpected, by looking at invisible music at the Fair via the telephone and the phonograph. Together, the chapters, like the Fair itself, stimulate reflection on retrospection and progress, notions associated with advanced modern civilizations.

A number of recurring themes give the book coherence while raising questions that go beyond its scope. Foremost is the notion of “music as national and racial signifier” (p. 12). Arguing that what the city produced beyond the perimeter of the fairgrounds was “part of what was exhibited as French achievement” (p. 61), Fauser’s most extensive analysis comes in discussing genres not performed at the Fair.⁴ *Opéra comique* and ballet were considered quintessentially French genres and, to the extent that *Esclarmonde* and *La tempête* embodied French responses to Wagner, these works addressed the Fair’s focus on progress. Holmès’s *Ode triomphale* took on republican values of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Performed at the gigantic Palais de l’Industrie, it featured 1,200 performers, including a central character signifying France and a series of allegorical groups—winegrowers, soldiers, artists, children, among others—their choruses performed by thirteen working-class choral societies. Although Fauser honors Holmès with this extensive review and is sensitive to music as a signifier of gender, there is no discussion of why other women composers were excluded from the Fair concerts, a topic she may well intend to address in her next book.

When it comes to French music performed at the Fair, Fauser suggests that organizers sought to create “a French canon of masterpieces” and, for this reason, presented “existing repertoire instead of new compositions.” She sees this premise as “akin to the retrospective of one hundred years of French art exhibited in the Palais des Beaux-Arts” (pp. 18–19). While the choices suggest a retrospective organization, only those excerpts performed at the state-supported Opéra, Opéra-Comique, and Société des Concerts du Conservatoire embodied this intention. Moreover, the Société des Concerts may have restricted its program principally to music by illustrious members of the

3. The scheduled premiere of Saint-Saëns’s *Ascanio* at the Opéra was postponed until the following year.

4. Except for those at the Opéra and Opéra-Comique, the book does not reproduce programs for performances elsewhere in Paris also broadcast by telephone, such as at the Eden-Théâtre (285n10).

Académie des Beaux-Arts (Saint-Saëns, Thomas, Reyer, Delibes, and Gounod), but many works produced by the Opéra-Comique were minor compositions from the recent past, mostly forgotten by 1889.⁵ And at the other orchestra concerts, the vast majority were recent works. The Concerts Lamoureux presented Félicien David's *Le désert* and the Concerts Colonne Berlioz's *Requiem*, two established masterpieces from before 1870. However, the rest I see not as an emerging canon, but an aural kaleidoscope of the state of French music, past and present.⁶ With every genre represented, critics attacked the official orchestral concerts for embracing too much variety and having too little coherence. To understand what may have been perceived as canonic in 1889, I would argue, one should start with the repertoire of the Opéra and Opéra-Comique that recycled its favorites during the Fair for provincial and foreign visitors. In terms of instrumental music, one would also want to look at what pieces were performed in other contexts, such as in processions, official ceremonies, and even military-band concerts at the Fair. Multiple arrangements of the same work would suggest a certain popularity if not also an index of canonicity. Beyond these, contemporary works preceding early music on concerts of *Musique française ancienne et moderne* suggest more about performers' personal tastes and connections with the composers than any pretense of greatness;⁷ indeed there is a striking absence of works composed *dans le style ancien*—new sarabandes and pavaues, although this was a taste popular in the late 1880s.⁸ Since Fauser reproduces these programs, I would have enjoyed more analysis of the music chosen for concerts at the Fair and what it communicated about French values.

In France, the Self is often understood in relationship to the Other; French identity comes into focus through implicit comparisons. In disdaining the length of Russian music and the tendency of American music to imitate German music, French critics, I would argue, implicitly elevated their own values of measured proportions and originality. While fascinated with other musics' distinction, they concentrated on how difference constituted a "lack"

5. Excerpts from Jules-Laurent Duprato's *La déesse et le berger* (1863), Henri Maréchal's *Les amoureux de Catherine* (1876), Émile Pessard's *Capitaine Fracasse* (1878), and Ferdinand Poise's *Joli Gille* (1884).

