



historical agents deserved separate histories. Before the age of mass consumption, after all, categories such as that of composer, performer, publisher, promoter, spectator, listener or subscriber to music journals could easily overlap in the same individual. Even when they did not, their different interests and agendas intersected via the musical commodity. And it is in an archaeology of these encounters that musicologists may find an opportunity to retrace what Mondelli calls the ‘relational’ values of musical commodities (235) and the vicarious experiences of enjoying them.

FABIO MORABITO

fabio.morabito@lincoln.ox.ac.uk



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ELLEN LOCKHART

ANIMATION, PLASTICITY, AND MUSIC IN ITALY, 1770–1830

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About two-thirds of the way through Ellen Lockhart’s ambitious book, *Animation, Plasticity, and Music in Italy, 1770–1830*, appears an engraving depicting a blind youth bent over two geometric solids, his left hand touching a cube, his right grasping a sphere. The plate, taken from Cristofano Sarti’s 1799 treatise *L’Ottica della natura e dell’educazione* (Vision in Nature and in Education), illustrates one stage in an imaginary experiment designed to test what philosophers refer to as ‘the Molyneux problem’. Named for William Molyneux, who framed the question in a letter to John Locke in 1688, the problem posits a person who was born blind and has learned to distinguish between different forms through touch alone. If this person suddenly regained the ability to see, it asks, would he be able to recognize the cube and the sphere by sight? Following George Berkeley and others, Sarti answered in the negative, arguing that senses such as touch and vision created impressions (or ‘primary ideas’) that were completely distinct, not connected by a common sensorium or by shared abstractions of the objects being perceived. A subject could *learn* to associate the feel of the solids with their visual manifestations, but would not be able to do so instinctually.

Recent research suggests that Berkeley and Sarti were correct; but this we do not learn from Lockhart. For her purposes what matters is less how perception actually works than that eighteenth-century Italian thinkers wondered about the interdependence of the senses – and that their investigations sometimes led them into thinking about musical experience. The range of examples Lockhart has gathered, drawing on fictional, scientific and philosophical sources, indicates that late eighteenth-century readers and writers were fascinated with the idea that extreme development of one sense could compensate for the loss of another, and that they invested music with a special power to animate and enliven the body and the soul in cases when one sense or physical attribute was deficient. In Gaspare Spontini’s opéra-comique *Milton* (1804), for example, the blind poet’s daughter plays the harp for her father and surrounds him with flowers, sparking his creativity by stimulating the senses of smell and hearing in the absence of sight. And in Camillo Federici’s 1799 play *La cieca nata* (The Girl Blind from Birth), a sightless young woman learns to perceive colour through playing the harpsichord, perceiving vivid tints in the various pitches and feeling that she has ‘eyes at the ends of her fingers’ (quoted in Lockhart, 126). When her cataracts are surgically removed in the play’s *dénouement*, the acquisition of sight brings a surge of transformative energy that Lockhart sees as akin to the animation of a marble statue.

It is through Lockhart’s analyses of obscure texts such as these that the book’s central arguments and the import of its title are gradually revealed. While the first of the abstract nouns in the book’s title is in play in



fairly obvious ways from the outset, the second term appears for the first time just over halfway through the book and is brought into focus bit by bit over the next ten or twenty pages. This withholding of a key term and subsequent reluctance to pin it down hints that Lockhart is working through ideas and methods as she writes, her attention shifting as new cases and approaches present themselves; the result is a book whose form is itself plastic. As the book unfolds, 'animation' acquires multiple resonances, stretching to refer to the animation of classical ruins by poetic vitality, the revivification of the Italian language by romantic iconoclasm, the enlivening of the partially sense-deprived and the electrification (both actual and imagined) of bodies in sexual congress and in song. On one level animation functions as a metaphor; but it is also a transformative process that takes us to the core of the aesthetic discourses and artistic practices of the period. An opening section on musical works and aesthetic texts involving the animation of statues is succeeded by a chapter-length investigation of fictional works about poet-improvisers and the energy with which they infuse both ruins and rhetorical conventions. What feels like a crucial pivot point arrives in chapter 4, where the focus shifts to sense deprivation, aesthetic perception and neuroplasticity as presented in plays, operas and medical texts of the period. A final chapter on the metaphor of electrification in opera criticism gives material form to the twin discourses of animation and plasticity, drawing a parallel between the mysterious force that brought Pygmalion's Galatea to life and early nineteenth-century scientific and popular understandings of electricity's effects on the body.

