most familiar ground; but the lack becomes rather acute at times in the remaining chapters, where a more episodic style of writing prevails and where the effect is often more tantalizing than satisfying.

As minor points, this reviewer feels that the author’s estimate of Gluck’s influence on 19th-century opera is somewhat exaggerated, and he finds unconvincing the insistence that all operatic roads, even in France, led to Wagner.

Despite these strictures, however, one can still profit from what M. Gaudefroy-Demobynes has done. He has obviously covered his sources well; he writes easily; and while his book does not enlarge greatly or alter our general conception of 18th-century German thought, it is valuable for filling in many details of the picture.

WILLIAM L. CROSTEN
Stanford University


The first issue of the new French periodical, Polyphonie, is a handsome and valuable addition to the list of music journals. The editors propose to consider one subject in each issue, and to engage specialists in various related fields to discuss the chosen topic. In addition to this, there will be a section of bibliographical and statistical data referring to the main consideration. A current chronicle and a subdivision devoted to a contemporary composer complete the general format. The first issue presents Luigi Dallapiccola in terms of biographical chronology, portrait, bibliography, notes on the opera, Il Prigioniero, and an aria from that opera.

There are twelve articles in the first issue, Le Théâtre musical. These range from a consideration of the medieval melodrama, by Gustave Cohen, to a report on the dramatic works of Schoenberg, by René Leibowitz. There are articles on the lyric theater in the U. S. S. R. and in Italy, music in the films, stage décor in relationship to music, music and the ballet, etc.

The main article is “Le Temps du drame et le temps de la musique,” by Boris de Schloezer. This is an analytic, non-topical examination of the problem of opera. “For whatever it is worth, the problem that confronts all musical theater is to find the means and the process whereby the opposition between drama and music can be reduced, if not resolved. It is a question, in fact, of obtaining not a sum whose elements are merely juxtaposed more or less loosely, but an entirety wherein they are found completely fused; in a word, a synthesis.”

Mr. de Schloezer’s desire to find a functional solution to problems of musical theater is resolved first to the analysis of the components in terms of a time concept. Drama, we are told, uses real or clock time, progressive, chronological time. Along with this, drama relies on functions of memory and anticipation; the present in drama is least significant: “…characters have intentions, they pursue their ends, but oriented towards the future; their pasts trail after them.” The time of drama is open at both ends, past and future. Music, on the other hand, is a closed system, beginning arbitrarily, axiomatically, and insisting on the priority of the present. “Listening to music, taking part in this act, is therefore to attach oneself always to the present, to live for the present as such. Does this not mean that listening to music is equivalent to evading real time, to transcending it?”

The solutions we are offered are rather vague and contradict the original demand for a functional unity. “It appears from the beginning that for it [opera] to succeed, there is no other method to follow than yielding to the example of the non-figurative painter and the choreographer: it is necessary to arrange the drama in such a way as to reduce the rational element as much as possible.”

Insisting on the primacy of musical time, the argument continues: “It is a question of always shaking off the drama; one can accomplish this by underlining certain sentences, emphasizing the ‘ent’actes,’ introducing interludes, etc.; one can also make the action less rigorous, less logical even to the point of being equivocal; one
can reduce its reference to reality by keeping it in a mysterious half-light."

What has happened to the desire for a functional solution, a synthesis of drama and music? We are left with rule-of-thumb solutions, mechanistic in concept, too vague to apply.

Practical solutions are an unnecessary part of an analytic thesis. That Mr. de Schloezer's answers are useless cannot detract from his analysis except that they are symptomatic of the falsity and lack of clarity in the analysis itself. The problem of opera certainly needs statement, analysis, and clarification. Mr. de Schloezer, however, confuses. He introduces irrelevant aesthetic judgments concerning the rationality of signification; he equates dramatic word with dramatic action (the Wagnerian error), he considers dramatic action only as physical movement, and finally, he applies different general standards to art forms in theater and music.

The art work always attempts to be a closed system, no matter what the medium. Its enclosure is part of its inner rationality and excludes arbitrariness of invention and direction. The closed system is the artist's perfection. That Mr. de Schloezer has to forfeit this concept in order to admit his formulation of "open" time in drama indicates the weakness of the "open" time observation. The idea of drama as an open system is completely inadmissible, especially if we accept Mr. de Schloezer's equation of dramatic dialogue with dramatic action. For what is more closed than the relationships of sonic and symbolic values in the use of words?