6. Works by lesser-known composers Georges Marty, William Chaumet, Émile Bernard, Gaston Salvayre were performed alongside music by Charles Lenepveu and Ernest Guiraud—Conservatoire professors—the Hillemecher brothers, Gabriel Pierné, Victorin Joncières, Charles-Marie Widor, Gabriel Fauré, Augusta Holmès, Charles Lefebvre, and Alphonse Duvernoy as well as Berlioz, Bizet, Massenet, Chabrier, Franck, d'Indy, and Lalo. One critic referred to this as a "veritable exhibition of our composers" (20).

7. For example, Lenepveu, here represented by a song and a barcarolle, would have known the flutist Paul Taffanel, the pianist/harpsichordist Louis Diémer, and the cellist/gamba player Jules Delsart as colleagues at the Conservatoire where he taught harmony.

8. I discussed this trend in my paper "Forging French Identity: The Political Significance of *la musique ancienne et moderne*," read at the Seventy-First Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Washington, DC (October 2005).

from the French perspective (p. 58). Fauser's citations are provocative. Tiersot compares a Hungarian rendition of the Rákóczy march with Berlioz's, the former more "short-breathed" and "rhythmically unstable," to explain why the Hungarians were "still dominated by the Austrians," unlike the French who "achieved the political results that they sought in their revolutions" (p. 256). Elsewhere he uses gender to underline his point. The sound of the panpipes he hears as emblematic of the "effeminate" music of Romanians, long "enslaved" by others (p. 259). Non-Western music too was inevitably heard in comparison with Western music. Fauser notes that listeners may have compared the Spanish *gitanas*'s music with *Carmen*, "performed at least once at week at the Opéra-Comique" (pp. 266–68). I was left wondering why, given the large presence of non-Western music at the Fair, organizers programmed so few French Orientalist works, and why reviewers compared non-Western music with Wagner more than with *Le désert*, Fauser's frequently cited point of reference, or with *L'Africaine* and *Aida*, performed at the Opéra during the Fair.

French notions of musical simplicity and complexity in Fauser's citations complicate national and racial identity; although not discussed, they bear critical scrutiny. Whereas Fétis and Renan characterize the music of Aryans, "l'art véritable," as complex,⁹ many French composers embraced simplicity (pp. 77, 150). Massenet used it to distinguish his music from Wagner's. Simplicity also connoted the origins of French music in the *chanson populaire* and the merits of rural people, far from the temptations of urban decadence. Ironically, complexity arises principally in the critical discourse about non-Western music. What attracted Tiersot and others to Javanese and Vietnamese music was its rhythmic complexity. Debussy, who found gamelan music more complex than Palestrina's counterpoint, tried to capture this in his *Fantaisie* and *Fêtes galantes*. Fauser convincingly interprets Debussy's "encounter with alterity" not as modernist "rupture," but as "appropriation" in the French Orientalist tradition, even if it "left traces on the structural level as well as on a surface one" (pp. 180, 191–92, 199, 205, 239). For French composers pursuing a form of musical progress distinct from Wagnerian harmonic complexity, Javanese and Vietnamese music offered important new stimuli.

