The Plague, a Metal Monster, and the Wonder of Wanda: In Pursuit of the Performance Style

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Abstract: The claim of having achieved “authenticity” in performance has today almost disappeared without a trace. However, Richard Taruskin’s efforts to disprove the premise through a series of articles in the 1980s still beg important questions, such as exactly what are the origins of the early music movement’s performance style and which performers had a role in its transmission? Taruskin contends that Stravinsky transmitted the “geometrical,” or modernist, Bach to the musical world, and that Stravinsky might have learned it from Wanda Landowska. Taruskin’s accolade exposes more than a bit of irony within the early-music revival, since Landowska is seldom, if ever, acknowledged as a significant contributor to the development of the early-music “style” of performance, even though Landowska’s recordings reveal a performer with a modern style, one that foreshadows 1980s early-music performances. Due primarily to the sound of her non-historic harpsichord, Landowska’s influence, however, has been diminished, and her significant role was negated in the post-“authenticity” early music movement. This paper traces Landowska’s central influence through an investigation of her Varsovian musical education, Parisian residency, and recordings. It recognizes and advocates for the contributions made by Landowska before the advent of the “authenticity” era.

Keywords: Historical Performance; Early Music; Authenticity; Performance Practice; Landowska; Kleczyński.

1 - Introduction

Richard Taruskin’s campaign berating early music’s dependency on “authenticity” as a defense for its performance style, now seems irrelevant or even alien (TARUSKIN, 1988). For today, the claim of “authentic” performance has almost disappeared without a trace. However, the effort to disprove historicism still begs important questions, such as what exactly are the roots of the early music movement’s performance style and which performers had a role in its transmission?

Taruskin reminds us that there is no way of knowing what music sounded like in the eighteenth century and, therefore, the early music movement’s claim of “authenticity” cannot be substantiated. He asserts that the performance style of the early music movement is a geometrical one and has its origins, rather, with Igor Stravinsky and the early twentieth-century modernists. Geometricism, with its stiff angularity and emphasis on objectivity, is in opposition to the softer vitalist style, a style exhibited by
nineteenth-century “Romantics” in their early twentieth-century recordings (TARUSKIN, 1988). Taruskin hypothesizes that Stravinsky learned his geometricism from Wanda Landowska in 1907 (TARUSKIN, 1988, p.167). His accolade exposes more than a bit of irony within the early music revival, since Landowska is seldom, if ever, acknowledged as a significant contributor to the development of the early music movement’s style of performance.

Landowska was a flamboyant performer of the highest regard, and her recordings exhibit a distinctive and modern style, one that foreshadows period-instrument performances of the 1980s. Due primarily to the sound of her Pleyel harpsichord combined with the theatricality of her performance style, Landowska’s influence, however, has been diminished and her significant role was negated in the post-“authenticity” early music movement. Using Taruskin’s theory as a starting point, this paper reevaluates Landowska’s contribution to the early music movement’s style of performance within the philosophical and musical framework of the “authenticity” movement.

2 – The Plague

The history of the early music movement is a capricious one; its chronicle leaves off or deemphasizes those members who do not fall within present criteria. Despite the movement’s tendency to play up its kaleidoscope-like characters, Landowska, an exotic woman with strong musical ideas, plays the one-dimensional role of harpsichord advocate. Her script requires very few lines beyond the resurrection of and advocacy for her instrument, and most would agree that Landowska is not on the early-music marquee with Harnoncourt, Leonhardt, and Brüggen. These three headliners brought the early music movement’s performance style to a mainstream audience and secured it with widely circulated recordings. They spearheaded in the 1960s and 1970s what Stephen MEYER (2009, p.248) recently called the “modern” early music movement. But what influence does Landowska and other performers from the “pre-modern” early music movement have upon our performance style? And why is Landowska’s generation not considered modern?

There is a disconnect between the accomplishments of Harnoncourt, Leonhardt, and Brüggen, and those of the previous generation. For standing defiantly between the two generations is the Achilles’ heel of the early music movement – “authenticity.” It is difficult to determine when the “authenticity” movement began, but by the mid-1960s it had gained momentum. In 1968, Harnoncourt signaled the movement’s authentic resolve:

> Today we only want to accept the composition itself as a source, and present it as our own responsibility. The attempt must thus again be made today, with Bach’s masterpieces in particular, to hear and perform them as if they had never been interpreted before, as though they had never been formed nor distorted (HARONCOURT, 1968).

In the 1980s, many of the prominent leaders in the early music movement signed on to the “authenticity” campaign and enthusiastically waved its flag in support of their own performance style. “Authenticity” was entrepreneur-friendly and records heralded claims such as “Pachelbel’s Canon: The Famous Canon as Pachelbel Heard It” (HOGWOOD, quoted by KENYON, 1988, p.6).

Due to Taruskin’s widely published criticism of “authenticity” in the mid-1980s, the term became permanently accessorized with quotation marks, and today the early music movement rarely speaks its name. But like a scar left from The Plague, the residual mark of “authenticity” still remains. It is embedded in the movement’s performance ideals and defines what is or is not historical performance. One residual is that an early-music ensemble must perform on period instruments. This ideal is apparent in Stanley Sadie’s criticism of musicians “aping” the early-music style of performance on modern instruments:

> There is little point in aping the sound, or the balance, of the groups we know to have been used by composers of the Baroque if we employ instruments and voices altogether different from the ones from which they conceived their music (SADIE, 1998 c1990, p.440).

The use of “authentic” instruments in the place of the modern equivalent is a mid-twentieth-century development that was fully embraced by the early music movement in the 1970s. However, before the discovery and proliferation of period replicas, the movement held aloft a different ideal – an ideal defined by repertoire rather than medium. In the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, an ensemble committed to the performance of early music most often performed on instruments from their period. The leaders of these ensembles unearthed and realized old music and were reported, with their “modern” forces, to have rendered compelling performances.

Alexandre-Etienne Choron (1771-1834) was one such early-music leader. He was an advocate for the golden age of French music, which for him was the late-Medieval and Renaissance. Choron’s ensemble *Ecole royale et spéciale de chant*, at its peak in the late 1820s and early 1830s, presented nearly fifteen concerts a year. These concerts programmed sacred vocal works from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries – including Monteverdi, Josquin, and Handel. Some of the performances engaged a choir of over 600 voices, accompanied by an organ or piano paired with a violoncello and double bass (SIMMS, 1971, p.148-150).

At the end of the nineteenth century, Charles Bordes (1863-1909) took up where Choron left off. Bordes, a pianist and composer who studied with César Franck, was appointed choirmaster of Paris’s *Saint-Gervais*, where with the *Chanteurs de Saint-Gervais* he gave numerous performances of early repertoire ranging from Palestri na to Bach to Schubert. As with Choron, Bordes did not
require period instruments for the performance of early repertoire. When presented with a choice, he preferred the modern one. In his 1903 letter to Landowska, Bordes discouraged the use of the harpsichord for works written with the harpsichord in mind:

I want to put you to a big task, one which may become for you a splendid specialty. Play all the works of the harpsichordist, but not on the harpsichord; enough of this “cage for flies” which reduces superb and often large-scale works to the size of its tiny, spindly legs (RESTOUT, 1965, p.10).

Despite the employment of modern instruments, nineteenth-century operatic singing techniques, and Berlioz-like performance forces, these leaders were considered early-music experts. For a nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century audience, conventions such as these did not deter the enjoyment of an early-music performance or make it “modern” in a derogative way. In all probability, these conventions made the early repertoire more palatable.9

There were also early-music ensembles in the late-nineteenth century that performed on a mix of period and modern instruments, such as the harpsichordist Louis Diémier’s Société des instruments anciens with Louis van Waefelghem (viola d’more), Laurent Grillet (hurdy-gurdy), Jules Delsart (viola da gamba), Paul Taffanel (flute), Georges Gillet (oboe d’amore), Guillaume Remy and Armand Parent (violins). Société presented exhibition concerts at the 1889 World’s Fair that set the stage for performances at the Salon Pleyel in Paris (1895) and a tour of London (1897) and St. Petersburg (1907). Their repertoire included works by Rameau, Bach, Couperin, Lully, Handel, and Marais.10 For the most part, the Société used period instruments, but the idea of a “Baroque” set-up on the violin or even an old flute was unheard of, for period replicas of these instruments were outside the realm of possibility.

Membership in the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century early music movement did not require historical instruments; the emphasis, rather, was on the repertoire. The popularity of “authenticity” in the 1960s, with its focus on period replicas, redrew the boundaries of the movement and left a number of committed early-music performers outside its borders. Taruskin’s defrocking of “authenticity” exposed unsightly holes in the undergarments of the movement’s defense for its performance style and sobered the movement’s authentistic resolve.11 Ever since, members of the early music movement have struggled to redefine “historical” in relation to their historically informed performance. Recent efforts have been fruitful, and it is safe to say that the plague of “authenticity” has finally receded, but unfortunately it has taken Landowska with it. One particular recording by Landowska in the late 1930s exhibits traits of the early music movement’s performance style and gives ample cause to bring her back into the fold.