The whole analysis begins with the peripheral consideration, for in the dynamic growth of a dramatic and musical work the time element is residual. It results from the musical and the theatrical action. The difficult question is: What is the nature of musical action? Theatrical action concepts have been stated and analyzed exhaustively and practically by Aristotle, Stanislavsky, and Ferguson, to mention only a few. However, the nature of musical action, even within the limits of the system of triadic tonality, has been incompletely studied. We have no analysis of the means of creating musical motion to compare with the works in drama, though the analytic theories of Schenker are a monumental beginning.

The possibilities of establishing a functioning unity called opera will involve the correlation of techniques, structure, and expressive (textural) elements of music and drama, based on a combined concept of action. The nature of the synthesis may well vary. A solution may be found in the dramatic beats of action; in the preparations and transformations of action that mark the movement of plays. Perhaps, as another approach, opera must deal with both action and the abstraction of action as two separate elements that meet in the consideration of the motivations and the characterological changes that result from action. The latter is certainly the solution of most death and love scenes, as well as of the general recitative-aria structure. What remains open is the complex of correlations between musical and dramatic techniques, the complex that will be the operatic solution.

Mr. de Schloezer's serious consideration of the theory of opera is a beginning point. The single subject format of Polyphonie makes this consideration possible. Actually the focus of investigation raises the level of the periodical to a subject reference work. For this, Polyphonie merits our thanks, our wishes for success, and our support.

Alvin Bauman
Columbia University


Very few studies have been made that have dealt exclusively with the investigation of rhythm in music. Best known are those by Hugo Riemann (System der musikalischen Rhythmik und Metrik, 1903) and René Dusmesnil (Le Rythme musical, 1921). The former compresses, expands, and distorts all musical expression into his straitjacket of "Vierhebigkeit"; the latter abounds in historical inaccuracies and superficial, illogical analyses. For the most part we have had to rely on discussions and analyses contained in larger studies devoted to specific historical areas, com-
posers, genres, etc. From the creative aspect, many 20th-century composers (e.g., Bartók, Stravinsky) have shown an emphatic interest in rhythm, endeavoring to utilize it, through manifold manipulations of radically unconventional character, as an integrative device. Because of the relative neglect of the study of this element of musical language, and because of this rising interest in its role in contemporary music, the publication by Polyphonie of a volume devoted to this subject should be welcomed.

The editor, André Souris, has collected a curious ensemble of six articles, the first of which is by himself, and entitled, "Le Rythme concret." Souris criticizes the general nature of the investigation of rhythm: aestheticians ignore or underestimate the powers of timbre, intensity, register, and polyphony; the psychologist, on the other hand, deals with the more elementary observations which leave us ignorant of the capacities of musical perception. From this, one is left to assume that the task of investigation must rest with the musician, who can successfully apply analytical methods to the problem. As a musician, Souris offers little that is meaningful or new in the clarification of the nature of the task. Generalities and vagueness are typified by the following: "Concrete rhythm is the executed rhythm which possesses an organic time independent of the metronome, a time which bestows upon it the totality of the conditions of its execution." Souris stresses again and again the fact that rhythm is conditioned by many functions of the language of sound. The nature of the measure, the relationship between polyphony and rhythm, and the role of instruments in rhythm are other problems posed by the author.

The article, "Temps musical et tempo," by Gisèle Brelet indulges in emotional description that serves no purpose and contains a good deal of purely romantic nonsense. Out of it emerges what the author describes as an "ethos" doctrine of tempo. Tempo has emotional flavors: joy and sadness are characterized by a particular duration or temporal scheme. Rapidity of movement is related to uniform, simple rhythm, easily perceptible, expressing a simple harmony without many tonal or modal irregularities, a polyphony without great complexities—as though the quickness must remedy a weak musical density. On the other hand, slowness is in agreement with harmonic and rhythmic complexity. The sonorous or musical density determines the tempo of a work. For example, a work destined for the piano requires a slower tempo than would its orchestral execution. Loud and strong sounds call for a slower tempo, whereas light sounds accelerate the time and call for a quick tempo. Melody belongs to slowness; it is the revelation of the individual soul. On the other hand, rapidity is the objective time of action, the victory of the universal over the individual. Rapidity is often the absence of profundity. Is it necessary to dwell any further on the absurdities of Brelet? They deserve no place in a serious periodical.

