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Our Festschrift for Allen: An Introduction and Conclusion

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OUR FESTSCHRIFT FOR ALLEN: AN INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

DAVID CARSON BERRY

In July 2009, several essays appeared in the online music-theory journal Gamut, separated from the other content by the following banner: A Music-Theoretical Matrix: Essays in Honor of Allen Forte (Part I). In the issue’s announcement (which appeared on several academic mailing lists) this was described as “the first installment of a serialized Festschrift for the eminent music theorist.” Additional essays appeared in the 2010 issue (Part II), in the 2011 issue (Part III), and in two 2013 issues (Parts IV and V). During the course of these five installments, twenty-two articles were published; all were by Allen’s former doctoral advisees, with graduation dates ranging from 1975 to 2002. The issues also included three special features: a previously unpublished article by Allen himself, on Gershwin songs; a collection of tributes and reminiscences from forty-two of his former advisees; and an annotated register of his publications and advisees. The full content of the now-complete Festschrift is given in the Appendix.

The goal of the present essay is to provide general information about the Festschrift: how it originated, how it came to take its serialized form and title, and points of orientation for the

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1 See, e.g., “New Publication: Gamut 2/1 (2009) Now Online,” sent by the present editor, on 7 July 2009, to <smt-announce@societymusictheory.org>.
2 As sometimes happens with journal publications, certain issues were published later than their dates indicate. For the record, the 2009 issue (Part I) was published in July 2009; the 2010 issue (Part II) was published in January 2012; the 2011 issue (Part III) was published in April 2012; the first 2013 issue (Part IV) was published in October 2013; and the second 2013 issue (Part V) was published in May 2014.
3 Given that this is an introduction to a Festschrift, I hope my use of the honoree’s first name will be forgiven. To refer to him formally, by last name, would seem a bit stilted in the present context.
reader with respect to its content. An epilogue offers a brief summation of the significance of the honoree, to both the contributors and the field at large.

The Back Story

The academic Festschrift, as we recognize the genre today, emerged in the nineteenth century and became more frequent from the 1860s onward; in those early years, philologists were frequent honorees. It took a few more decades for the first Festschrift to be dedicated to a music scholar, but when it appeared, it was to a music theorist: in 1909, Hugo Riemann received a hefty tome in commemoration of his sixtieth birthday. In its North American incarnation, music theory began to see its own homage volumes emerge primarily in the 1990s and afterward—a period coinciding with milestones in the lives of many pioneering figures in a field that did not start to coalesce until the late 1950s and ’60s. A handful of these figures went on to receive two Festschriften, although one was typically in a special issue of a journal (with the other being in book format), and the second of the two usually appeared posthumously (and thus was more precisely a Gedenkschrift). It is in this context that we celebrate what is the second Festschrift for Allen Forte.

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4 Riemann-Festschrift: Gesammelte Studien: Hugo Riemann zum sechzigsten Geburtstage überreicht von Freunden und Schülern, ed. Carl Mennicke (Leipzig: M. Hesse, 1909); it is x1 + 524 pages in length, and contains forty-three essays in various languages.

Berry: An Introduction and Conclusion

The first appeared in 1997, in commemoration of Allen’s seventieth birthday (23 December 1996). Edited by three of his former doctoral advisees (James M. Baker, David W. Beach, and Jonathan W. Bernard), it was titled *Music Theory in Concept and Practice*, in keeping with a tradition of deriving a title from one of the honoree’s publications (in this case, Allen’s undergraduate textbook, *Tonal Harmony in Concept and Practice*). Of its nineteen contributing authors, twelve had been Allen’s advisees, and of these all but one had completed their dissertations between 1968 and 1981, thus placing them among the first third of his (eventual) seventy-two advisees.

I first heard of this project in spring 1995, before I was at Yale, when I happened to be presenting a paper at a conference attended by two of Allen’s former advisees: one, an editor of the Festschrift, and the other, a graduate of four years earlier. The editor smiled as he and his colleague spoke of a “secret project,” which I gradually came to understand was the cited book. By the time it was published, I was a student at Yale, and I recall the delight that Allen felt in the many fine essays that had been assembled in his honor.