3 – The Sound of “Historically Informed”

My introduction to Landowska came in the form of her 1937 recording of Mozart’s “Coronation” Concerto K537.12 Despite Landowska’s unauthentic reputation, her piano playing on this record sounds “historically informed.” But how is the sound of “historically informed” defined? A list of descriptors, many of which are part of the early music movement’s jargon, come to mind, such as transparent texture, light tone, articulated style, cellular phrasing, beat hierarchy, speech-like or rhetorical rendering, and ornamental or non-continuous vibrato.13 The exclusive application, however, of these descriptors to the early-music style of performance is problematic, for all compelling performances – modern or Baroque – contain to some degree these elements.14

Landowska had access to Urtext-like editions and period instruments. On a concert tour before World War I, she played a Mozart piano housed in Salzburg’s Mozarthaus (ZALTSBERG, 2002, p.18). She also had a vast library – approximately 10,000 volumes – that included the Bach-Gesellschaft and “12 volumes of music by Mozart.” (DE VRIES, 1996, p.225)15 The latter collection could have been issues of the late nineteenth-century Mozart Gesamtausgabe. These materials surely informed Landowska’s performance, but as we shall see, she might have crafted her “historically informed” approach in Warsaw with Jean Kleczyński, well before she gained access to scholarly sources and period replicas.

Luckily, Neal Zaslav provides a tangible definition for “historically informed,” conveniently addressed towards the “Coronation” Concerto. In his liner notes to Malcolm Bilson and John Elliot Gardner’s 1998 recording, Zaslav re-notates the opening motive of the first movement. His redressing of the motive provides “the supposedly ‘missing’ marks of articulation and expression, which are lacking (or only haphazardly applied) in all too many modern performances of the music of Mozart and his contemporaries, but restored by Bilson and Gardiner in the present performances.” (ZASLAW, 1988) Here, Zaslav’s definition of historically informed is obvious – play shorter. In strict fashion, his realization halves all notes marked with a dagger – as well as the last note in a series of tones under a slur. He also indicates various degrees of emphasis with small dashes stacked on top of each other; three dashes are reserved for the strongest beats. Zaslav’s example, peppered with thirty-second notes and rests, has visually “restored” Mozart. His restoration – probably to Taruskin’s satisfaction – also resembles a score of Stravinsky’s L’Histoire du soldat.

But what does historically informed sound like in Landowska’s recording? I must admit that I came to this recording with some trepidation, and the crackling and hissing of the needle’s first trip around the LP did not alleviate my uneasiness with early twentieth-century recordings of this repertoire. To my surprise, I imme-


4 – Haydn and the Metal Monster

My mood, however, quickly changed when I flipped the record over to the B-side. There, waiting for me, was Haydn’s Concerto in D, Op. 21 – recorded on the harpsichord.21 The sound of Landowska’s Pleyel is almost indescribable: a hybrid of a harpsichord, pianoforte, hammered dulcimer, and mini-Casio keyboard. In addition to the cacophonous tone, it sounds as if the microphone is secured to the soundboard – positioning my ear directly in her instrument.22 Her harpsichord, what Joel Cohen dubbed “the metal monster,” made my “authenticity” scar burn, and I suddenly knew why Landowska did not have a place on the marquee next to Harmoncourt, Leonhardt, and Brüggen (COHEN, 1985, p.25).23

As an advocate for the harpsichord, Landowska strongly resonates with period-instrument revivalist, but the state of her instrument unashamedly reflects a turn-of-the-century performance aesthetic. Her Pleyel utilizes a sixteen-foot register, pedals for changing the stops, and leather plectra instead of quill – all housed within a sturdy metal frame.24 This metal monster stands in defiance to 1960s “authenticity,” and still today the early twentieth-century sound distracts us from the quality of Landowska’s music making.

The early music movement’s aversion to Landowska’s instrument is a symptom of what TARUSKIN (2009, p.13) would probably call Klangmaterialismus (sound fetish or infatuation), a term that he recently used to differentiate between Early Music and Alte Musik.25 Taruskin asserts that the term Early Music (which he affiliates with Stravinsky) signifies an infatuation with the details of the “sounding surface,” such as timbre, texture, and articulation – all of which make up what the early music movement once called the “authentic” sound. He juxtaposes this approach against the term Alte Musik of Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. Here, interpretation, using contemporary means, is conjured by digging deep “below the surface – to [get to] the ‘subcutaneous’ level, where motives lurk.” (TARUSKIN, 2009, p.20) As a consequence of this paradigm, the Second Viennese School considers Alte Musik an extension of their present musical situation, while with Early Music, the “authenticity” movement aims to detach music of the past from the immediate present or from the not so immediate present, such as the nineteenth century.

Within this context, Landowska has one foot firmly placed in each camp. On a philosophical level, she challenges the idea of progress in music. Landowska argues that newer music was not superior to older music and period instruments significantly affect interpretation – situating Landowska within Early Music (LANDOWSKA, [1909] 1923, p.4-6). On the other hand (or foot), her hybrid instrument, which clearly reflects a contemporary performance aesthetic, aligns her with the Second Viennese School and the ideal of progress embodied in its concept of Alte Musik.

However, full membership for Landowska in either of these camps is unattainable. Her use of a harpsichord or non-modern instrument exposes to the Second Viennese School a blatant disconnection with the present while for the 1960s “authenticity” movement, the Pleyel too closely resembles a present-day monster. Therefore, Landowska holds a precarious place in our performance world. Her legacy is neither truly “authentic” nor truly modern.

5 – Haydn, Once Again
Taking this all into account, I return to Landowska’s recording and let Haydn’s concerto have a full turn. Now more able to move past the sound of her instrument, I notice a few performance conventions made classic by the early music movement. Landowska takes more liberties with articulation and ornamentation in the Haydn performance. At the end of the harpsichord’s opening statement in the first movement, a series of eighth notes marked without a slur are articulated in units of twos and threes, demarcated by the virtue of steps and skips. Here, Landowska adorns Haydn’s music with her own paratext.26 Her approach to ornamentation is also more adventurous. At the end of the development section, she recomposes Haydn’s skeletal cadence before embarking upon the recapitulation.27 Landowska’s tendency to re-compose and significantly change articulations is not as evident in her performance of the Mozart concerto. Perhaps in the Haydn she felt less inhibited by the harpsichord, or maybe it has something to do with the composer. Haydn’s concerto was in the repertoire of concert pianists, but the work and its composer did not carry the same performance baggage of the more renowned Mozart. In an interpretative sense, Haydn’s concerto – a work less enveloped in an established performance tradition – was more available to a specialist performer. It was music ripe for reinterpretation.

We also might consider the work’s designation of a period keyboard instrument on its Parisian print (1784) – Pour le Clavecin ou le Forte Piano. Perhaps the indication for a clavecin signified to Landowska what ethnomusicologists sometimes refer to as a sense of “other.”28 The otherness of the harpsichord, and to some extent Haydn, provided relief from the dictates of the canon and engendered a broader range of possibilities for interpretation. In other words, Haydn’s concerto for harpsichord, in regard to Landowska’s interpretative possibilities, was more akin with the obscure music of the French harpsichordists – rather than that of its canonized contemporary, Mozart. Despite Landowska’s unauthentic instrument, the Haydn performance sounds “historically informed.” Landowska is HIP. Her style is modern and exhibits the traits of the geometrical style of Stravinsky – Taruskin’s early-music style.

6 – Frankenstein’s Monster
My experience with Landowska’s recording of Haydn illuminates an inherent challenge in the study of early twentieth-century performance practice. Sonic engagement with a performance convention that greatly differs from our own challenges our musical taste. It is one thing to create an eighteenth-century performance by reading Johann Quantz’s treatise or poring over a manuscript of J. S. Bach. These efforts employ a transformative process, which extracts the written text – Quantz’s words or Bach’s musical notation – and translates it into sound. The sonic result is involuntarily shaped by our own performance aesthetic. Due to the desire to create a compelling performance, the findings fit comfortably within the interpreter’s performance ideal. Under these circumstances, it is improbable to render a personally offensive interpretation. There is little chance of reliving Victor Frankenstein’s experience: “I have created a monster!” However, the pursuit of early twentieth-century performance practice requires a slightly different approach, one that utilizes the study of recordings. A recording for the most part is sonically intact, and therefore its content is unaffected by our value judgment.29 We face the cold-hard facts unearthed from a time capsule. Within these parameters, Landowska’s recordings may challenge our own conventions. These recordings may reveal performances or instruments that are not only different from our own, but are in conflict with what we think is good music making. The study of recordings makes the creation of (or more accurately) the discovery of a monster more probable. Despite the risk of unearthing something undesirable, let us return to Landowska and the first part of her biography.30