This is a book about animated statues and the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea that contains very few actual stories of statues coming to life. Only the first two chapters of *Animation, Plasticity, and Music* focus on statues or animation, narrowly defined. Chapter 1 begins from the figure of the statue in Condillac's *Traité des sensations* (1754), brought to life by stimulation of each of its senses in turn, as mediated through an odd ballet on the subject choreographed by Gaspare Angiolini, *La vendetta spiritosa* (Teatro alla Scala, 1781). (An earlier version of this chapter was published as 'Alignment, Absorption, Animation: Pantomime Ballet in the Lombard *illuminismo*', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 8/2 (2011), 239–259.) In her second chapter Lockhart turns to Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, considering a series of Italian adaptations of the *mélodrame* from Francesco de' Rogati's adaptation (1773, but never set to music) through Antonio Sografi and Giovanni Battista Cimador's Venetian version (1790) to its influence on Gaetano Donizetti and Vincenzo Bellini. Together with the animated clay figures of Beethoven and Viganò's 1801 ballet *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus* (discussed in the Introduction, along with their disguised appearance in the final movement of the 'Eroica'), these are the book's central examples of animated statues.

However, to imply that each chapter deals merely with a single example would do scant justice to the scope of this imaginative study. Chapters are organized centrifugally, spiralling out from a central point to consider a wide array of related issues and texts. The chapter that nominally centres on Angiolini and Condillac also has much to say about French and Italian conceptions of language, gesture and the natural sign. In his *Mozart and Enlightenment Semiotics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011) Stephen Rumph took Condillac's sensing statue as a starting-point for a theory that sees poetic language as a series of traces of sensory experience, and musical patterns and topoi as stylized indices for specific sensations. Without directly engaging with Rumph (who is mentioned only in a footnote), Lockhart takes Condillac's theory of sign and sensation in nearly an opposite direction, stressing the vital force that animated these statues, which she sees as both symbolizing and inspiring a new model of a natural language, freed from the constraints of classical rhetoric and imbued with the gestures and inflections of ordinary speech.

Lockhart is not the first to suggest that, for Italians mired in an entrenched system of rhetorical convention, pantomimic gesture and dance represented a fresher, more immediate form of communication. In the pages of the influential Enlightenment journal *Il Caffè*, Alessandro Verri lamented that Italian was deficient as a language to denote concrete things, and Cesare Beccaria characterized an oration composed according to strict classical rules as 'a procession of gigantic, hollow, papier-mâché statues' posed in a series of traditional attitudes (31). In these formulations, the statue is equated with ancient artifice and its animation makes possible not only a revitalization of communication, but also a democratization of culture and education. Drawing on the sentiments articulated in the prefaces to Angiolini's ballets and similar texts, Lockhart argues



that works such as *La vendetta spiritosa* also animated their spectators, their elevation of natural gesture and unvarnished feeling inaugurating a theatrical experience based in sympathy. Rightly cautious about positing a unified 'Italian' perspective on anything during this period, she soft-pedals the intriguing suggestion that the vogue for artworks about living statues played a crucial role in the formation of national identity and the construction of a public sphere in Italian peninsula.

Somewhat less convincing, perhaps, are the claims about musical style that run in parallel with this argument about language and gesture. Lockhart suggests that enthusiasm for a (musical) language that sounded natural created a desire for a style of recitative that was influenced by the contours and pacing of the musical interludes in *mélodrame*, and specifically by the musical style of Rousseau's *Pygmalion*. Although the argument remains characteristically subtle and dispersed, taking fascinating detours to consider the career of the poet-improviser Alessandro Pepoli and the graphic system devised by Joshua Steele to notate the melodies of speech, Lockhart posits a strong evolutionary through-line leading from Rousseau to the gestural style of accompanied recitative to Vincenzo Bellini's experiments with *canto declamato*, culminating in some unusually teleological claims. Along the way she offers a wonderful mini-history of the term 'filosofico', showing that the application of that word to Bellini's style around 1830 was not new, but rather grew out of an existing critical vocabulary and an aesthetic that valued vocal delivery that either was improvised or sounded as if it could be, part of what Lockhart calls the 'dream of an opera written by singer-actors' (76). The argument about musical influence seems a bit shakier, relying as it does on a belief in the stylistic impact of Rousseau, via Sografi and Cimador's *Pimmalione*, and the implicit exclusion of other works and styles as possible influences on declamatory style.