Seemingly as an antidote, the article, "Le Giusto syllabique bichrone; un système rythmique propre à la musique populaire roumain," by C. Brailoiu, is a sober and fine study, continuing the traditions of Bartók in the investigation of Romanian folk song (Béla Bartók: Melodien der Rumanischen Volkslieder [Weinachtslieder], Vienna, 1935). "Giusto" Brailoiu explains as "exact"—a uniform, regular movement in opposition to rubato. As for "syllabique" and "bichrone," he concerns himself here with rhythmic effects drawn from two different qualities of the syllable; in the relationship of music and word, the rhythm finds its source in the meter of the words. The "giusto syllabique" appears essentially in vocal music, especially in the following chanson types: lyrics, epics, rituals, funereal lamentations, and most particularly, in the noëls. The, distinctive characteristics of this system are: the exclusive use of two invariable durational values whose proportion is 1:2 or 2:1, and the free alternation of elementary rhythmic groups consisting of two or three of these values. Rhythmic groups are separated by dotted bars, the regular barline being used only at the end of the textual line. As a preliminary step, Brailoiu describes the characteristics of Romanian versification; thereafter, he
traces, step by step, how different rhythmic groups are formed within the many variants of the quantitative versification. A word consisting of two syllables can be arranged in four possible combinations of eighth and quarter notes: two eighths, an eighth and a quarter, a quarter and an eighth, or two quarters. A regular octometer, consisting of four groups of two syllables, therefore presents 256 (i.e., 4×4×4×4) possible rhythmic combinations. An irregular octometer, consisting of two groups of three syllables plus one group of two syllables, likewise presents 256 (i.e., 8×8×4) possibilities. Brailoiu's tables of mathematical possibilities for all lines up to twelve syllables adds up to more than 40,000. To what end does this complexity lead? The general method of notating Roumanian folk songs in the regular metrical schemes, with irregular accents and frequent change of meter, presents a picture of what appears to be a haphazard and arbitrary notion of rhythm. Brailoiu's study definitely systematizes the metrical scheme into an order reflecting specific principles whereby the folk language, through music, takes its articulate shape; the richness of variability is in no way impaired by this system.

A particularly provocative exposition of a composer's concepts of rhythm is to be found in "Propositions," by Pierre Boulez, who operates principally in the twelve-tone technique. It is apparent that in this technique of composition, no longer dependent upon the functional harmony of tonality, in which rhythm is a secondary factor of integration, the role of rhythm may be elevated to a primary position, not only taking its importance in the relationships within the "set," but also emerging as a constructive device in the polyphonic discourse throughout the composition. Therefore Boulez, in search of new rhythmic devices, criticizes the total indifference of Schoenberg and Alban Berg to these problems, they (he states) remaining attached to the classical measure and the ancient idea of rhythm. As his point of departure, he adopts some of the rhythmic devices of Messiaen, particularly the use of irrational values. Using no meter, he emphasizes polyphonically complementary irrational values and irregular rhythmic canons, sometimes in retrograde fashion. This is an approach rather than a closed system, and because the examples from his compositions are only fragments, the degree in which this approach is artistically convincing can only be judged when it can be seen how these relationships function in the totality of the structure of the composition. It is anticipated that his music will soon be introduced to American audiences.

The two remaining articles can be mentioned briefly. A study of rhythm in the music of Olivier Messiaen by Marcel Fremiot does not contain any material that is not presented more adequately and clearly in Chapters II through VII of Messiaen's own theoretical work, *Technique de mon langage musical* (Paris, 1944). Vladimir Fédorov's "Paroles dites—Paroles chantées," is an undistinguished, brief essay on the relationship between the rhythm of the spoken and sung word.