7 – To Paris
Born in Warsaw, Landowska (1879–1959) acquired her taste for Musique ancienne early on; the conductor Artur Nikisch, after hearing her play a prelude and fugue from the Well-Tempered Clavier on the piano in 1893, affectionately dubbed her “the Bacchante.” (RESTOUT, 1965, p.6)31 After studying with Jean Kleczyński and Aleksander Michałowski – both champions of Chopin’s music – at the Warsaw Conservatory in 1896, she moved to Berlin to study composition with Heinrich Urban, where she frequented the conservatory’s Musikinstrumenten-Museum with its vast collection of harpsichords.32 As a performer of both old and new music, Landowska’s move to Paris in 1900 was advantageous on many fronts; she entered a musically vibrant, politically charged, socially liberated, and fully connected scene. Paris in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was a haven for modern music and the revival of early repertoire. Pari- sian concerts frequently juxtaposed Musique ancienne and Musique moderne. Rather than full-performances of works, these “miscellany concerts” programmed excerpts as part of an effort to reveal historical development. The works of Lully and Rameau were precious artifacts, hailing from a prestigious period in French culture. The musical dialogue between the old and the new – Dubois next to Lully, or Saint-Saëns following Rameau – portrayed contemporary music as an extension of a worthy lineage of composition.33 All of this resonated with a nation suffering from its devastating loss in the Franco-Prussian War.34 The miscellany concert was revised in the mid-1890s, when composers integrated these early forms and styles into their own compositions, referred to as neoclassicism.35 Therefore, it is not surprising that the early-music revival in Paris was led by a group of prominent composers and scholars including Vincent d’Indy, Gabriel
Fauré, André Pirro, Albert Schweitzer, and Paul Dukas; their admiration for early music followed in the footsteps of Camille Saint-Saëns and César Franck. This synthesis of old and new music was cultivated in two institutions in Paris, the Paris Conservatoire and the Schola Cantorum. Early music had its most sympathetic place in the Schola, and this is where Landowska upon her arrival in Paris settled as a teacher of the harpsichord and piano.36

8 – Ideology
As with most Parisian institutions in the late-nineteenth century, the Conservatoire and the Schola were politically polarized by the Dreyfus Affair. In 1894 Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French artillery, was found guilty of selling military secrets to the Germans. He was exiled to the French Guiana, where he was placed in solitary confinement. A few years later, new evidence revealed that the traitor was Ferdinand Esterhazy, and there was a retrial. The military, however, suppressed this evidence and accused Dreyfus and others of fabrication. Dreyfus was sent back to South America worse off than before. The highly publicized efforts of left-wing politicians and artists, most notably Emile Zola, led to another trial and an eventual pardon of Dreyfus in 1899.37 But the damage had already been done, for the Dreyfus Affair was now part of the political, social, and cultural fabric of France. You were either with him or against him.38 Dreyfus’s trials exposed a country grappling with nationalistic pride and anti-Semitism, and the grappling was evident in the Conservatoire and Schola. The Conservatoire aligned with the Republican government (Dreyfusard) while the Schola sided with the out-of-power right-wing Royalists (anti-Dreyfusard).

It was in direct opposition to the Dreyfusards that d’Indy, Bordes, and Alexandre Guilmant opened the Schola in 1894.39 D’Indy, an ardent Catholic, was influenced by Richard Wagner’s writings on the decadence of nineteenth-century opera. D’Indy attributed much of this decadence to the “insidious Jewish influence that had harmed so many aspects of different national cultures.” (FULCHER, 1999, p.32) In the Schola, d’Indy brazenly mixed right-wing ideology (much of it anti-Semitic) with musical professionalism.41 Jann Pasler recently considered these public competitions undesirable displays of musical professionalism.42 Claude Debussy presumed the Schola to be right wing and, in 1903, was surprised by the institution’s synthesis of old and new music with old and new politics:

It is a strange thing, but at the Schola, side by side, you will find the aristocracy, the most left-wing of the bourgeoisie, refined artists, and coarse artisans (FULCHER, 1999, p.30).

While Albert Schweitzer’s 1959 letter to Landowska exposes an apparent division between the Schola and the Conservatoire:

You yourself were associated with the Schola Cantorum. There was accordingly between us the gulf that existed between the Conservatoire and the Schola Cantorum. We crossed it (MURRAY, 1994, p.74).43

9 – Madame Landowska44 Despite her place in the Schola with its incommodious factions, Landowska was a modernist and part of the artistic elite of Paris. Her international performance career, her affiliation with the lesbian-writer Natalie Barney’s Académie des Femmes, and her close personal relationships with other women – two of whom lived in her home for many years – reveal her as a liberated individual.

Landowska frequently performed at Barney’s literary soirées held in the Salon de l’Amazone on 20 Rue Jacob.45 One such occasion was a June 1910 theatrical performance of Le ton de Paris (LASCARIS, [1787] 1911), where from the second-floor bedroom Landowska played the music of Couperin on the harpsichord (RODRIGUEZ, 2002, p.194-195).46 On this particular midsummer evening, Landowska from her designated perch must have observed a fantastic spectacle, for Barney had, in conjunction with the theater performance, organized a masked ball in the garden. The garden – with its meandering path leading to a four-columned Doric eighteenth-century temple inscribed with the words Temple à l’Amitié (temple devoted to friendship) – was illuminated by Japanese lanterns.47 The costumed guests meandered through the wooded grounds. Barney’s neighbor, the writer Jean de Bonnefon, donned the red robes of a cardinal; Paul Poiret, the so-called Picasso of fashion design, dressed as a Buddhist monk while the full-figured soprano Emma Calvé, lounging in a sedan chair, made a diva-like entrance carried by four exhausted porters. Barney, of course, would not be outdone. She dressed as a Japanese firefly chaser and carried a casket of tiny light bulbs that posed as her captive insects. I am sure this exotic scene, reminiscent of Shakespeare’s nocturnal comedy, was well complimented by the “otherness” of Landowska’s instrument and its repertoire.

Landowska’s contributions to these occasions must have been significant, for her name is immortalized in Barney’s hand-written map of her salon.44 On this rough sketch, Barney scribbled in the names of artists, writers, patrons, and musicians that frequented her salon – including her lovers. True to the art of a salonièrè, her guests are strategically seated according to their shared interests. In the upper right-hand quadrant next to the table serving orangeade, fruit, port, and whisky, “Wanda Landowska” sits with “Virgil Thompson [sic],” “Darius Milhaud,” “Antheil,” and “Honegger”; they surround “Armande de Polignac,” the niece of Prince Edmond, whose wife Winnaretta Singer was a patron of many of these composers.45 Barney’s sketch, with its intertwined appellations, reflects the fully connected nature of Landowska’s world. Landowska mixes and mingles with “I. S. Elliot,” “Isadora Duncan,” “Rilke,” “Gertrude Stein,” “Sinclair Lewis,” and “Montesquiou Proust.” She is of and among the artistic elite.

Landowska’s affiliation with Barney and the writer’s notoriously lesbian environs have brought forth speculation. W. G. ROGERS (1968, p.48) was adamant about her lesbianism. “[Barney] welcomed cordially [those who] shared her ways of intimacy [such as] Landowska.” Landowska never formally admitted her sexual orientation, but her relationships with women – relationships that mixed professionalism with intimacy – have fueled suspicion. Patricia Juliana Smith, in her entry on Landowska in the Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, and Queer Culture, contends that Landowska while living in Berlin organized a “ménage à trois” between her husband Henryk Lew and their housekeeper Elsa Schunicke. Landowska’s housekeeper has been described by those closest to Landowska as “her most beloved and devoted companion.” (RESTOUT, 1960, p.138)46 Due to Landowska’s supposed lesbianism, Martin Nowak contends that Lew had a female lover while Smith adds that a competition existed between Landowska and Nadia Boulanger over the affection of their younger female students (NOWAK, 2009; SMITH).47 The lesbian community, citing Landowska’s apparent openness about her sexuality with students and colleagues, has claimed her as one of their own. Martha Mockus goes one step further in Lesbian Histories and Culture. She claims to hear Landowska’s sexual orientation and draws a metaphor between the struggle of lesbians in society and Landowska’s efforts to gain equal status for the harpsichord in the mainstream-musical world.

Her performances of keyboard music were marked by a vigorous passion that is often considered excessive but can be heard as the work of a lesbian musician clearly devoted to promoting the beauty, subtlety, and status of the harpsichord in the classical-musical world (MOCKUS, 2000, p.435).

10 – A Jew in the Schola

Landowska’s Jewish heritage and liberated social circles makes her decade-long affiliation with the anti-Semitic, right-wing Schola seem rather extraordinary. How did Landowska reconcile these differences? As with her sexual orientation, Landowska never formally spoke about her spirituality. However, anti-Semitic feminists were not unheard of in early twentieth-century Paris. Barney openly expressed anti-Semitism. Barney’s biographer, Suzanne RODRIGUEZ (2002, p.312), attributes this phenomenon to the “zeitgeist of her time, a careless anti-Semitism.” She contends that Barney protected herself from the incoming Nazis – citing the well-timed publishing of her most anti-Semitic book Nouvelles pensées de l’Amazone (1939).

Willa Silverman’s research on Gyp (Sybille-Gabrielle de Riquetti de Mirabeau) – a feminist, anti-Semitic, anti-republican novelist and political activist during the Dreyfus Affair – also shows that a woman could be both anti-Semitic and feminist (SILVERMAN, 1997).55 Gyp embodied sexual ambiguity and expressed, in caricature-like fashion, the image of a liberated Parisian woman. She was a crossdresser clothed in garments that accentuated her muscular arms and, at the same time, a grande dame of her salon, outfitted in luxurious frocks.56 Silverman wondered if “she [saw] herself as a man trapped in a woman’s body?” (1997, p.19) Dreyfusards clearly knew what they saw; they depicted Gyp as a hideous creature – “a Walkyrie drinking human blood.” (SILVERMAN, 1997, p.20) When Gyp was questioned about her profession, she infamously answered that she was not a writer, but rather an anti-Semite (SILVERMAN, 1997, p.13).57

Both Gyp’s and Barney’s lifestyles, paired with their seemingly contradicting political views, show that Landowska with her far-less sensational personal complexities comfortably fits in the political and social framework of the Schola. Regardless of whether Landowska was a lesbian, feminist, or anti-Semitic Jew – and whether there was a conflict of interest between any of these scenarios – Landowska found a receptive environment in the Schola to develop, refine, and realize her passion for early music and the harpsichord.