A second major theme is the "aura of the authentic" legitimating the exhibitions (p. 218). As Fauser points out, traditionally "signifiers of authenticity"

9. Ernest Renan, in his *Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques* (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1863), and François-Joseph Fétis, in his *Histoire générale de la musique depuis les temps les plus anciens jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1869), saw progress, or the ability to develop progressively over time, as characteristic of the Aryan race and history as the result of other races' contact with it. Like them, in his *Trente mélodies populaires de Basse-Bretagne* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 1885), the music historian Louis Bourgault-Ducoudray argued that music supported the hypothesis of an "Aryan unity" among peoples of the Aryan diaspora, by which they meant the "Indo-European group" (14–16). See my "Theorizing Race in Nineteenth-Century France: Music as Emblem of Identity," *Musical Quarterly* 89 (2006): 459–504.

consisted of folk or exotic melodies (p. 142). “Stressing regional authenticity in lieu of cosmopolitan achievement” led to the requirement that folk musicians perform only melodies from their region of origin, not that composed in Paris or reflecting modern influences (pp. 272–74). Instruments and performers were also made to serve this function, particularly in non-Western performances where Fauser found authenticity an “unproblematic though celebrated bonus” (p. 218). Music from North Africa—much of it accompanying belly dancing, a form of popular culture—was, appropriately, represented in cafés; yet when Tiersot heard not only Western harmonies but also a piano in an ensemble, he criticized it as “inferior to the truly ‘authentic’ folk music he would have liked to hear” (p. 237). Fauser is right to place this prejudice in the context of Tiersot’s anxieties about the café-concert music in France, where many railed about its deleterious moral effect, but to me it also implies that he thought popular culture should stay frozen and rooted in its origins as folk music (p. 237). Concerns about authenticity also emerge in attitudes towards recordings, where critics referred to the need for “fidelity” and the “faithful rendering of both speech and music” (p. 307). Fauser writes suggestively that Tiersot, keen to “perceive with absolute fidelity the slightest nuances of timbre,” “seemed to use his earphones as if they were a stethoscope to diagnose the abilities and problems of the new musical instrument” (p. 308).

With the tensions authenticity created, we should not assume a too-easy understanding of it and its meaning to Fair-goers. Fauser gives no evidence to suggest that critics or audiences perceived the authenticity of the 1769 harpsichord differently from that of the replicas of string instruments, describing early instruments in general as “signifiers of pastness” (p. 32). And for all its associations with rural people, most performances of *musique pittoresque* took place in a sterile concert hall, the Palais du Trocadéro, with some performers frauds, that is, actually Parisians.¹⁰ Vietnamese music, presented authentically as part of popular theater with audiences facing forward instead of gathered around café-style tables, was considered the “summit of exoticism at the Exhibition” (p. 187). Yet, with reviewers comparing its “music for torturers” to animal cries, one wonders why the French would want to persist in colonizing a country whose music, a racial signifier, they found so repugnant. The importance of authenticity also raises the question of why most Fair visitors better appreciated the Javanese performances: they were presented in a café-théâtre where listeners, as noted above, drank alcohol and consumed snacks—hardly an analogue to the Javanese courts for which this music was conceived. The jarring disjunction between authentic performers and an inauthentic locale played out problematically on the “Rue du Caire.” Fauser points out

10. For example, Fauser notes that the “beautifully costumed ‘Russians’” included “a second violin from the Colonne orchestra and a double-bass player from its rival orchestra, the Lamoureux” (p. 268).

that this was an imaginary “timeless landscape” recalling old Cairo, a construction resembling the backdrops of Orientalist opera, not a replica of modern Cairo (p. 223). While authenticity celebrated in the Javanese spectacles led to the elevation of the four dancers as stars, belly dancers and their accompanists in the “Rue du Caire” cafés remained largely anonymous. Critics panned their music for its hybridity. The genres themselves and the form of entertainment presented may have contributed to this vastly different reception, but so too would have Parisians’ familiarity with Arab music already heard at the 1867 and 1878 Exhibitions. I would have appreciated discussion of the role authenticity in exotic performances may have played in unsettling conventional notions of music as art or entertainment.