This collection of essays and studies is a disappointment, with the exception of those by Brailoiu and Boulez. The opportunity for the publication of first-rate historical essays and analytical studies, in place of verbalization and generalities, has been singularly missed. In contrast, the volume is printed in handsome, deluxe style.
Positions, where taken, varied extensively. Boris de Schloezer claimed that the prevailing relativistic attitude acknowledges no distinction in quality and timeliness between old and new music; the past lives in, and enriches, the present. Handschin, stressing the role of scientific research as a substitute for the direct aesthetic contact we cannot completely establish with much old music, nevertheless maintained that the quickening of interest in old music was of prime significance in pointing up the contemporary decline in creativity. The same theme, still valid, recurs in this issue of *Polyphonie*.

Opening her contribution with a frank question, “L’aime-t-on? L’aimons-nous?,” the late Yvonne Rokseth answers with an equally frank negative, and then proceeds to offer her reasons. She understandably emphasizes positive values in old music and makes several penetrating observations in the process. Mme. Rokseth claims a unity for western musical thought, noting in passing the parallel musical functions of several stylistic techniques: the *copula* likened to a concerto *cadenza*; the initial *organum* prolongation likened to a symphonic slow introduction. Accepting the absence of tonal organization in old music, she points to other unifying principles—for one, *trecento* spatial symmetry. Making a case for, and a virtue of, the relative freedom of late medieval composers from external pressures, she goes on with wit to accept as a blessing that lack of cluttering biographical detail which forces attention to the period’s most valid cultural facts, its music. Included are some pertinent remarks anent performance practices, and a scholarly injunction to avoid the “personal equation” in matters of fact, as well as an exhortation to emulate such scholars as Pirro in enthusiasm and insight.

The opposite assumption, namely, the success of old—to the detriment of new—music, is made by Robert Wangermée. He purports to observe a three-century conflict between contemporary and old music, a view presumably supported by an interesting historical sketch proceeding from the 17th century, “Querelle des anciens et des moderns.” But M. Wangermée loses sight of the fact that late 17th- and 18th-century polemics were for the most part socially, economically, and politically inspired. Music, then an eminently social art, merely reflected the intellectual phase of a struggle that became a revolution in 1789. Since contemporary art-music is hardly fraught with large social values, it is difficult to justify such a continuity of conflict. Rather there seems to be some confusion between “la musique ancienne” and what has been called “the standard repertoire,” a body of music perpetuated largely by the broad base of our musical institutions. As long as the public concert hall remains the essential vehicle for the dissemination of live music, it is certainly to be expected that the best of its associated repertoire will survive. Since the bulk of old music, and new as well, is neither conceived for the mass audience nor comfortable in the large hall, one can but conclude that their devotees will continue to be the small groups they are at present. Far from being in conflict, the fates of old and new seem to be inextricably interlocked.

A contribution by Suzanne Clercx, though not central to the main theme of the magazine, is nevertheless stimulating. She traces the role of the “return to antiquity” concept in the transition from the “classicism” of the first half of the Cinquecento to the Baroque. Although it is recognized as merely a pretext for change, the concept is shown to be related to three essential stylistic tendencies of the second half of the century: the dissolution of choral homogeneity, accompanied monody, and the late madrigal manner of text relation. It would, however, be interesting to learn how the author reconciles the monodic implications and practices of the *frottola* and the almost antiphonal pairing of voices in late Josquin with her otherwise valid remarks.

In smaller articles, Armand Machabey reasserts the aesthetic quality of medieval music (Machaut in particular) despite its difficulties for the modern listener, while Jacques Chaillé, obviously indifferent to the Ars Nova without Machaut, extols him, by virtue of his assimilation of the rhythmic and harmonic acquisitions of the time, as the savior of 14th-century music.
Elsewhere, the late Middle Ages is taxed to support a harmonic system of superimposed fourths. M. Yvan Wyschnegradsky offers as evidence the frequency of such harmonic constructions in medieval music, but without regard either for the structural value of such chords in a larger musical context, or for the small concern these composers showed for vertical as opposed to horizontal relationships. He blithely states that post-medieval music might easily have had recourse to a system of fourths but for the triadic influence of secular art; hence contemporary music takes its thread of continuity from the Ars Nova. Even the overtone series, according to M. Wyschnegradsky, supports harmony in fourths as well as in triads; where the triad is based on the tones of the third overtone octave, superimposed fourths can be awarded nature’s sanction if the intervals found in the second and fourth octaves are pressed into service. Clearly the author reckons without, or is unaware of, the normal decrease of relation and amplitude as one proceeds to the higher partials. There must be better justification than this for an admittedly arbitrary system.