11 – The Wonder of Wanda, “Hocus Pocusness”

Landowska’s favorable reputation as an interpreter of old and new music – for both the harpsichord and piano – spread throughout Paris’s network of composers and their patrons. As reflected in Barney’s sketch, Winnaretta Singer (Princesse Edmond de Polignac) was one such patron. She hosted performances of works by Chabrier, d’Indy, Debussy, Gabriel Fauré, and Maurice Ravel – and also commissioned emerging composers such as Stravinsky (Renard), Eric Satie (Socrate), and Darius Milhaud (Les Malheurs d’Orphée) (BROOKS, 1993; ROSS, 2006, p.108-110). At a 1923 performance in Polignac’s salon, Landowska played the harpsichord part for Manuel de Falla’s El retablo de maese Pedro and attracted the attention of Francis Poulenc (Pablo Picasso and Stravinsky were also in attendance).58 This led to concerto commissions by Falla and Poulenc.59 The latter claimed that his engagement with Landowska on the Concert Champêtre was a turning point in his career.60 By the late 1920s, Landowska had acquired superstar status in Europe, and her reputation quickly spread beyond its

borders with concerts in Russia and the United States (ZUCKERMANN, 1969, p.164).59

A particular aura surrounded Landowska. She cultivated an atmosphere that Ralph KIRKPATRICK (1985, p.68), at first impression, cynically referred to as "hocus pocus-ness." 60 And her recitals were bewitching. Drawing on the practice of the salons, Landowska’s performances combined intimacy with showmanship. The lights dimmed, and she levitated over an ornate carpet to her harpsichord subtly illuminated by a floor lamp. (Many never actually saw her walk on stage; they claimed she just appeared next to the harpsichord.) Garbed in a red velvet robe, Landowska spoke profoundly and passionately about the music. Before she played a note, you were already entranced by her persona – taken in by the Wonder of Wanda.61 Even Landowska’s detractors described her performances as transforming. KIRKPATRICK (1985, p.69) obviously found her personality challenging, but begrudgingly admitted that Landowska’s performances of Mozart on the piano made him forget (at least temporarily) their personal differences.62

12 – Influence

Landowska was a musician of high repute, but her charismatic performance style and metal monster conflict with the objective and depersonalized ideals of 1960s “authenticity.” Howard Mayer Brown’s address to a 1978 conference for early-music performers and instrument makers, devoted to “The Future of Early Music in Britain,” gives insight to Landowska’s precarious position.63 Brown discusses the youthful state of the early music movement and the possible hazards of its imminent popularity:

Many would agree that early music should be presented to large audiences – we have seen that it can have broad appeal if it is properly explained and attractively performed – and yet no one should defend the kind of popularization that distorts or falsifies the music (BROWN, 1978, p.xiv).

Brown describes a movement emerging from a stage of adolescence and implores that “standards need to be improved” in preparation for adulthood or the mainstream (1978, p.xiii). Brown’s view of the early twentieth-century early music movement is clearly blocked by “authenticity,” for he does not consider the accomplishments of Landowska and her generation, whose musical standards, as we have seen, were improved enough. Landowska’s generation is pre-history. It is a disconnected era.

Brown’s trepidation over popularization is expected from an alternative movement entering the mainstream.64 Here the ideals of 1960s “authenticity,” which emphasize the composer’s intentions or the period instruments themselves as the influences of style, are heard loud and clear. In some cases, the mere presence of historical instruments was a sign of better music making.65

Malcolm Bilson in 1980:

I have often heard it stated by scholars and others interested in performance on early instruments that they rather hear a great artist on the wrong instrument than a mediocre player on the right one. I am no longer willing to accept that statement. Perhaps it is wrong to put the instrument before the artist, but I have begun to feel that it must be done (BILSON, 1980, p.161).

The movement’s orientation toward the composer and historically prescribed instruments deflects attention from the individual performer and makes the formal recognition of collegial influence unsavory. This explains why the acknowledgment of “historically informed” elements in the performance style of Landowska and her generation are scarce in the literature on the early music movement.

There is no shortage of biographical information on the early music movement (see COHEN and HASKELL [1996], SHERMAN [1997], ELSTE [2000], FABIAN [2003], GOLOMB [2004]), and HAYNES [2007]), but most biographies do not draw distinct connections between performers on stylistic grounds. Fabian and Golomb explore style lineage, but their research addresses primarily post-war performers.66 Why is the movement so hesitant to construct a stylistic stemma? Perhaps the formal recognition of collegial influence conflicts with the early music movement’s authenticist philosophy – a philosophy only validated by historical reference. In other words: “I am historically informed” (not informed by my colleagues). Perhaps collegial influence is reminiscent of a previously conquered adversary – the stereo-typical nineteenth-century performance philosophy: “I play it like my teacher plays it.” However, the presence of collegial influence is not entirely ignored by members in the early music movement, for Barthold Kuijken exposes influence from within the movement (1994). He criticizes the present generation’s approach to historical investigation and points to an infatuation with the previous generation’s recordings, performances, and literature. Kuijken portrays a generation ensnared in a trap, whose design is made possible by the early music movement’s aim to become institutionalized and mainstream. His critique reveals collegial influence, but unfortunately puts it in less-than-ideal lighting.

13 – In Pursuit

As I mentioned at the onset of this paper, Taruskin believes that as early as 1907 Landowska introduced the geometrical style to Stravinsky.67 The centerpiece of his argument is Stravinsky’s Pastorale, a work for voice and piano written in St. Petersburg in 1907.68 According to TARUSKIN (1996, p.365), this “little piece” – with its three-part counterpoint, “open and pervasively lined” texture, and continuous sixteenth notes in the left hand marked Sempre staccato – reveals Stravinsky’s signature style for the first time. Taruskin proposes Landowska’s tour of Russia in 1907 as a possible explanation for the emergence of Stravinsky’s recognizable handwriting. The tour included performances in Moscow, Yasnaya Polyana (Leo Tolstoy’s country residence), and St. Petersburg.69 Her recitals in St. Petersburg on 27 February and 22 March could have drawn Stravinsky’s attendance, since he lived in St. Petersburg at the time. The recital in March,
Landowska composed arrangements of folk songs on this occasion. Landowska might have programmed her compositions and arrangements of dances she recorded later (as early as 1923), displays similar ostinato bass line, overlaid by a melody. In the second section, the left-hand ostinato is replaced by a chord progression with numerous open fifths and octaves. Landowska's Bouree d’Auvergne, an arrangement of dances she recorded later (as early as 1923), displays similar ostinato patterns and harmonic tendencies. Her performances of these works could have inspired a budding geometrist, such as Stravinsky.

14 - Kłeczyński’s Chopin, Landowska’s Couperin

Perhaps Jean Kłeczyński and his treatise, The Works of Frederic Chopin and their Proper Interpretation ([1879] 1913), inspired a young Landowska. As a student of Kłeczyński in the Warsaw Conservatory, Landowska must have easily absorbed his ideas on performance. Landowska’s openness to him is evidenced by Kłeczyński’s observation of her playing: “This child is a genius!” (RESTOUT, 1965, p.6). The Works of Frederic Chopin and their Proper Interpretation gives insight to Landowska’s early influences and stylistically and philosophically connects Kłeczyński – via his famous student – to the early music movement.

Kłeczyński describes Chopin’s performance style as rational and emotionally balanced, in clear opposition to the Romantic “convulsions” of his time:

Chopin never loses the feeling of equilibrium; always refined, he feels that passion should never descend to the prose of realism. He suffers, he has his fits of madness, but none of those unbecoming convulsions which composers of the present time, sometimes without reason or sense, introduce into their realistic productions (KŁECZYŃSKI, [1879] 1913, p.13).

In 1909, Landowska reiterated Kłeczyński’s comments on Chopin and associated the composer with Couperin, daring a connection between the performance style of Baroque repertoire and that of Poland’s most famous pianist:

And later, in the midst of the Romantic epoch, we find Chopin who, like a resurrected Couperin, rejected every tonal violence, all pianistic din (KŁECZYŃSKI, [1909] 1923, p.44, 156).

Kłeczyński cites misinterpretations of Chopin’s music, such as exaggerations in rubato and “the turning of the thought upside down,” due to the overemphasis of weaker notes in the measure ([1879] 1913, p.18). His commentary is kindred to the early music movement’s adherence to an unchanging pulse and proper beat hierarchy.

Kłeczyński also illustrates the proper phrasing for Chopin’s music. His examples prescribe at cadences the typical early-music diminuendo paired with the literal halving of the last note (replaced with a rest). This convention, in contrast to long-line phrasing, reduces the overarching phrase unit into small cells – highlighting smaller structures within a larger one ([1879] 1913, p.50-51). Harnoncourt believes the origins of long-line phrasing lie at the Paris Conservatoire in the nineteenth century (1988, p.25). Geoffrey Burgess concurs with Harnoncourt and brings to light phrase revisions in older vocalizes by the Conservatoire’s oboe professor, Gustave Vogt (BURGESS, 2003, p.41-43). His revisions reveal a predilection for long-line phrasing in mid-nineteenth-century Paris. However, Kłeczyński, who lived in Paris in the early 1860s, describes a phrasing more aligned with the cellular conventions commonly attributed to the modernist performance style of the early music movement.

