Critical and Historical Essays: Lectures delivered at Columbia University

Edward MacDowell

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TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

Italic text is represented by _underscores_ around the text.

Footnotes in the original text were all marked with asterisks: I have renumbered these and represented them as [01] through [15].

All other text enclosed between square brackets represents or describes the illustrations (for which see the HTML edition):

Pitches: [c, ... c ... a b c' (middle-C) d' e' ... c'' ... c''']

Round brackets: when around a single note these represent a note in the extract which was bracketed or otherwise highlighted. When around two or more notes, they represent a slur or beam.

Braces: surround simultaneous notes in a chord {a c' e'}

Accidentals:

[f++] = F double-sharp
[a+] = A sharp
[c=] = C natural
[e-] = E flat
[d--] = D double-flat

In the main text, accidentals are written out in full, as [natural], A[flat], G[sharp]. One table uses [#] for [sharp].

Accents and marcato: denoted by > and ^ before a note.

Time signatures: [4/4], [6/8], etc.

[C] or [C/4] = C-shaped [4/4] time.

[C|] or [C/2] = C-shaped [2/2] time.

[O] = A circle

[O.] = A circle with a dot in the center

[C.] = A broken circle (C-shaped) with a dot in the center

[G:] = Treble clef ([G8:] = Treble clef 8va bassa) [F:] = Bass clef ([F8:] = Bass clef 8va bassa)

Rhythms (A trailing . represents a dotted note):

[L] = Longa

[B] = Brevis

[S] = Semibrevis

[1] = Whole-note (Semibreve)

[2] = Half-note (Minim)

[4] = Quarter-note (Crotchet)

[8] = Eighth-note (Quaver)

[16] = Sixteenth-note (Semiquaver)

Lyrics and Labels: words aligned with the notes begin [W: ...]

Breves and macrons, used to denote short and long stresses in poetry are denoted ['] and [-] respectively.

[|] = Bar (Bar line)

[<] = Crescendo hairpin

[x] = small cross

[\] = 45 degree downstroke

[/] = 45 degree upstroke

[/\] = large circumflex shape

[O|] = a circle bisected by a vertical line protruding both ways

[Gamma] = The Greek capital gamma
[mid-dot] = a dot at the height of a hyphen
[over-dot] = a single dot over the following letter
[Over-slur] = a frown-shaped curved line
[Under-slur] = a smile-shaped curved line (breve)
[reverse-apostrophe] = the mirror image of a closing quote
[Upper Mordent] = an upper mordent: /\/\/ with thick downstrokes
[Crenellation] = horizontals, low, high, low, connected by verticals
[Podium] = [Crenellation] with the third horizontal at half-height
[Step] = horizontal, vertical, horizontal, vertical, ascending
[Turn] = a turn (~)

[Figure 01] = extract available as a MIDI file (figure01.mid). [Illustration] = all other illustrations.

For example, here's a D minor scale set to words:

[G: d' e' (f' g') a' b-' (c+" d")] [W: One, two, three, four, five, six.]

And a simple rhythmic example:

[3/4: 4 4 8 8 | 8. 16 2] = [- - ' ' - ' -]

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

Lectures delivered at Columbia University

BY EDWARD MACDOWELL

EDITED BY W.J. BALTZELL

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PREFACE

The present work places before the public a phase of the professional activity of Edward MacDowell quite different from that through which his name became a household word in musical circles, that is, his work as a composer. In the chapters that follow we become

acquainted with him in the capacity of a writer on phases of the history and aesthetics of music.

It was in 1896 that the authorities of Columbia University offered to him the newly created Chair of Music, for which he had been strongly recommended as one of the leading composers of America. After much thought he accepted the position, and entered upon his duties with the hope of accomplishing much for his art in the favorable environment which he fully expected to find. The aim of the instruction, as he planned it, was: "First, to teach music scientifically and technically, with a view to training musicians who shall be competent to teach and compose. Second, to treat music historically and aesthetically as an element of liberal culture." In carrying out his plans he conducted a course, which, while "outlining the purely technical side of music," was intended to give a "general idea of music from its historical and aesthetic side." Supplementing this, as an advanced course, he also gave one which took up the development of musical forms, piano music, modern orchestration and symphonic forms, impressionism, the relationship of music to the other arts, with much other material necessary to form an adequate basis for music criticism.

It is a matter for sincere regret that Mr. MacDowell put in permanent form only a portion of the lectures prepared for the two courses just mentioned. While some were read from manuscript, others were given from notes and illustrated with musical quotations. This was the case, very largely, with the lectures prepared for the advanced course, which included extremely valuable and individual treatment of the subject of the piano, its literature and composers, modern music, etc.

A point of view which the lecturer brought to bear upon his subject was that of a composer to whom there were no secrets as to the processes by which music is made. It was possible for him to enter into the spirit in which the composers both of the earlier and later periods conceived their works, and to value the completed compositions according to the way in which he found that they had followed the canons of the best and purest art. It is this unique attitude which makes the lectures so valuable to the musician as well as to the student.

The Editor would also call attention to the intellectual qualities of Mr. MacDowell, which determined his attitude toward any subject. He was a poet who chose to express himself through the medium of music rather than in some other way. For example, he had great natural facility in the use of the pencil and the brush, and was strongly advised to take up painting as a career. The volume of his poetical writings, issued several years ago, is proof of his power of expression in verse and lyric forms. Above these and animating them were what Mr. Lawrence Gilman terms "his uncommon faculties of vision and imagination." What he thought, what he said, what he wrote, was determined by the poet's point of view, and this is evident on nearly every page of these lectures.

He was a wide reader, one who, from natural bent, dipped into the curious and out-of-the-way corners of literature, as will be noticed in his references to other works in the course of the lectures, particularly to Rowbotham's picturesque and fascinating story of the formative period of music. Withal he was always in touch with contemporary affairs. With the true outlook of the poet he was fearless, individual, and even radical in his views. This spirit, as indicated before, he

carried into his lectures, for he demanded of his pupils that above all they should be prepared to do their own thinking and reach their own conclusions. He was accustomed to say that we need in the United States, a public that shall be independent in its judgment on art and art products, that shall not be tied down to verdicts based on tradition and convention, but shall be prepared to reach conclusions through knowledge and sincerity.

That these lectures may aid in this splendid educational purpose is the wish of those who are responsible for placing them before the public.

W.J. BALTZELL.

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CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

I

THE ORIGIN OF MUSIC

Darwin's theory that music had its origin "in the sounds made by the half-human progenitors of man during the season of courtship" seems for many reasons to be inadequate and untenable. A much more plausible explanation, it seems to me, is to be found in the theory of Theophrastus, in which the origin of music is attributed to the whole range of human emotion.

When an animal utters a cry of joy or pain it expresses its emotions in

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