Finally, medieval musicology is advised by Vladimir Fédorov as to “son objet de demain”: synthesis. In a typically youthful statement, hardly requiring refutation here, it is claimed that the musical facts are known: “one would be justified in believing that we are in possession of a picture—complete, even if not exhaustive—of medieval polyphonic music.” His demands are boundless, as one sample will reveal: “To be sure, the Gregorian corresponds to a thought, a feeling, a world-conception, a community, an epoch, all of them determinate; but, what are they exactly? what are the musical signs which translate them exactly?” Should but a small fraction of M. Fédorov’s demands be met, the future will certainly be in a position to deal more adequately with the theme, “Présence de la musique ancienne.”

Harvey J. Olnick
New York City

Quatrième Cahier (n.d.): Le Système dodécaphonique. 82 pp.

The article of primary interest in this issue of Polyphonie, devoted to the twelve-tone system, is Arnold Schoenberg’s “Le Composition à douze sons.” This is Schoenberg’s only extended statement on the twelve-tone system, and though it was delivered as a lecture in 1939, it had not been generally available until this translation by René Leibowitz appeared; since then, it has appeared in its English version in a collection of Schoenberg’s essays issued under the title, Style and Idea. It is to be assumed that this article will serve henceforth as a source material in the history of twelve-tone music and of Schoenberg’s personal development. As such, it possesses interest and significance, but as a statement of the nature of the twelve-tone system it must be adjudged disappointing.

This article is concerned essentially with two aspects of the system: its origins, and its compositional characteristics as revealed in three of Schoenberg’s compositions: the piano suite, Opus 25; the Quintet, Opus 26; and the Variations for Orchestra, Opus 31.

With regard to origins, two sources are cited: the personal and the historical. The extremely mystical statement of the personal origins furnishes the basis neither for discussion nor for objective enlightenment. The historical discussion proceeds from the now familiar premise that musical pluralism, a perfectly valid concept, must be avoided at all costs. Thus, Schoenberg asserts the “necessity” of the system, an assertion that requires the identification of non-equivalent conditions: that which arises as the result of a historical development, and that which is offered as a possible solution of a historically initiated problem. The attempt to establish historical derivation leads to a sort of functional synecdoche, with unrelated functional constituents of a musical component equated in terms of the fixed character of a secondary aspect of the component. Schoenberg cites Beethoven’s Opus 135 as a work adumbrating, in motival form, the operations of the twelve-tone system, while admitting that the motival transformations in Beethoven are not literal, because of the tonal functions they must fulfill. But this is the crux of the problem. For it is just this aspect of the tonal
motive, which is subject to the predetermined boundary conditions of tonality, that completely differentiates it from the twelve-tone set and its transformations, which are themselves the fundamental boundary conditions. The tonal motive assumes functional meaning within a context, and becomes, in turn, a vehicle of movement within this context; the twelve-tone set, however, is the instigator of movement, and defines the functional context. To equate a compositional element with a pre-compositional element is not only to confuse the nature of the systems, but to reduce the number of levels of musical meaning, and, as a result, to reduce the functional multiplicity of the individual note. It is unfortunate that in attempting to make of the twelve-tone system something more than it can be demonstrated to be, in historical terms, Schoenberg consequently reduces it to something less than it can be demonstrated to be, in autonomous terms.

In the discussion of his own twelve-tone compositions, Schoenberg's analytic method tends toward paraphrastic description of musical events in terms of their embodying procedures of the system, but without indicating the particular inventive and implicative character of such an embodiment with relation to other such characterized events or to the eventual totality. The result is an analysis of the complete work in terms of discrete parts, which are constantly referred back to a stage preceding the formulation of the specific work; this would appear to attribute a subordinate role to specific, internal properties. The emphasis is upon the possible rather than upon the demanded, upon the "how" rather than the "why," with no indication of the particular, perhaps unique, implications for development and progression of the concrete musical statement. In compositional terms, this can lead only to a very real discontinuity in the progression from the region of the individual conformation to that of the totality.