15 – A Shared Rhetoric

In The Works of Frederic Chopin and their Proper Interpretation, Kłeczyński employs an anti-other rhetoric that aims to restore and purify Chopin’s performance style. The nature of this rhetoric – one that lays blame on a group, era, or movement for distorting the composer’s original intentions – has been frequently adopted and adapted by members of the early music movement from the last quarter of the nineteenth century throughout the 1980s. The only difference is the guilty party.

In 1879, Kłeczyński [quoting M. Wilcznski] juxtaposed the simple and pure Slavonic aesthetic against Germanic barbarity:

The country of the Germans is built upon a barbarous model; it inspires a superstitious fear which penetrates you from every point of view... Our land, on the contrary, breathes calmness and tranquility... Our style aspires to two ruling qualities: simplicity and purity (KŁECZYŃSKI, [1879] 1913, p.68-69).

At the turn of the century, d’Indy as editor of the Rameau Edition (1900) compared nineteenth-century alterations in eighteenth-century orchestra parts to the falsification of evidence by the Jewish people in the Dreyfus Affair. Here, d’Indy’s use of “twice” is a derogatory reference to the retrial of Dreyfus (twice trialed) that established the fabrication of evidence:
And above all, don't trust the parts held by the Opera! They have been falsified, perverted, tarted up no more or less than the records of Dreyfus's trial by the good Semites... I have been forced to begin Hippolyte et Aricie again twice (THOMSON, 1996, p.95).

In 1909, Landowska blamed opera and revealed her disdain for the generous attention given to the genre:

> It is to be noted that in every age superior minds showed little enthusiasm for music with stage devices... It must be recognized that in the opera the music is diluted by the action, by the scenery. It is as if you watered the champagne served [to] a great connoisseur of wines (LANDOWSKA, [1909] 1923, p.53–54).

In 1915, Arnold Dolmetsch condemned modernity for the corruption of musical meaning:

> It is advisable, however, before beginning this study, to clear our mind of prejudice and preconceived ideas and put aside intolerant modernity or else we may, as others have done, corrupt and twist about the meaning of even the clearest statement (DOLMETSCH, 1915, p.xiv).

Harmoncourt, in 1968, made the Romantic tradition the elephant in the room:

> An interpretation must be attempted in which the entire Romantic tradition of performance is ignored (HARMONCOURT, 1968).

And in 1974, Brüggen optimistically sensed the nineteenth-century leaving the room:

> It's already clear that the usual form of concert recital, where one takes a bow and nonsense like that, will be gone in a couple of years. So then we will have the last remaining traces of the nineteenth century behind us. I hope so! (BRÜGGEN, 1974, p.103)

While Roger Norrington, in 1987, set out to rescue Beethoven from a dehumanized complacency:

> In particular, we want to restore the Ninth Symphony to the humane, quicksilver thought-world of the Classical Period (NORRINGTON, 1987).

Members of the “authenticity” movement, in an effort to defend their style of performance, embraced a rhetorical device that established an air of exclusivity, superiority, and righteousness. This rhetoric predates the 1960s “authenticity” era. Kleczyński’s, d’Indy’s, and Landowska’s efforts to restore and purify performance connects them to the “modern” early music movement of Brüggen, Harmoncourt, and Norrington.

16 - Full Circle

It is time to bring Landowska back into the fold and, ironically, the notion that negated her role in the first place, “authenticity,” is the path by which she may very well return. The notion of “authenticity” employed by Landowska, Kleczyński, and d’Indy was less rigid than the 1960s variety. Kleczyński strongly advocated for an authentic rendering of Chopin’s music, but at the same time acknowledged with the composer’s death that Chopin’s style is unattainable (KLECZYŃSKI, [1879] 1913, p.61–62). D’Indy’s additions of wind and inner-string parts to Rameau’s Hippolyte et Aricie (1900) – left conspicuously unmentioned in the 135-page preface to the edition (despite his remarks about perversions to the performance parts) – expose a desire to enhance eighteenth-century music when it did not quite play up to his expectations (SADLER, 1993, p.416). Landowska, in a paranormal reference to Rameau, takes Kleczyński’s sentiment and d’Indy’s textual embellishments one step further:

> If Rameau himself would rise from his grave to demand of me some changes in my interpretation of his Dauphine, I would answer, “You gave birth to it; it is beautiful. But now leave me alone with it. You have nothing more to say; go away!” (RESTOUT, 1965, p.407).

Compare Landowska’s statement with one made recently by the early-music specialist Rene Jacobs – “I don’t feel I have to reproduce how things were done in the past. I reimagine them” – and it seems that a new sort of “authenticity” has emerged. Or more accurately, an old one has returned (quoted in WHITE, 2006).

The post-“authenticity” early music movement embraces a myriad of performance philosophies, ideals, and practices. This is reflected in Joshua Rifkin’s recent appraisal of the movement in Goldberg Magazine:

> [The early-music] world has grown large enough to encompass all the contradictions, the flaws and the virtues, of any substantial and mature culture. So we don’t have a panacea. But we have room for all – “strict constructionists,” the wild and willful, and everything in between... We do have a lot to celebrate (RIFKIN, 2008, p.21).

The early music movement is moving in a cosmopolitan direction, one more aligned with Michelle Dukak’s “post-modern performance practice” (DULAK, 1993, p.61). As early as 1993, Dukak sensed a “metamorphosis” within the movement (DULAK, 1993, p.61). The collaborations between modern and early-music musicians since the late 1980s, such as Yo-Yo Ma and the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra (1999), Cecilia Bartoli and Il Giardino Armonico (1999), and The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment with Simon Rattle (REES, 2010), confirm her suspicion. While modern-instrument organizations that specialize in early repertoire, such as Combattimento Consort Amsterdam (CCA) and the weekly Bach cantata series presented in Boston’s Emmanuel Church (EMMANUEL-UEL), valiantly carry on the nineteenth-century efforts of Choron and Bordes.82

In the field of musicology, “authenticity” has resurfaced in an enlightened guise. In an effort to pry off those pesky quotation marks, John Butt’s Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance (2002) and Peter Wallis’s History, Imagination, and the Performance of Music (2003) astutely reevaluate the role historical truth plays in performance.83 The books’ titles alone reflect a more flexible approach that openly plays with the idea of historical imagination. Even Taruskin noticed changes. Andrew Manze’s imaginatively vivid recording (MANZE, 1997) of Giuseppe Tartini’s The Devil’s Sonata inspired him to write, “It is one of the most encouraging defiances of late-late romantic taste I’ve heard in years” (TARUSKIN, 2006, p.131).
Unexpected early-music performers, such as Sting, are also staking their claim. Sting’s most recent collaboration with lutenist Edin Karamazov in a recording of John Dowland songs has set the movement abuzz (STING, 2006).84 Sting also plays Bach on the Classical guitar. In 2008, he produced a video short where Allessandra Ferri, principal dancer of the American Ballet Theater, dances to Sting’s transcription of the First Cello Suite (STING, 2008). In this video, ballet is paired with a shirtless rock star performing Baroque counterpoint; three consecutive centuries coalesce in one production.

All of this has enticed Tess Knighton, then editor of the journal Early Music, to put forth the question: “So, are we indeed coming full circle? Is the relationship between periphery (or specialist) and mainstream an ever-repeating cycle of breaking away and reabsorption?” (KNIGHTON, 2006, p.531)85 We might also ask ourselves do the doctrines established by the gurus of the “authenticity” movement still hold true. What defines early music today: is it repertoire, instrumentation, style, intention?86 And in what proportion do we mix these ingredients to make the cocktail we all call the early music movement?

In light of these developments, it is time to reabsorb and celebrate the contributions made by Landowska and other members of the early music movement before the “authenticity” era. As we settle comfortably into the twenty-first century and “authenticity” with its ensuing hangover is farther adrift, we might take a closer look at the beginning of the previous century and earlier. There, with our clearer head and less-obstructed view, we will find early-music experts – artists such as Landowska, d’Indy, and perhaps even Chopin’s champion, Kluczyński – whose influence, despite their unauthentic instruments, is still present. As Cohen admitted, “Landowska seems closer to the true spirit of [early] repertories than many a player of the generation that came after.” (COHEN, 1985, p.26)

Perhaps the early music movement has come full circle.

I am most grateful to Victor Coelho and Joshua Rifkin for their expert guidance during my work on this paper.

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Notes


2. T. E. Hulme (1883–1917), borrowing from WORRINGER, 1908, applies the terms “vitalist” and “geometrical” to movements in art. “You have these two different kinds of art. You have first the art [vitalist] which is natural to you, Greek and modern art since the Renaissance. In these arts the lines are soft and vital. You have other arts [geometrical] like Egyptian, Indian, and Byzantine, where everything tends to be angular, where curves tend to be hard and geometrical, where the representation of the human body, for example, is often entirely non-vital, and distorted to fit into stiff lines and cubical shapes of various kinds” (HULME, 1924, p.82). Translation of WORRINGER, 1908 is in FRASCINA and HARRISON, 1982, p.50–64. Taruskin refers to FURTWÄNGLER, [1950] 2005 as a “vitalist” recording.

