

in question—*Bacchanale* (1940)—but rather an otherwise unidentified “Table of piano preparations” that appears to belong to either *A Book of Music* (1944) or *Three Dances* (1945). Elsewhere, although on page 309 we are notified that Cage at the start of 1979 “permanently shaved off the graying mustache and beard he had sported for the last half-dozen years,” we still find it in evidence on pages 315, 332, 367, and 369, it having previously disappeared on pages 304 and 292. Fourth, there are some curious omissions or near omissions. One might, for instance, have expected to find more concerning Jackson Pollock, and at least *something* about Peggy Glanville-Hicks.

Finally, one might have assumed in such a thorough biographical study as Silverman’s that there would be a sizeable amount of discussion and dissection, to balance the detailed description that otherwise maintains throughout. Sadly, all too often such analysis is avoided, whether in relation to Cage’s upbringing (the first twenty-six years of his life are routinely dispensed with in twenty-five pages), his musical aspirations and achievements, his rather embarrassing sometime espousal of Maoist views, or any number of other potentially pregnant topics. To cite but one example, on pages 245–46 Silverman describes Cage’s lifestyle changes ca. 1970: “Cage changed much more than his diet. He had always dressed conservatively, appearing in public clean-shaven, wearing a suit and tie. . . . Now he dressed in faded blue jeans and denim workshirt, sometimes topped by a denim workjacket. Uncombed dark hair covered his ears and fell to his shoulders. His lipline barely showed through his full gray mustache and breastbone-length gray beard.” The obvious question here is “Why?” Was Cage having a mid-life crisis, albeit at sixty? Had he felt the need to update his image to fit with the times, perhaps better to relate to those who saw *Silence* as “a bible for the young in heart”?⁵ Or with the passing of his parents (father John Sr. had died in 1964, mother Crete in 1969) did he no longer feel the need to dress in a manner of which they would have approved? Yet Silverman’s explanation of the change of “uniform” simply (and limply) cites Cage’s pragmatic remark that “I can stop my car on my way to or from a concert or lecture engagement and hunt for mushrooms in the woods” (246). Readers both casual and professional could surely be forgiven for expecting more.

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Sound Diplomacy: Music and Emotions in Transatlantic Relations, 1850–1920. By Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

With *Sound Diplomacy*, Jessica Gienow-Hecht, professor of International History at the University of Cologne, Germany, and author of *Transmission Impossible*:

⁵ The reference here is to Wilfrid Mellers’s remark on the jacket of the first British imprint of *Silence* (London: Boyars, 1961).

American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1999), presents an in-depth study of German-American interactions in the development of a U.S. symphonic music tradition as a unique case of nongovernmental cultural diplomacy. Gienow-Hecht traces the development of this influential musical alliance from the revolutions of 1848 through the end of the World War I, and she suggests that its impact can be felt to this day.

To illustrate these German-American cultural relations, Gienow-Hecht uses the concept of “elective affinities” (initially a chemical term, “chemical affinities,” pointing to the property of dissimilar chemical species to create compounds) explored by Goethe as a metaphor for complex human emotional relationships among two men and two women in his 1809 novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (The Elective Affinities). Like the novel’s aristocratic couple, Eduard and Charlotte, who invited a friend and a niece, Otto and Otilie, into their uneventful married life and experienced new yet skewed romantic relations with unfortunate consequences, the music-loving American elite lured German musicians with their German symphonic repertoire to their shores, enjoyed successes, and faced initially unforeseeable trouble.

Gienow-Hecht’s study, which is richly illustrated with numerous halftones, draws on her extensive research in numerous German and U.S. private and public archives, including the Bundesarchiv and Geheimes Staatsarchiv in Berlin as well as orchestra archives in Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. She has brought to light an impressive array of documentary sources related to her topic.

In Chapter 1, “Transatlantic Relations before World War I,” Gienow-Hecht compares France’s, Great Britain’s, and Germany’s governmental efforts regarding cultural diplomacy or expansionism in the nineteenth-century United States. The French government successfully promoted its culture, especially the visual arts, through such institutions as the Alliance Française. Despite complicated political relations with the United States, the British were able to facilitate the dissemination of Victorian lifestyles and, thanks to the shared language, their rich literary and theater traditions. The German government, however, failed in its attempts to export culture to the United States, and it was German musicians who more or less unwittingly came to serve as informal cultural ambassadors, staking out a strong presence in the realm of symphonic music in the United States.

In the second chapter, “Music, Magic, and Emotions,” Gienow-Hecht elaborates on nineteenth-century ideas of music as a universal language of emotions and of music as a “cure for all sorts of social, political, and physical problems” (41), as discussed in such U.S. journals as the *New York American* and *Dwight’s Journal of Music*, as well as in the European press. She also shows how these views, along with the notion of the Germans as the “people of music” and of German music allegedly embodying superiority, purity, profundity, and a universal spirit, cultivated in the process of Germany’s nation-building and nationalistic endeavors, converged with the American elite’s increasing appetite for imported symphonic music. Proud of their cultural heritage, German musicians toured and/or immigrated to the United States and spread with missionary zeal the gospel of German symphonic

music, which came to be considered superior to vocal, chamber, and church music. Thousands of Americans made pilgrimages to Germany, the musical Mecca, to study in its conservatories and to attend musical performances.