It is regrettable that this analytic procedure is so much less satisfactory than that which Schoenberg has applied to tonal music, at least in his conception of tonal "regions," which involves a unifying principle of total analysis. It is perhaps significant that this conception serves to indicate the basic systematic difference between tonal and twelve-tone composition, and the resultant impossibility of employing tonal principles analogically with regard to twelve-tone music. For the notion of "regions" involves a principle of containment, and these containment relations are constant for all tonal composition; only the normative factor is defined for the specific work, and this factor itself determines a region which occupies a fixed relative position of containment. But there are no such fixed relations in the twelve-tone system; the normative factor is determined without any reference to means of its being so recognized other than by internal structure, which is not true in tonal music, and by priority, which is not necessary in tonal music. And, although the totality of tonal operations is cyclic, the individual operations, unlike twelve-tone operations, are non-reflexive. Thus, the problem of true formal progression in twelve-tone music can be solved only within the system itself. Schoenberg does not indicate the nature of such a solution, and indeed, implies an attitude towards form as a separable vehicle of projection in the statement that "form . . . aims primarily at comprehensibility."

It is interesting to observe the emphasis, and the nature of the emphasis, that Schoenberg places upon the semi-combinatorial set. (This is a set so constructed that one of its transformations, other than its retrograde, can be transposed so that its first six notes are equivalent, with regard only to content, to the last six notes of the original set. The first six notes of each of these two sets will then, together, contain all twelve notes. The same condition will hold for the second halves of the sets and, by symmetry, the same relations will hold between the remaining two basic forms of the set. The nature of the retrograde operation assures comparable linear properties. This principle can be generalized to the construction of the all-combinatorial set, which possesses such a relation to all of its transformations and one, or more, of its own transpositions.) Unfortunately, Schoenberg emphasizes the
set's negative property in avoiding octave doubling rather than its positive properties in terms of harmonic and linear organization. Strangely too, in discussing his Quintet, Schoenberg remarks that in this work he had not yet begun utilizing a set in which combinatoriality is obtained by transposing the inversion down a perfect fifth. This emphasis upon the fifth can only be explained as a vestige of triadic thinking, since any odd transposition interval may be associated with the transposition necessary to effect combinatoriality. Indeed, the elements of the combinatorial segment may be subjected to any permutation without affecting the combinatorial property. But each such permutation alters the first note changes the transposition interval. Therefore, there is no significance to be attached to a particular interval of transposition. The Quintet itself employs a set that effects combinatoriality by transposing the inversion down a minor second, and the principles of progression arising from this property differ in no basic manner from those of other works which require a different interval.

On the basis of Schoenberg's preoccupation with questions of historical derivation, and his insistence on negative rather than positive aspects of the system, one is obliged to conclude that the system's demonstrable consistency is an astounding fortuity, and that Schoenberg, like many other great innovators, was not, at least at this point, entirely aware of the implications of his own discovery. This is, in no sense, to minimize his achievement; on the contrary, it makes the achievement appear all the more remarkable.

Ernst Krenek's article, "Technique de douze sons et classicisme," though relatively short and general in nature, concerns itself with at least one question of great significance: that of the twelve-tone system's supplying the basis for a "common practice" or a tradition. This involves the urgent and complex matter of the loss of a fixed body of conventions, a problem common to all the arts in our time, but particularly serious for the non-verbal arts, where the assumptions cannot be stated within the art work itself and must be sought, not only outside the work, but in a different medium. The art work then becomes, at once, isolated and heteronomous. The absence of homogeneity of intent and belief has led to achievement by self-definition, an insistence on the qualitative character of means, and, in general, a complete circularity of thought with regard to the function of the individual work. Even the masterpieces of our time have existence as solitary achievements rather than as inheritable elements of a historical succession.

The need, then, for a genuine tradition cannot be overestimated, if only for the security of judgment it affords in making the inherently relative effectually absolute, for that period of time during which the elements of the tradition are assumed totally and exclusively.