3. “[Where] would have [Fritz Reiner] got his very modern ideas about baroque period style?” You can be sure that he never read his Dolmetsch. In the 1910s, when Dolmetsch’s great guidebook came out, Reiner was in Dresden, hobnobbing with Nikisch, Muck, Mahler, and Strauss, vitalists to a man the latter pair leaving us, in their compositions and arrangements, ample testimony to their utterly sentimentalized, fairyland vision of the eighteenth century. It must have been from his own time from which Reiner (as great musicians do in all periods) formed his ideas about the music of other times. I believe it was Stravinsky who taught Reiner – and the rest of us – about Bach the geometrist, as it may have been Landowska – whom he heard as early as 1907 – who taught Strawinsky” (1988, p.166–7). “Dolmetsch’s great guide book” is DOLMETSCH, 1915. Taruskin refers below to REINER, [1949] 2005.

4. Bruce Haynes brings Landowska’s obscurity to our attention: “it is paradoxical and somewhat poignant that Wanda Landowska and Arnold Dolmetsch, the two original cultivators of “stylistic nostalgia,” are unknown to most of the younger musicians active in HIP at the beginning of the twenty-first century” (HAYNES, 2007, p.38). Galia and Michael Melzer express a commonly held view of Landowska’s style. “Wanda Landowska, who had adopted early baroque instruments, played them according to the 19th-century tradition” (MELIZER, 1994, p.38) Marchwica notices that it is “strange” that a “famous performer who taught so many good harpsichordists, [did] not have direct successors in the field of performance aesthetic.” (MARCHWICA, 1999, p.446) Concerning register changes, Philip recognizes Landowska’s influence on later generations of harpsichordists (PHILIP, 2004, p.209). Watchorn discusses Landowska’s and Pleyel’s aim to “adapt” and “redesign” the old instrument (WATCHORN, 2007, p.8–9).


6. He uses this term to differentiate Harmoncourt, Leonhardt, and Brüggen from Landowska’s generation. He also draws a correlation between the peak of the modern early music movement in the 1980s and the success of the compact disc.


8. In preparation for Holy Week at Saint-Gervais in 1892, Bordes scheduled over one-hundred rehearsals while d’Indy conducted fifty more sessions – all part of an effort to become familiar with this new old-music (DOWD, 1969, p.18). For more detail on Bordes and the Chanteurs, see ELLIS, 2005, p.105–11. For contemporary biographical information on Bordes, see D’INDY, 1927, p.9–26.

9. In the late 1980s, Taruskin recognized the necessity of adapting early repertoire to insure acceptance. “Modern audiences have been discovering a Bach they can call their own – or, in other words, Bach has at last been adapted with unprecedented success to modern taste. Our authenticist performers, whatever they may say or think they are doing, have begun to accomplish for the twentieth century what Mendelssohn et al. had accomplished for the nineteenth century. They are reinterpreting Bach for their own time” (1988, p.197)


11. The defrocking happened earlier in Germany and Austria, where publications debated “authenticity” from the 1960s onward, well before the 1980s (FABIAN, 1981; and FABIAN, 2004).

12. Walter Goehr (1903–1960) conducted the concerto (London, 1937); he was the first in three generations of prominent musicians, musicologists, and philosophers. (Alexander, composer, is his son and the music philosopher, Lydia Goehr, is his granddaughter). Walter Goehr moved to Britain as a refugee from Nazi Germany. He was a student of Schoenberg and eventually became conductor/musical director of the Berlin Radio, the Columbia Graphophone Company and the BBC Theater Orchestra. In London, he presented Britten’s Serenade, Tippett’s A Child of our Time and Seiber’s Ulysses. Goehr was also a Monteverdi enthusiast and edited Poppea and the Vespers of 1610.

13. For additional descriptors gathered from interviews with listeners of early-music performances, see SCHUBERT, 2006, p.580.


15. After Landowska’s exile from Paris, her library was confiscated by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) around 20 September, 1940. The ERR shipped fifty-four crates to Berlin and, from there, distributed them to rural areas. The vast majority of her property is either non-extant (destroyed by bombing?) or believed to be held by private owners. For the ERR’s inventory of Landowska’s collection and more detail on the confiscation, see DE VRIES, 1996, p.217–29. A description of Landowska’s instruments is provided in EIGELDINGER, 2006, p.224–5.

16. See m. 41. Measure numbers drawn from Neue Mozart-Ausgabe 15, no. 8.

17. See mm. 59–69.

18. See mm. 58–9, 78–80.

19. This articulated style resembles Philip’s description of Landowska’s performance of fast movements. He concludes that Landowska, on the harpsichord, produces rhythmic drive via the manipulation of articulation, mostly utilizing staccato playing. For an analysis of Landowska’s performance of J. S. Bach’s “Italian Concerto,” see PHILIP, 2004, p.59–61. Marchwica’s description of Landowska’s playing is similar to Philip’s: “sharply rhythmical and agogical contrasts, a simple and precise articulation.” (1999, p.448)

20. See mm. 95–9.

21. The Haydn Concerto was recorded in 1937 under Eugene Bigot and with a different orchestra (Paris). K537 and Op. 21 were eventually released together (RCA Label). For details, see LANDOWSKA, 1937; ELSTE, 2010, p.222, 224; and RESTOUT, 1965, p.418–9.
“Landowska’s metal monster wasn’t really a harpsichord, but it wasn’t quite a piano either.”

For a worthy reassessment of the inauthentic qualities of Landowska’s instrument, see LATCHAM, 2006, p.95-110. Landowska unveiled the “Landowska-Pleyel” model during the Breslau (Wroclaw) Bach Festival in 1912.

Taruskin borrows the term Klangmaterialismus from REDLICH, 1936.

See mm. 58-9. Measure numbers drawn from Joseph Haydn Werke 15, no. 2.

See m. 180.

For more on “miscellany” concerts, see PASLER, 2009, p.217-29, 629-42, fig. 24-5; and WEBER, 2005, p.337-40.

Referred to by the French as the 1870 War (19 July 1870-10 May 1871). The German victory brought an end to Napoleon III and the Second French Empire. The Third Republic took its place. For more detail, see TAITHE, 2001; and HOWARD, 2001.

According to Pasler, Neoclassicism is a metaphor for the recovery of France’s national identity and the social integration of the elites into French society (2009, p.630).

Landowska taught at the Schola from 1900-1912. D’Indy lists Landowska as a “Principaux solistes des concerts de la Schola.” (D’INDY, 1927, p.235)


For more on the Dreyfus Affair, see LINDEMANN, 1991, p.57-128; FORTH, 2004; and BEGLEY, 2009.

Paul Marie Théodore Vincent d’Indy (1851-1931), composer, studied for three years with Dièmer (of Société des instruments anciens) and later with Franck at the Paris Conservatoire in 1873. His popularity and favorable reputation is revealed in numerous contemporary accounts such as ROLLAND [1912] 1915, p.112-38; JULLIEN and FERRARI, 1915, c1906, p.465-6; DEMUTH, 1951; TRUMBLE, 1994; VALLAS, 1950; and HILL, 1991 (contains detailed descriptions of his compositions). Félix-Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911), organist and composer, succeeded Charles-Marie Widor as organ teacher in the Paris Conservatoire (1896-1911), where he taught Marcel Dupré and Nadia Boulanger. He edited and published lesser-known keyboard works by early composers, such as Titelouze, Grigny, Clérambault, and Couperin. For more on Guilmant, see DICKINSON, 1911, p.488; D’INDY, 1929, p.27-38; and Thomson’s article in the New Grove.

D’Indy thought that Wagner’s music had more in common with Gregorian chant than with the impute “Italo-judäische” style, which he affiliated with the Conservatoire. D’Indy believed that “authenticity” in art can only be achieved after a purging. This would facilitate a natural connection with the past. For more detail on D’Indy’s political views, see FULCHER, 1999, p.33; FULCHER, 2005, p.48-50; PASLER, 2008; and CARROLL, 1995, p.21.

In response to the Conservatoire’s competitive nature, d’Indy asserted with anti-Semitic intimations that students at the Schola were pursuing higher goals and would never be satisfied gaining profit from their artistic aims. See FULCHER, 1999, p.33; and ROLLAND, 1912, p.273-8. For more on the French nobility and the concours, see FULCHER, 1999, p.30; and CHARLE, 1988, p.410. For more detail on the Schola’s curriculum, see appendix of D’INDY, 1929. For more detail on the Conservatoire’s Société des Concerts, see HOLOMAN, 2004.

For more detail on d’Indy, the Schola and the French political landscape, see FULCHER, 1999, p.30-2; FLINT, 2006; THOMSON, 1996, p.116-39, 160-78; ELLIS, 2005, p.107-11; and CARHART, 2001, p.169-82 (includes late twentieth-century description of Schola’s facilities). For a detailed contemporary account of the Schola’s history, musical aims, and activities, see D’INDY, 1929 (includes listing of faculty, graduates, curriculum, and concerts given); ROLLAND, 1915, p.283-98; and DOVID, 1969, p.31-49.