Related to this concern is the author’s interest in not only sound as sign, but also sound as presence—the nature of sound and the location of its production. From what Fauser writes, one senses a continuum at the Exhibition between sonic reality, rooting listeners in the acoustic present, and sonic mystery, taking them away from the present and encouraging imaginative fantasy. The “soundscape” was an enormous field of “discovery” and “uncomfortable awe” (p. 279). Authenticity and faithfulness would have supported the former, while interest in magic, exoticism, and the charm of the unfamiliar would have reinforced the latter. The natural imprecision of musical timbre plays an interesting role here and, throughout *Musical Encounters*, Fauser mines the press for references to it. Sometimes she calls this “sonic difference,” although it may refer to the difference of Self and Other as much as to the specificity of sound. Ironically, her critics’ most frequent reference to timbre comes in discussing the benefits and liabilities of the phonograph.

Seeking to understand how people listened is Fauser’s central and yet most elusive theme. Although “the sound of the spectacles” may have “clashed with horizons of expectation formed through decades of musical exoticism,” the ambition of proving that “active listening” took place, beyond that of musicians and critics, turns out to be a daunting one (pp. 163, 165). Fauser, if possible, would have been out there interviewing audiences as well as performers, seeking to understand what people paid attention to and how they bridged the “gap between the imagined and the real” (p. 139). Stymied by many critics’ inability to adequately convey their sonic impressions, and convinced that performance venues shaped listening experiences, she takes listening as part of a larger field of perception: “In contradiction to most Western spectacles, here the musicians themselves were part of the show . . . not only their music and musical instruments, but also their posture, their clothing, and their expressions were scrutinized” (p. 175).¹¹ She also looks to transcriptions as a

11. This important point could also be extended to our understanding of Western theatrical spectacles, such as opera and ballet, which spectators often viewed through binoculars and whose costumes, gestures, and scenery were objects of critical debate. I am grateful to Carlo Caballero for this observation.

recorded form of listening. In Benedictus's renditions of gamelan music, focused on "the sonic surface" (p. 182), we come perhaps closest to visitors' "musical encounters." To say more, perhaps Fauser might have tried to trace the possible effect of repeated hearings and potential changes in public or critical perception over time. Unfortunately, giving volume numbers instead of months for citations from *Le Ménestrel* and *L'Illustration*, including Tiersot's "Promenades," makes it impossible for readers without access to the journal to detect for themselves any such evolution.

The last chapter, more theoretically provocative than the others, turns to "changes in listening technique" required by new media. To the extent that recordings and telephone broadcasts rely "entirely on the listening imagination," Fauser sees them as involving "individualized meditation" and, less convincingly, as paralleling "notions of hysteria in contemporary psychology" (pp. 294–96). Strangely, Wagner, so important elsewhere in the book, is absent from such discussions even though his music elicited similar responses. Fauser proposes "a new type of listener," pointing ahead to electroacoustic music. But to do justice to this topic and support the contention that "sound reproduction technologies reflect changing practices of listening" (p. 295) would take a whole book.¹² By the end, we suspect the *bourgeoise* on the book's cover was also musing about the power of science to transcend human limitations.

Musical Encounters, a wonderfully evocative portrait of the Paris World's Fair, almost makes you feel you were there. At the same time, it drenches the experience in rich historical, cultural, political, and theoretical contexts. Annegret Fauser has the knack of a born historian for colorful detail and insightful interpretation. Her work, a pleasure to read, is a model of synchronic historical analysis.¹³

JANN PASLER

Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema, edited by Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, and Richard Leppert. Paperback ed. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2007. viii, 324 pp.

The rhetorical gimmick in a title phrase starting with "Beyond . . ." is now a deeply rooted convention in academic and tradebook publishing—and with

12. Fauser here builds on the insights of Denis Smalley, "The Listening Imagination: Listening in the Electroacoustic Era," in *Companion to Contemporary Musical Thought*, ed. John Paynter, Tim Howell, Richard Orton, and Peter Seymour, 2 vols., 1:514–54 (London and New York: Routledge, 1992); and Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2003).

13. For another musical portrait of the Fair, see my *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), chap. 10.