Whether such a tradition will arise from twelve-tone principles is not dependent, by any means, on merely the immanent properties of the music or the system, or even, to state Krenek's criterion, upon its clarity and ease of comprehension. (There is ample evidence on which to question this last criterion.) It would appear that a genuine tradition is not only dynamic but idiomatic. The composer of the latter half of the 18th century, for example, worked unquestioningly within a stylistic and technical domain. The nature of his achievement could be isolated within a closely defined and subtle frame of reference. But the twelve-tone system (and this is one of its virtues) does not imply a specific style or idiom. Indeed, there are already a multitude of styles within the system, and whereas change of idiom in the tonal system has been a gradual and linear process, in twelve-tone music there is no homogeneous core of style to serve as a point of origin. The reason for this may reside in what is, in a sense, another problem associated with the question of a "twelve-tone tradition," the problem of "license" within a tradition. In the past, idiomatic change has usually been the surface manifestation of a systematic extension, demanded, or at least motivated, by the relations of the individual work. But much twelve-tone music has indulged in "licenses" which make it impossible to infer what stable properties the composer associates with the principles of the system.
Often the licenses appear to be motivated by the desire to secure certain idiomatic events that do not imply a twelve-tone context at all. Thus, the work originates and eventuates outside the domain of the system, which seems to function merely as the source of sonic details, and as the basis for analytical rationalization after the fact.

Also, a tradition must be founded on the impossibility of an alternative. The conscious embracing of a tradition always implies the possibility of rejection. The mere presence of a technical body of beliefs serves, at best, only to define the location of the point of choice, even, perhaps, returning it closer to the creative origin. But a tradition is all or nothing; degrees of approximation are essentially irrelevant.

Bernard Saby’s “Un Aspect des problèmes de la thématique sérielle” is an interesting analysis of René Leibowitz’s Chamber Symphony, Opus 16, in terms of the creation of an autonomous twelve-tone form.

Leibowitz’s “Aspects récents de la technique de douze sons” is an analytical discussion of three of Schoenberg’s most recent works: the Prelude, Opus 44; the String Trio, Opus 45; and A Survivor from Warsaw, Opus 46. This article also appears as the final chapter of Leibowitz’s Introduction à la musique de douze sons, and can be more profitably and fairly discussed in the context of that volume.

Luigi Dallapiccola’s “A propos d’un trait ‘expressionniste’ de Mozart” is another example of attempted historical identification, this time in terms of stylistic characteristics. The author cites details, primarily from Don Giovanni, that he considers dramatically “expressionistic” or that foreshadow procedures employed in contemporary “expressionist” works.

The volume also contains: Frank Martin’s “Schoenberg et nous,” the Manifesto of the First International Congress for Twelve-Tone Music, a portrait of René Leibowitz, a Leibowitz chronology and bibliography, and an excerpt from his opera La Nuit close.

Milton Babbitt
Princeton University


This book is planned as a continuation of the same author’s The Orchestra in the 18th Century, published in 1940, although some duplication of material was obviously necessary to make the second volume self-contained. With admirable diligence, Carse has collected a mass of information hitherto scattered in various monographs, memoirs, and periodicals. The present volume, lavishly illustrated with plates, drawings, and diagrams, is organized into three large sections: histories of individual orchestras, operatic and symphonic, in the principal musical centers of the Old and New World; a discussion of conducting and conductors—methods and personalities; and a survey of orchestral materials and techniques.

Carse is most successful in his presentation of technical matters, where his factual, objective style is particularly well suited to the subject matter. The chapters on conducting methods, instruments, score and parts, seating arrangements, and constitution and strength of various orchestras, contain much valuable information which should prove of interest to historians as well as practical musicians, especially conductors. In reading that Beethoven requested as few as four first and four second violins for the performance of one of his symphonies in 1811 (p. 24), one begins to realize the degree of tonal distortion inflicted upon the classical symphonic repertory by the technicolored lushness of our modern orchestras.

The chapter on conducting deals primarily with the important transitional decades between about 1790 and 1820, which saw the gradual abandonment of dual control by keyboard-director and violinist-leader, and the emergence of the baton-conductor. However, conducting methods were not the same in concert and opera, as a contemporary report quoted by Carse (pp. 313-314) would