From Schweitzer’s letter to Landowska dated 30 May 1959. Landowska died three months after the date of this letter. Their relationship was clearly kindred. “It was in 1899 in Paris. I no longer know just how our first meeting took place. I believe you had learned that I was a pupil of Widor and that I had had some talks about Bach with him. He asked me to give a lecture, on the master and his works, for his students at the Conservatoire. You yourself were associated with the Schola Cantorum. There was accordingly between us the gulf that existed between the French masters of the Conservatoire. You yourself were associated with the Schola Cantorum. There was accordingly between us the gulf that existed between the French masters of the Conservatoire. You yourself were associated with the Schola Cantorum. There was accordingly between us the gulf that existed between the French masters of the Conservatoire. You yourself were associated with the Schola Cantorum. There was accordingly between us the gulf that existed between the French masters of the Conservatoire.

“We can both consider ourselves privileged because we have been able to achieve a lasting union. This would facilitate a natural connection with the past. For more detail on d’Indy’s political views, see FULCHER, 1999, p.33; FULCHER, 2005, p.48-50; PASLER, 2008; and CARROLL, 1995, p.21.”

In response to the Conservatoire’s competitive nature, d’Indy asserted with anti-Semitic intimations that students at the Schola were pursuing higher goals and would never be satisfied gaining profit from their artistic aims. See FULCHER, 1999, p.33; and ROLLAND, 1912, p.273-8. For more on the French nobility and the concours, see FULCHER, 1999, p.30; and CHARLE, 1988, p.410. For more detail on the Schola’s curriculum, see appendix of D’INDY, 1929. For more detail on the Conservatoire’s Société des Concerts, see HOLOMAN, 2004.

For more detail on d’Indy, the Schola and the French political landscape, see FULCHER, 1999, p.30-2; FLINT, 2006; THOMSON, 1996, p.116-39, 160-78; ELLIS, 2005, p.107-11; and CARHART, 2001, p.169-82 (includes late twentieth-century description of Schola’s facilities). For a detailed contemporary account of the Schola’s history, musical aims, and activities, see D’INDY, 1929 (includes listing of faculty, graduates, curriculum, and concerts given); ROLLAND, 1915, p.283-98; and DOVID, 1969, p.31-49.

From Schweitzer’s letter to Landowska dated 30 May 1959. Landowska died three months after the date of this letter. Their relationship was clearly kindred. “It was in 1899 in Paris. I no longer know just how our first meeting took place. I believe you had learned that I was a pupil of Widor and that I had had some talks about Bach with him. He asked me to give a lecture, on the master and his works, for his students at the Conservatoire. You yourself were associated with the Schola Cantorum. There was accordingly between us the gulf that existed between the Conservatoire and the Schola Cantorum. We crossed it... I spoke to you of Bach and of the nature of his work: through you I came to know the French masters of the clavecin... We can both consider ourselves privileged because we have been able to complete the work we have undertaken. And we shall continue in a spiritual relation during the years we are still on earth, you in America, I in Africa.” (MURRAY, 1994, p.74)

This title is borrowed from FAUSER, 2006.

Barney (1876-1927), born in Dayton, Ohio, was a playwright, poet, and novelist who lived in Paris for over 60 years. Her Salon de l’Amazone brought together renowned artists and writers. She was openly lesbian and a polyamorist, and her lovers fell in to three categories: “liaisons,” “demi-liaisons,” and “adventures.” Her infamous relationships with women were surrounded by intrigue, one of her love-stricken liaisons Dolly Wilde killed herself.

Le ton was performed by Génia of the Comédie-Français and Francis di Miomandre (RODRIGUEZ, 2002, p.195).

See RUE VISCONTE for history, restoration, and photographs of the Temple de l’Amitié.
48 The sketch became the foldout insert (inside front cover) in BARNEY, 1929. The Carte du Salon de l'Amazone records guests from 1910-1930. For a reproduction of the sketch and more detail on Barney's salon, see SOUHAM, 2004, p.60-3, unpaginated illustration after p.50; a reproduction of the sketch also appears in RODRIGUEZ, 2002, unpaginated illustration after p.234.

49 Anthel's radical First String Quartet, which Barney had financially supported, was premiered at Barney's salon on 1 January 1926 (ANTHEIL, 1945, p.173).

50 Restout on Landowska's relationship with Schuncke: "When finally Wanda was able to return to France, she had lost her father, her husband, most of her belongings. But she had met Elsa, who forever after was to be her most beloved and devoted companion." (Restout, 1965, p.138)

51 I presume the competition between Boulanger and Landowska happened at the École normale de musique de Paris in the 1920s and 1930s.

52 For more detail on Barney's anti-Semitism, see BENSTOCK, 1986, p.412-5.


54 For photos of Gyp, see SILVERMAN, 1995, unpaginated illustrations after p.165.


57 For bibliographical information on Landowska's recordings of modern music on the harpsichord, see ELSTE, 1995, p.100, 162.


59 For a recording of Landowska's radio broadcasts, see RESTOUT, 1965, p.411-23; and ELSTE, 2010, p.212-30. Landowska performed in Russia at the estate of Count Leo Tolstoy (1907, 1909), and her United States debut was with Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra on 16 November 1923 (WISTER, 1925, p.223). For more detail on her concerts at Tolstoy's residence, see note 69. Her performance of Brandenburg V at Carnegie Hall on 12 October 1923 was with the New York Symphony Orchestra. Landowska moved to New York City on 7 December 1941 (the bombing of Pearl Harbor) and eventually to Lakeville, Connecticut in 1947, where she lived until her death. Her final recital (1954) took place at the Frick Museum, New York City.

60 "I was somewhat alarmed by the hocus pocus of the atmosphere and the general spirit of 'Isn't this old music just lovely. And nobody can play it but Landowska!'"

61 For more on Landowska's aura in performance, see FAUSER, 2006; LISZNIEWSKI, 1927; and ATTIE, 1997.

62 "My further capitation came on Sunday, when this same music was given a dress rehearsal, plus some solo playing by Landowska, and the Mozart sonata for two pianos, played by Landowska and Gerlin, her chief pupil. And really, - I have only once heard Mozart playing that even approached the precision, brilliance, and delicacy of hers, and the way she could turn and mold the phrases and simply take you straight to heaven in the slow movements... She is a much greater musician than I first thought her." Kirkpatrick studied briefly with Landowska in 1931 and joined the music faculty of Yale University in 1940. For more of Kirkpatrick's comments on Landowska, see KIRKPATRICK, 1985, p.68-9; Buckley's interview in ATTIE, 1997, Chap. 7; CASH, 1990, p.180-1; and WATCHORN, 2007, p. 13-16.


64 By the late 1980s, the early music movement had infiltrated the mainstream market with recordings of Bach cantatas, Mozart operas, and Beethoven symphonies. Early music projects were ambitious and nearly unprecedented for the recording industry, such as: the 90-LP Harnoncourt/Leonhardt complete set of Bach cantatas (1971–1989), Hogwood's complete set of Mozart symphonies ([1979–1982] 1997), and Norrington's complete cycle of Beethoven symphonies ([1989] 1990). For more on the rise of historical performance and compact disc sales, see MEYER, 2009, p.249; and BUTT, 2004, p.194.

65 Galia and Michael Melzer confer with BILSON, 1980: "A performing artist who has learned his authentic instrument — its colors and manner of speech, has the power to present the music in a more convincing way." (MELZER, 1994, p.61) The premise had been around since the 1950s, well before 1960s "authenticity." Paul Hindemith advocated for it in a speech given in Hamburg in 1950: "If we want to perform his [Bach's] music according to his intentions we ought to restore the conditions of performance for that time." (HINDEMITH, 1952, p.19; quoted by BUTT, 2004, p.191) Although Hans Ferdinand Redlich had reservations: "The belief that the employment of ancient instruments alone ensures a historically faithful reading of old compositions shows an exaggerated appraisal of the purely material side of old music" (REDLICH, 1952, p.196; quoted in TARUSKIN, 2009, 34n). Butt asserts that period instruments through their limitations facilitate alternative forms of expression and interpretation, "just as blind people often develop more acute hearing, the deaf a better sight." (BUTT, 2004, p.194) Butt emphasizes the play between the eternal work and the fleetingness of its performance. "Much of the meaning that a contemporary audience may have found in this music lay in unpredictable places — the person of the performer, the difficulty of an instrument or the formal perfection of the music measured against the necessary imperfections of the performance medium." (BUTT, 2004, p.203)


67 For Taruskin's argument, see note 3 above.

68 For the reproduction of J. & W. Chester's edition of Pastoral, see STRAVINSKY, 2005, p.22–4. For the composer's 1923 arrangement for wind instruments, see STRAVINSKY, 1933.
In 1907, Leo Tolstoy attended a performance by Landowska at a reception honoring Russian guests at the Salle Pleyel in Paris. He was enamored with the performance and invited Landowska and her husband Henry Lew to his country residence in Yasnaya Polyana for the Christmas holidays. This marked the beginning of a long relationship with Tolstoy, his wife, and their daughter Alexandra. According to publicity archives, Landowska's Russian tour prescribed numerous performances (FAUSER, 2006, p.22n). For detail on Landowska's performances in Yasnaya Polyana, see CASH, 1990, p.61-9; LANDOWSKA, 1908a, p.322-3; LANDOWSKA, 1908b, p.95; and ELSTE, 2010, p.43-58; and note 70 below.