Nearly a decade later, in 2006, I began to entertain the possibility of a second Festschrift for Allen. The timing seemed appropriate for a few reasons. First, he had retired at the end of 2003; and second, the end of 2006 would mark his eightieth birthday. Of course, a new Festschrift would not appear quickly enough to commemorate either of these occasions. But a third reason loomed larger still: Allen’s list of former doctoral advisees was now complete, and nearly

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7 Using the FA or “Forte Advisee” numbers established in David Carson Berry, “The Twin Legacies of a Scholar-Teacher: The Publications and Dissertation Advisees of Allen Forte,” in Part I of this Festschrift, eleven of the advisee-authors ranged between FA1 and FA26. The exception was Daniel Harrison (FA37), who submitted his dissertation in 1986. The remaining seven (non-advisee) authors had professional and collegial associations with Allen.
two-thirds came from after the period represented in the first Festschrift; and even among the first third of his advisees, only about half had contributed to the former book. It seemed to me to be a good time to contact all those advisees who had not yet had a chance to honor Allen with an essay, and to see if there was enough interest to warrant a new publication. The first letters were sent in July, and respondents quickly committed to participate.

The project was initially envisioned as leading to a traditional book format; a publisher known for sustaining the genre of the musicological Festschrift had been contacted and had expressed interest. However, as we approached the second anniversary of the initial letters of invitation, something happened that often plagues edited collections (as I have since confirmed with other editors): there was becoming too great a time gap between the small number of contributions received from early submitters, and the large number of essays still promised. Indeed, a few within the former group, who were facing local pressure to publish sooner rather than later, reluctantly asked to withdraw their work. I knew that others might join them if enough additional essays (to warrant a book) were not received soon. This did not happen, and in late November 2008, I contacted everyone to announce the cancellation of the project.

And then came an unexpected revival. A few months before, I had agreed to assume the editorship of Gamut, with the 2009 issue. After my cancellation letter, I had some brief discussions with authors who had already submitted Festschrift essays, and I discovered that several were interested in having their work published in Gamut, as “regular” (i.e., non-Festschrift) articles. This prompted me to ask the journal’s sponsoring organization, the Music Theory Society

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8 Birthdays and anniversaries are overrated rationales for Festschriften, at any rate. As the editors of a volume for the “33rd or 34th Birthday” of James D. McCawley proclaimed: We “have been repeatedly asked: Why a Festschrift now? To which we have repeatedly replied: Why not?” (See Studies Out in Left Field: Defamatory Essays Presented to James D. McCawley on the Occasion of His 33rd or 34th Birthday, ed. Arnold M. Zwicky, Peter H. Salus, Robert I. Binnick, and Anthony L. Vanek [Edmonton, Canada: Linguistic Research, Inc., 1971], vii.)
of the Mid-Atlantic, for permission to serialize the Festschrift in its issues. The board members agreed, and two weeks after I cancelled the book project, it was reborn in its present form. The advantages were immediately obvious. The serialization meant that I could adopt a “first submitted, first published” policy, so that the time-gap described above would no longer be an issue. It also meant that I could extend the Festschrift (within reason) as long as a significant number of essays were still being received, thereby attaining more total submissions than would have been possible otherwise. And because the articles would be part of an online, open-access journal, they would circulate in far greater numbers than they would in any printed Festschrift. There were two additional reasons the new format seemed to be a harmonious fit. First, because essays contributed to Festschriften are often related to one another only by their general discipline (e.g., music theory), a Festschrift’s content has often been compared to that of journal issues instead of that of edited collections (which tend to have a more specific focus). Or, to put it another way, Festschrift essays seem particularly at home in journal issues. Second, for biographical reasons, it seemed appropriate to honor Allen with a Web-based publication in which articles would appear on computer screens (and other devices) after a few keystrokes and clicks. He was, after all, a pioneer in the use of computers for music theory and analysis (from back in the days when one sat at consoles, used punch cards, and watched the tape drives spinning), and he was both a

9 The diversity of content is sometimes indicated by the surrogates for “Festschrift” used in titles in other languages. For example, in French, “mêlanges” (mixtures) is often used, as in “Mêlanges offerts à . . .,” “Mêlanges en l’honneur de . . .,” and “Mêlanges dédiés à . . .” In Italian, “miscellanea” (miscellany) is often used, as in “Miscellanea in onore di . . ..” And occasionally even English titles have used “miscellany,” as in “A Miscellany of . . .” or simply “A Miscellany.” As for the lack of specific focus that Festschriften tend to have, it has been noted that “a Festschrift may well have only one point of focus—the dedicatee of the volume,” and that “the natural association with the recipient” (i.e., dedicatee) may unify the work “to a greater or less extent” (quotations from, respectively, Edwin S. Gleaves, “A Watch and Chain and a Jeweled Sword; or, The Graveyard of Scholarship: The Festschrift and Librarianship,” RQ 24/4 [1984], 469; and Dorothy Rounds and Sterling Dow, “Festschriften,” Harvard Library Bulletin 8/3 [1954], 297, n. 22).