In Chapter 3, the focus is, in Goethe's words, on the "houseguests," the German musicians, conductors, and composers crossing the Atlantic. The motives of these artists, among them Anton Seidl, Frederick Stock, and Theodore Thomas, differed widely, ranging from the search for fame and fortune to above all proselytization. Yet the German government did not support their efforts. Gienow-Hecht describes the "houseguests" as "rooted cosmopolitans" due to their commitment to their German cultural heritage and reluctance to speak English or to assimilate in other ways to their chosen environment. However, their American hosts expected them to overtly display Germanness. If musicians lacked German credentials, the press Germanized them. Between 1850 and 1918, German musicians helped build, and then dominated, most symphonic music institutions across the United States.

In Chapter 4, Gienow-Hecht introduces the American hosts, affluent Anglo-Saxon music connoisseurs and art patrons, including Charles N. Fay, Henry Higginson, as well as many upper-class women, who readily welcomed and even recruited German musicians, and who sponsored the foundation of symphony orchestras and building of concert halls, leading to a veritable "symphony boom" beginning in the 1890s (111). The author also considers the constructive role of such music critics as Henry Krehbiel, Felix Borowski, and Louis Elson, as well as audiences in this musical alliance. Although Gienow-Hecht believes that the German-American community was minimally involved in the creation and subsidy of the prestige-yielding yet hardly profit-oriented American orchestra, support in this immigrant group for German high art, including symphonic repertoire, was encouraged at least by the elite and professional classes, German cultural and artistic organizations such as the numerous singing societies, and by newspapers such as the *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung*.

Chapter 5, "Love Affairs: Audiences and Programs," centers on repertoire, performance, and reception history. Although she did not thoroughly analyze American orchestral programs, Gienow-Hecht states that, "between 1890 and 1915, more than 60 percent of all music performed by symphonies in the United States stemmed from Austro-German composers," with Beethoven being the most performed composer (143–44). German conductors were largely responsible for repertoire choices, but American music patrons often expected or even requested works by German composers (144–45). Conductors such as Stock and Karl Muck even introduced daring works like Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra before World War I, although Gienow-Hecht does not mention that in her book. On the other hand, these conductors often enriched their programs with light and popular fare and an increasing number of works by U.S., French, and Russian composers to cater to a broad spectrum of the by no means exclusively elite audience.

Chapters 6 and 7 lay out how, after the initial "love affairs" between houseguests and hosts, the Germanness of the houseguests and symphonic repertoire became a problem in the face of rising cultural nationalism in the late 1800s and anti-German sentiment during World War I. Aided by the Alien Contract Labor Bill

of 1885, labor unions, among them the American Federation of Musicians, fought for the employment of U.S. musicians and made it difficult for foreign artists to find work or keep their jobs. The prominence of supposedly superior German music on American concert programs suggested to Americans cultural inferiority and made them yearn for musical independence and a genuinely American music. Gienow-Hecht points out that, “just as people around the globe started to fear the influence of U.S. culture on their own local cultures, no one fretted as much about cultural authenticity as the Americans themselves. And it was precisely this fear that challenged their previous affinity with their houseguests, the ‘people of music’” (154). The situation escalated during World War I, and the efforts of German musicians were equated with “German cultural imperialism, Prussian militarism, and espionage designed to subjugate American art, democracy, and patriotism” (78). Once treated like pop stars, German musicians lost their jobs and were the objects of social pressure and even physical threats, and some of them, including Muck and Ernst Kunwald, were investigated, interned, and deported. Performances of works by German composers were banned. After the war, the United States formed a strong musical alliance with France, although this did not end the country’s “emotional elective affinity with ‘the people of music’” (215). Most of the German repertoire quickly resurfaced on U.S. orchestral programs, and with the rise of Hitler, Americans saw another wave of German musicians pouring into their country. After World War II, the United States and Germany resumed their cultural relationship through musical exchanges.

Gienow-Hecht brings fresh insights and her expertise as a diplomatic and cultural historian to a musical topic. Yet her lack of a background in musicology is apparent throughout the book. For instance, she classifies Mozart and Beethoven as Romantics (perhaps leaning on E. T. A. Hoffmann’s categorization). Seemingly unaware of the dichotomy of absolute music and program music and the fact that not all “Romantic” symphonic works constitute absolute music, she concludes that “absolute music was instrumental, romantic, and elevating,” and that it “combined universalistic and nationalistic traits” and “glorified the symphony, a musical form that became internationally associated with German masters” (9). She fails to realize that Tchaikovsky could not have written and premiered his Sixth Symphony in 1903 (146); that the reporter of the 1916 Minneapolis Symphony rehearsals in fact did not mislabel Stravinsky’s *Firebird* as *Fireworks* (Stravinsky’s youthful work premiered in the United States in 1910; 126–27); that during World War I Stravinsky did not spend any time in Russia (“In Russia, Igor Stravinsky praised the mature Russian civilization, expressing his hope that after the war a revolution would create a Slavonic United States” [208]); that Schoenberg never “worked at the New School for Social Research” and that he refrained from introducing his American students to serialism (211–12). Such shortcomings aside, this book should be of interest to not only cultural historians, but also to musicians, music lovers, and students of American music.

Sabine Feisst