Somewhere between Rousseau and Bellini is also where animation gives way to plasticity in Lockhart's narrative. In a chapter devoted to depictions of poet-improvisers in novels by Alessandro Verri and Madame de Staël, the focus shifts from statues that come alive to humans of monumental stature – Verri's fictional depiction of Cicero and the *improvvisatrice* Corinne in Staël's novel – whose *ex tempore* performances also have the power to animate their surroundings. These characters become the occasion for the book's first discussion of plasticity – which Lockhart defines at first, in terms adapted from Hegel, as a fusion of the sculptural with 'intensely nervous biological matter' (88), straddling the categories of the archetypal and the particular. This definition is eventually expanded to draw on both the philosophical and neurological usages of the term. The material on Molyneux's problem and sense deprivation, briefly discussed above, take us into the realm of neuroplasticity, the ability of the brain (and other forms of biological matter) to change and adapt in response to stimuli. Midway through chapter 3 Catherine Malabou makes a brief appearance, in reference to the philosophical notion that a substance or an object is 'plastic' when it is in a constant state of becoming and can change to assume a new ideal form. Statues summoned to consciousness and movement by music, or by the sheer desire of their makers, clearly possess this kind of plasticity; as Lockhart notes, 'the notion that one can learn about thinking by imagining oneself a statue is at least as old as Condillac' (101). But 'plasticity' means much more than this, and its many functions in the book's argument are never clearly disentangled, nor are the intellectual foundations for the various uses of the term ever fully laid out.

In the simplest terms, plasticity replaces animation when plays, operas and ballets about Pygmalion and the creatures of Prometheus fall out of fashion, in the first or second decade of the nineteenth century. In a delightful turn, Lockhart locates this shift quite precisely, in Rome in 1816, with the scene of confused human characters temporarily turning into statues in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* – a scene she cleverly recognizes as both a parody and a reversal of the eighteenth-century trope of animation. From this point on, her interest falls on human characters (or performers) who are represented as immobilized or deficient in some way until they are stimulated by an external force, whether by music (as with the blind harpsichordist in Federici's *La cieca nata*) or by a real or metaphorical charge of electricity. The emerging science of electricity is the focus in the book's final chapter, where Lockhart juxtaposes cases in which electricity (often accompanied by music) was administered to cure illnesses or promote fertility (as in James Graham's famed 'Celestial Bed') with the early nineteenth-century critical habit of describing particularly effective operatic performances as 'electric'. One of Lockhart's aims in concluding with electricity is to suggest that the force that animated Condillac's



and Pygmalion's statues *was*, in some sense, electricity, and to document a scenario in which artistic works anticipated developments that science did not yet know how to name or understand.

Towards the end of the chapter, in a quick series of moves that depends partly on an equivalence between the energy of electric circuits and the sounds of operatic storms, Lockhart ventures another bold teleological trajectory. Beginning from the many listeners who praised the 'electrifying' energy of Giuditta Pasta's performances, she proposes that Pasta may have capitalized on the fascination with electricity to devise 'an electrifying topos', a fusion of vocal intensity and arresting gestures that she employed in a variety of roles and contexts, and even that Pasta's strategies for electrifying performance drew on the dramaturgy of Galatea's moment of becoming, her self-defining cry of 'Io!' ('I!'). But Lockhart backs away at the last minute, opting instead for a post-critical embrace of performativity, based in sudden bursts of effect and of affect:

electrical animation defied identification with verbal meanings and mimetic schemes; it creates a kind of bodily representation that is *other*, a living picture that is not of the diegesis, perceived via shocks. It invites a kind of spectatorial awareness, a kind of reading, that is simultaneous to but forcibly estranged from the opera's primary unfolding. (148)

It is at moments like this, which become increasingly common in the book's last two chapters, that the significance of 'plasticity' begins to come into focus. The 'shocks' and the 'spectatorial awareness' adduced here seem quite distant from the accounts of treatises and mostly forgotten operas that populated the book's first half – understandably so, given the impossibility of gaining access to meaningful information about audience experience in the eighteenth century. But this notion of a performative eruption of intensity that breaks free of plot and musical score is familiar. The possibility that the energy of the performance could, at special moments, overtake both composer and score is a key element of Melina Esse's account of the figure of the poet-improviser in opera; but the idea surely has its origins in Carolyn Abbate's writing about Brünnhilde and Salome. (See Esse, 'Encountering the *improvisatrice* in Italian Opera', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66/3 (2013), 709–770; and Abbate, *Unsung Voices* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) and 'Opera; or, the Envoicing of Women', in *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, ed. Ruth A. Solie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 225–258.) Lockhart goes beyond these precursors in construing electrical force in terms of the charisma that can inhere in inanimate objects (which include stone statues, but also works of art), or as the energy and information conveyed by expressive media. A sceptic might detect in these accounts musical transcendence by another name; but Lockhart's applications of thing theory and media theory enable new connections with unexplored realms of history, while also treating these relics of an age long past as sources of knowledge about sensory experience in the present moment.