10 At the time Allen was working on his 1964 article on set-complexes, he was using Yale’s IBM 7094/7044 Direct Coupled System. For a little insight into what computing was like in those days, and with that system, see “A
consulting editor and contributor to the early issues of *Music Theory Online* (from back in the
days before the Web was commonly used, and plain-text issues were retrieved by e-mail, FTP, or
Gopher).¹¹

As the first installment of the Festschrift neared, the matter of what to call it became
more pressing. After a period of informally referring to it as the “Fortschrift,” I gravitated to one
of Allen’s prior titles (as did the editors of the first Festschrift). *The Compositional Matrix* was
his 1961 monograph on Beethoven’s Piano Sonata, Op. 109.¹² Broadly speaking, the keyword
“matrix” refers to an interconnecting network of elements, as well as to the environment in
which an activity or process begins and is developed. With respect to Beethoven’s sonata, such a
matrix involves relationships between the original sketches and the music’s final form; the
broader compositional techniques and the single, complete work; and the basic plan and its coor-
dination into “a cogent totality.”¹³ Similarly, the (emerging) Festschrift seemed to me to repre-
sent a “music-theoretical matrix.” Its essays would be part of a network, interconnected by broad
topic (i.e., music theory) as well as by each contributor’s common debt to Allen as teacher and

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¹¹ The first eleven issues of *Music Theory Online* (dated Feb. 1993–Nov. 1994) were part of vol. “0.” (Allen was
one of the consulting editors beginning with vol. 0/1.) Vol. 1 debuted in Jan. 1995. Initially, one retrieved *MTO*
items by sending an e-mail message to a file server; retrieval through anonymous FTP (File Transfer Protocol) was
also available. Gopher retrieval was announced in vol. 0/7 (May 1994; see “MT0 Available Through the Harvard
FAS Gopher,” <mto.societymusictheory.org/issues/mto.94.0.7/mto.94.0.7.ann>). Allen’s contribution came in vol.
1/2 (Mar. 1995): “Tristan Redux: Comments on John Rothgeb’s Article on the Tristan Chord in *MTO* 1.1,”
<mto.societymusictheory.org/issues/mto.95.1.2/mto.95.1.2.forte.tlk>. This same issue marked the first time that
*MTO* items were accessible through a Web server (see “Communications,” <mto.societymusictheory.org/issues/mto
95.1.2/toc.1.2.html>), although the articles were still in plain text.

¹² The full citation is: Allen Forte, *The Compositional Matrix* (Baldwin, NY: Music Teachers National Associa-

¹³ The quoted words come from Forte, *The Compositional Matrix*, 85.
mentor; and the latter association would also represent the environment in which an author’s individual scholarly processes began and were developed.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{The Front Story}

Turning now to the content itself, it is common in Festschrift introductions for the editor to offer some words of orientation, some advice on how to navigate through the contributions. For example, in the preface to a Festschrift for musicologist Barry S. Brook, editor Allan W. Atlas observed that “[t]here are any number of ways to read a Festschrift: straight through from cover to cover (in either direction); in its entirety, but hopping about, whether with reason or at random; or, in the more miscellany-like examples, the two or three articles in which one is really interested.” He then went on to suggest that, for the book at hand, a profitable reading order would be to “follow the various themes or sub-themes that run through [it],” which he described in a fanciful theme-and-variation manner.\textsuperscript{15}

The last suggestion is appropriate here, too. One may group the present articles into various (unordered) sets through broad themes (which are further traceable to Allen’s own work): aspects of Schenkerian thought are explored by Berry, Cutler, Damschroder, Galand, Greer, and Yih; studies of post-tonal (though not necessarily atonal) music are offered by Boss, Brown, Ewell, Phillips, Rust, and Shaftel; issues of serialism are addressed by Bergman, Hamao, and Nolan; and various attributes of songs (of a wide stylistic range) are considered by Check, Graziano, Kowalke, Krebs, Latham, Spicer, and Wheaton. These groupings include all twenty-