Landowska's harpsichord was a spectacle, and the reviewers took notice. The remarks below are from the RUSSKAYA MUZÌKAL'NAYA GAZETA, 1907, col. 316-7. I am grateful to Daria Titova for her translation. "Wanda Landowska is a very interesting pianist. She fell in love with the classic harpsichordists and dedicated herself to the study of their music. Under the influence of the West (mainly in France and Germany), she has partly selected, as her specialty, to execute these old Renaissance works, revived nowadays on a harpsichord – an instrument adequate to deliver the spirit of the past. We are saying "partly" because of what is done by the chamber group Kazarus, which performs only on period instruments (they have a very talented harpsichordist Mr. Delerba). Madame Landowska plays both the harpsichord and modern piano in her concerts. If she does this to compare the construction, richness, and color of the two diverse instruments, it is hardly fair, for the harpsichord is different from the piano – as if to compare Haydn's lovely, modest, intimate chamber ensemble with that of Wagner's or Strauss's orchestra. But this mixture of instruments affected the quality of Madame Landowska's performance in an unfavorable way. For a modern listener, the difference in sound between these two instruments is intolerable, and in this case, the listener prefers a grand piano with great pleasure, rather than the harpsichord. The truth is that the harpsichord in our time is of novelty interest. Perhaps the whole program with only harpsichord gives quite an original art pleasure and rebuilds the entire epoch of piano style, but Madame Landowska's performance only lead to a certain point. We would rather hear this undoubtedly talented pianist perform on a modern piano and not on the harpsichord, which she tries to show."

"Madame Landowska's performance on the piano was filled with surprising tenderness, softness, and clarity. She has an ability to demarcate the polyphonic voices of it in the harpsichord writing, which are inherent in character of this style. But with Madame Landowska on the harpsichord, one cannot involuntarily forget the influence (advancement) of piano technique. Her execution loses its tenderness and clarity with the monotonous and noisy pedaling. Instead, you sometimes hear noise, a mixture of original harpsichord registers, a rigid impact, and so on. The explanation of this could be the youth and inexperience of Madame Landowska. (By the way, she was born in 1881 in Warsaw, where she studied in the conservatory in a class of Prof. Mihalovsky and then in classes of Urban and Moshkovsky in Vienna [Berlin].) During the last years, she gave many concerts with great success in France, Germany, and England). Having paid attention to the differences between old and modern instruments, she devotes herself exclusively to the cultivation of the harpsichord's style. This style is most likely to have a revival on the harpsichord, for the construction of the instrument quite differs from the piano, having more commonalities probably with an organ. The harpsichord, due to a vast number of pedals, has its own colors, but the abrupt jingling sounds absolutely differ from the force, smoothness, and shake sonorities of the piano, for which this rich literature Madame Landowska interprets in her concerts was not created. Her first concert on February 27, in Tenishev Hall was a great success and dedicated to the great Sebastian and his contemporaries. Not to speak only about Bach, those were pretty artful composers, who anticipated creative secrets well before the greatest artists of the nineteenth century. Take a listen to the "Gigue" from Bach's English Suite or the F-Minor Sonata by D. Scarlatti, and you most likely will agree that the first one could have been written by the creator of the Die Meistersinger, and the second by the creator of the Pastoral. By the way, Madame Landowska plays an instrument made by Pleyel, which is modeled after one owned by Bach, now held in Berlin's museum."

For more details on her recitals, see TARUSKIN, 1996, p.368.

Facsimile of the Brantle is found in FRANCISQUE, 1973, p.20v. Landowska might have performed from the edition issued by the Société Internationale de Musique (FRANCISQUE, 1906, p.52-4).

For more detail on Landowska-Stravinsky theory, see TARUSKIN, 1996, p.364-8; and WALSH, 1999, p.110.

Cash suggests this simple work was intended for Tolstoy's daughter, Princess Alexandra. For detail and transcription of Berceuse, see CASH, 1990, p.61-8.

Landowska recorded Bourrée d'auvergne in 1923, 1928, and 1951. This unpublished composition has not been dated, although it is similar to Berceuse. For detail on recordings of Bourrée d'auvergne, see RESTOUT, 1965, p.418.

The Works of Frederic Chopin and their Proper Interpretation (O wykonowaniu dzieł Szopina) was published in 1879 in Warsaw. The book was widely circulated, with translations in English (1913), French (1880, 1883, and 1906), Russian (1897), Dutch (1931), and Spanish (Mexico, 1949). For more bibliographical detail on The Works, see MICHALOWSKI, 1991, p.97. Kleczyński's observations of Chopin's performance style are based on traits exhibited by those "most nearly connected with Chopin by ties of friendship and talent." (KLECZYŃSKI, [1879] 1913, p.6) Landowska's article on Chopin interpretation shares Kleczyński's sentiments (LANDOWSKA, [1910] 1926, p.407-8). I am grateful to Joshua Rifkin for bringing my attention to the emigration of Varsovian composers to Paris.

Apparently Kleczyński said this with tears in his eyes (CASH, 1990, p.22). Landowska's mother felt Kleczyński's admiration for Landowska interfered with her daughter's education and eventually sent Landowska to a "more demanding" teacher, Alexander Michalowski (RESTOUT, 1965, p.6).

Landowska pursued a connection between Chopin and the music of the French Baroque keyboardists, but she was never able to produce evidence that Chopin knew French harpsichord music. She did, however, connect Chopin to eighteenth-century keyboardists on structural and hermeneutical grounds. "Here they are [connected] in their harmonic nature, with their ramifications and consequences; in their rhythmical complexity; in the phrasing of the melody; in the ornamentation; last but not least, they are evident in the esthetics of both composers." (RESTOUT, 1965, p.274-5) Also see LANDOWSKA ([1910] 1926); and LANDOWSKA, 1931.


Vogt, at the Paris conservatory from the 1820s, revived the phrasing in Girolamo Crescentini's vocalises (Vogt's pedagogical pieces were published in the 1860s). In contradiction to Crescentini's more cellular phrasing, adorned with "messo de voce," Vogt advocates for a "straighter" long-line approach. For detail, see BURGESS, 2003, p.41-3; HARNONCOURT, 1988, p.25; and HAYNES, 2007, p.184-6.

This notational discrepancy could also reflect variations in different instruments – the piano versus the oboe.

Robin Hartwell also put forth the title "Post Authentic Performance Practice Movement." (HARTWELL, 1993, p.34)

Combattimento is led by violinist Jan Willem de Vriend. The modern-instrument early-music ensemble has produced recordings of Handel and Biber. In 2002, they performed Rameau's Pléiade at the Utrecht Early Music Festival. For philosophy on their use of modern instruments, see BACH-CANTATAS.COM. Emmanuel Music was founded by Craig Smith (1947-2007). For more detail, see EMANUEL.
Butt encapsulates a new view of historical performance: "Perhaps the ultimate value of studying all aspects of historical musical performance do not rest in telling us how a piece should or should not sound, but rather in how performance, as the medium of sounding music, conditions our idea of the way music relates both to the world in which it first sounded and to the world in which it sounds again. In other words, we are led to a broader conception of the way in which we use music from the past." (BUTT, 2006, p.15)

For more detail on recording, see STING, The Journey and the Labyrinth. Similar to the early music movement in the 1980s, Sting branched into Romantic repertoire. For more detail, see his theatrical production of Robert and Clara Schumann's letters (Sting, 2009).

A study published by Early Music America in 2005 supports Knighton's observation. It shows that audiences no longer distinguish a difference between early music and mainstream classical music (COLDWELL, 2005, p.2; and COLDWELL, 2008, p.25).

In 1989, Kelly speculated that "the field [of early music seems] to comprise three related elements: a body of music, those who perform it, and the way(s) in which the performers approach the music." (1989, p.2) Kelly admitted that the early music movement's borders were blurring. In 2001, Shelemay's abstract definition confirmed his suspicion. "From an ethnographic perspective, the early music movement can be seen less as a bounded stream of musical discourse than a multi-faceted world of musical and cultural experience. In terms of conventional parameters of time and space, one finds a virtually unlimited array of musics and musical practices from a full range of accessible historical styles primarily emerging from Europe and America, but infused both in the past and present with many cross currents." (SHELEMAY, 2001, p.10-1)

David Kjar, natural trumpet player and scholar, is the artistic co-director of the Boston-based ensemble Cambridge Concentus, which toured to Japan with Joshua Rifkin as director. As a natural trumpeter, David has performed and recorded with early music ensembles throughout Europe and North and South America while working with early music specialists such as Luis Otavio Santos, Joshua Rifkin, Sigiswald Kuijken, Rene Jacobs, Reinhard Goebel, and Richard Egarr. David is the natural trumpet professor in Juiz de Fora at Festival Pro-Musica and has taught and presented at the Semana Musica Antiga held at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte. He holds a Bachelors Degree from the University of Northern Iowa and Masters in Historical Performance from the Royal Conservatory of the Hague. David is currently pursuing a Ph. D. in Musicology at Boston University. His research focuses on eighteenth-century performance practice and notions of performance in the twentieth century, with special attention given to Wanda Landowska and her influence on the performance style of the early music movement.