The discussion of performance and electricity is one of the not-infrequent moments in *Animation, Plasticity, and Music* where direct engagement with the work of other scholars would have been not only generous, but also useful in clarifying the book's arguments and inserting them into a larger disciplinary conversation. Lockhart clearly arrived at her fascinating ideas through direct and sustained engagement with a rich archive of texts from multiple disciplines and media, and her intimacy with her sources shows up in a positive way on every page. But at times she betrays unease about her reliance on historical debris. Already on page 1, the archival discoveries and forgotten texts that will structure the book are described as the historian's 'trail of breadcrumbs'. Later we hear of a 'quiet archive of overlooked music and musical practices' (17), music that is 'buried under the sediments of time' (42), and fragments 'of an enchanted cloak that becomes, as it falls to the ground, a piece of the dreamer's pajamas' (84). This intermittent anxiety about the seductions and limitations of historicism feels unnecessary, and perhaps it was eased somewhat in the process of writing, as Lockhart's attention turned increasingly to the theoretical possibilities of plasticity, and as she began to explore ideas unmoored from history, such as the possible connections between the gestural language of melodrama, sightless listening and the musical style of Beethoven quartets (as explored in a remarkable passage on 127–132).



The progression of Lockhart's understanding of animation and plasticity means that the reader is challenged to keep pace, called upon to fill in missing pieces or to pause and ask how one use of the term relates to or extends a previous instance. Confronted with such scenes of reading, the reflexive reaction is to demand that terms be nailed down and stray ideas forced into coherent statements of purpose. While a few more such declarations of intent might give Lockhart's important ideas greater reach, I would not wish away the detours and sudden revelations that *Animation, Plasticity, and Music* offers in every chapter. What Lockhart has achieved is to write at once a rigorous, carefully researched work on music history and a quasi-philosophical meditation on what it might have been like to enjoy this music in its own time, and on the varieties of knowledge and pleasure that music can offer us now.

MARY ANN SMART
masmart@berkeley.edu



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BIRGIT LODES, ELISABETH REISINGER AND JOHN D. WILSON, EDS
*BEETHOVEN UND ANDERE HOFMUSIKER SEINER GENERATION: BERICHT ÜBER DEN
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This volume of sixteen essays, nine in German and seven in English, is the product of a conference held in December 2016; for a report on the event see *Eighteenth-Century Music* 14/1 (2017), 149–150. Rather than a focused title, such as 'Beethoven in Bonn', the conference opted for one that encouraged a more contextual approach, shifting the attention from the experience of one individual to contemporary practice in general. Nine of the sixteen essays in the resultant volume deal wholly or in part with Bonn, but none deals only with Beethoven. The remaining seven essays enhance the reader's understanding of music at the Bonn court with accounts of musical life at other courts, including Berlin, Dresden, Eszterháza, Florence, Kassel, Munich, Oettingen-Wallerstein, Salzburg and Vienna. With courtly practice as the dominant perspective, this certainly has the effect of offering a new perspective on Beethoven's career, and also on that of Haydn and Mozart.

Another liberalizing aspect of the volume, outlined in the Introduction and in the very first essay by Mark Evan Bonds ('The Court of Public Opinion: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven'), is a willingness to avoid many of the tired clichés of musical scholarship in this period, most evident in writing on Beethoven, but apparent in Haydn and Mozart scholarship too: the emancipation of the restless creative individual from the old-fashioned restrictions of court life and, a similarly unhelpful binary construct, the move from the private sphere to the public sphere. Music at court was never systematically put to one side in Beethoven's lifetime: its practices and outlooks are evident well into the nineteenth century. Indeed, as Arnold Jacobshagen shows in his essay 'Kapellmeister als Opernkomponisten', there is a steadily unfolding narrative from the late eighteenth century of someone like Peter von Winter in Munich to the early twentieth century of Richard Strauss in Berlin; in a striking footnote the author goes even further, pointing out that the exceptionally generous provision of opera houses and orchestras in modern Germany is a demonstrable legacy of older court traditions.

The volume has a wide range of methodological approaches that complement rather than compete with one another. Rita Steblin presents a series of documents on the busy careers of the Wranitzky brothers in Vienna ('The Court Careers of Paul and Anton Wranitzky in Vienna'), Anton working for Prince Lobkowitz, Paul as a lead violinist in the court theatres as well as a prolific composer and a general amateur. On no fewer