\textsuperscript{14} More fancifully, a “matrix” in its mathematical sense (i.e., an array of elements) might be related very generally to the intertwined arrangement of a wreath or garland (i.e., an array of leaves, flowers, etc.). The relevance here is that “garland” is a word used figuratively for a collection or an anthology.

two articles, but through rather coarse criteria (with some articles capable of fitting more than one category). Another pathway through the articles could be charted by tracing the composers or theorists of primary focus; this would lead the reader from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries in an order like the following: Mozart (in Cutler), Schubert (in Damsgroder), Chopin (in Yih), Schumann (in Krebs and Wheaton), Schenker (in Berry), Schoenberg (in Boss and Hamao), Webern (in Ewell, Nolan, and Shaftel), Griffes (in Greer), Ullmann (in Bergman), Copland (in Phillips), Lutoslawski (in Rust), Desmond (in Check), and The Beatles (in Spicer). A few remaining articles focus equally on more than one composer, or else on a repertory: Beethoven and Brahms (in Galand), Schubert and Korngold (in Latham), Bartók, Stravinsky, and Webern (in Brown), American popular song of the 1920s (in Graziano), and American musical theatre of the 1940s–60s (in Kowalke).

Of course, there are many other “themes or sub-themes” that may be discerned to guide one’s reading. For example, one can sort the articles into eight sets, based on the following topics: (1) those that include historical surveys: Berry (on Schenker’s American reception), Hamao (on Schoenberg’s initial unveiling of his twelve-tone method), and Kowalke (on “Golden Age” American musicals); (2) those that examine types of compositional influence: Bergman and Shaftel (on Schoenberg’s influence on pupils Ullmann and Webern, respectively), and Nolan (on Webern’s discursive practices and the trope of “invented tradition”); (3) those that engage expressive meaning in various ways: Latham (on closure of musical and dramatic kinds in texted works); Krebs (on the expressive functions of rhythm and meter in Schumann’s Lieder); Rust (on Lutoslawski’s rhetorical/dramatic conception of form and temporality); and Spicer (on intertextuality in The Beatles); (4) those that address specific aspects of form: Cutler (on development sections), Galand (on rondos), and Graziano (on song bridges); (5) those that consider motivic/
harmonic parallelisms or elaborations: Boss (in Schoenberg), Greer (in Griffes), and Wheaton (in Schumann); (6) those that explore interesting chord types: Damschroder (on the subtonic chord), and Phillips (on a set-theoretic and genera-based study of quasi-tonal chords); (7) those that offer interval-based analyses that in some way foreground the semitone: Brown (on the interaction of interval classes 1 and 5, using his Dual Interval Space methodology), and Ewell (on the “hemitonicism” of Yuri Kholopov and Valentina Kholopova); and (8) those whose analyses relate in some way to performance: Check (on the jazz improvisations of Paul Desmond), and Yih (on how an understanding of “structural effects” can abet performance). (As before, some articles could fit more than one of these categories.)

Whatever pathway one takes (including “hopping about . . . at random”), the reader will find the full complement of articles to offer a wealth of scholarship. The twenty-two essays total around 230,000 words. The tributes add approximately 22,000 words; and Allen’s own essay offers around 6,500 more. Even without counting the register of publications and advisees and this preface, there are more than a quarter-million words to sate the music-theoretically inclined reader.

The Underlying Story

A half-century ago, a Festschrift bibliographer said of the genre that “[e]very successful Festschrift is a small academy.” Its spirit is expressed most concisely with the phrase “friends for a friend” (amici amico). There are two senses in which the word “academy” is appropriate to
the present Festschrift: the contributors constitute a society of scholars organized around the mentoring of Allen Forte, and through their essays they have provided a small athenaeum for the study of music-theoretical and -analytical ideas. These scholars are the “friends,” and Allen is the “friend” for whom they have rallied and to whom their contributions are offered.

Much more could be said along these lines, and indeed Festschrift introductions often include commentary on the honoree’s life and work—on those factors that prompted the Festschrift in the first place. But this collection already includes a set of reflections that tend toward the biographical, as well as an annotated inventory of Allen’s scholarly output. So let me eschew further particulars and instead end by summarizing the broader impact Allen has had on the discipline of music theory.18

Allen was fond of adding Germanisms to his course outlines and written comments (for example, labeling an updated class handout as the “Zweite, revidierte Ausgabe,” or writing “Warum?” next to a claim made in a paper or dissertation draft).19 In that spirit, allow me to note that the German term for one’s dissertation advisor is Doktorvater, which literally means “doctoral father,” or the “father of a doctorate.” Allen was the Doktorvater to each contributor to this collection; but more than that, he was also, in a figurative yet meaningful way, the “doctoral father” of North American music theory as it emerged in the final third of the twentieth century. His vision of the kind of study required for Yale’s Ph.D. in music theory became a model for other degree programs that followed, just as his vision of what “music theory” could be, as an

“amici amico” is not Swedish, as the quotation suggests, but instead Latin. The phrase has, however, been used in the titles of several Festschriften, including some published in Sweden.


19 I still have the schedule for “Music 901b: Tonal [i.e., Schenkerian] Analysis,” from Spring 1998, which bears the indication “Zweite, revidierte Ausgabe” (second, revised edition).
autonomous scholarly discipline, became a model for the field at large.\textsuperscript{20} In this respect, it is worth quoting the words of Joseph Straus, when he conferred the Society for Music Theory’s first-ever Life Memberships to Milton Babbitt and Allen Forte, in 1995:

If Milton Babbitt in some ways created us [i.e., the practitioners of contemporary North American music theory], then Allen Forte shaped and molded us. His early work on Schenkerian theory and pitch-class sets helped to define our central shared methodologies. His work in either of those areas would have been a substantial scholarly career for most of us, but Allen is inexhaustible, and he has continued to carve out new areas of research for himself and for us, in the motivic structure of late-nineteenth-century music, rhythmic theory, atonal voice leading, and, most recently, American popular song. Just as he led us in our early days, he thus continues to lead us as our field grows and expands. He is also, of course, one of the founders of this society and its first president.\textsuperscript{21}

Two years earlier, in the dedication of his \textit{Musical Form and Transformation}, David Lewin expressed the prior sentiments more concisely when he wrote: “for Milton, who showed me the world of music theory, and Allen, who showed me how to live there.”\textsuperscript{22}

We, the contributors, may have been “shaped and molded” by Allen in a more direct, personal manner than those who did not study with him; but all North American theorists of recent decades bear his imprint. He has—directly or indirectly—shown all of us “how to live” in the discipline. And for that, the contributors humbly offer him our scholarly and personal tributes.

\textsuperscript{20} Although this statement is axiomatic to all who know the history and evolution of North American music theory from the 1950s onward, I will also quote the editors of \textit{The Collected Essays of Milton Babbitt}, who add the following footnote to an essay that mentions Allen: he “is an American music theorist who has been central to the establishment of music theory as a discipline in the United States” (\textit{The Collected Essays of Milton Babbitt}, ed. Stephen Peles with Stephen Dembski, Andrew Mead, and Joseph N. Straus [Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2003], 457, n. 27).

\textsuperscript{21} Quoted from its published form in “SMT Life Members Named,” \textit{SMT Newsletter} 19/2 (August 1996), 3. The Life Memberships were awarded in the November 1995 meeting in New York.

\textsuperscript{22} David Lewin, \textit{Musical Form and Transformation: Four Analytic Essays} (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1993), [v].
APPENDIX

COMPLETE CONTENT OF A MUSIC-THEORETICAL MATRIX: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF ALLEN FORTE

NB: Abstracts and author bios appear at the end of each article.

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**List of Contributors by FA (Forte Advisee) Number and Ph.D. Date**

- Graziano, John (FA9, 1975)
- Kowalke, Kim H. (FA13, 1977)
- Phillips, Edward R. (FA17, 1978)
- Krebs, Harald (FA21, 1980)
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- Greer, Taylor A. (FA39, 1986)
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- Galand, Joel (FA46, 1990)
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- Berry, David Carson (FA72, 2002)
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This essay offers the editor’s commentary on *A Music-Theoretical Matrix: Essays in Honor of Allen Forte*, a Festschrift serialized in five installments (2009–2014) in the online music-theory journal *Gamut*. The Festschrift consists of twenty-two articles by Forte’s former doctoral advisees, and three special features: a previously unpublished article by Forte on Gershwin
songs, a collection of tributes and reminiscences from forty-two of his former advisees, and an annotated register of his publications and advisees. (The complete content of the Festschrift is given in an Appendix.) The essay provides general information about the Festschrift: how it originated, how it came to take its serialized form and title, and points of orientation for the reader with respect to its content. An epilogue offers a brief summation of the significance of the honoree, to both the contributors and the field at large.

This article is part of a special, serialized feature: A Music-Theoretical Matrix: Essays in Honor of Allen Forte (Part V).

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