

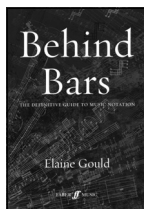
devoted to issues of idealization, to ‘strategies ... used to reconcile her unconventional life choices as an Egyptian woman with cultural expectations and perceptions of gender and sexuality’ (p. 15), and to the processes that lead to the inclusion of the songs of Umm Kulthum in the repertoire of the Arab cultural heritage (*al-Turath*). For the analysis of this last aspect Lohman considers ‘sonic memorialization achieved through radio programming, cover songs and remixes’ (p. 15) as well as physical memorials such as the Umm Kulthum museum in Cairo and ‘Umm Kulthum Cafes’ in Arab and Western cities.

Laura Lohman’s *Umm Kulthum. Artistic Agency and the Shaping of an Arab Legend, 1967-2007* is a well-written, well-researched, and well-documented account of an interesting and highly relevant topic. It locates itself in a productive field between music history, popular music studies, music anthropology, and area studies and utilizes skillfully the research potentials thus activated. The book offers a very welcome glimpse into the huge bulk of written sources to Umm Kulthum’s life and afterlife; it interrogates wisely from the perspective of recent research in stardom and in the constructed nature of star images, and still it bears the marks of respect for the particular cultural context. Obviously this book fills in a lacuna in the Western literature on Umm Kulthum and represents – as I read it – a much needed supplement to Virginia Danielsen’s great book, *The Voice of Egypt. Umm Kulthum, Arabic song, and Egyptian Society in the Twentieth Century* (1997).

My reservations are few and pertain primarily to the interpretative practice. It is not evident to me that Lohman’s interpretation of Umm Kulthum’s self-enactment in her later years as deliberate acts to control her posthumous reception really contributes to our understanding of ‘artistic agency’ in a deeper sense including the agencies of the artistic forms and practices in question. And on a broader level I miss a style of writing that invites to partaking in the interpretative process. Even if the author is quoting a great number of her source texts, her book leaves the impression of being basically ‘monologic’. The quotations are always strategic and fully covered by the interpretation. The voice of the book is the voice of the author, as far as no other voices with the right to contradict are heard. Maybe it is a matter of style, maybe it is a matter of economical writing? But it is as if the author considers her source materials as transparent for the (wished for) meanings. Even when she admits to the fluidity of their significance (p. 55), she does not take the consequence and quotes to an extent that enables the reader to look over her shoulder and take part in the precarious interpretations. Thus a dialogical use of this book is only possible for readers with access to the original Arabic sources.

Criticism of this kind, however, could be directed against a great part of our academic writing. Here it is triggered by desire to get even closer to the subject of a well-done and deserving scholarly work. The book is warmly recommended for research and study.

Søren Møller Sørensen



Elaine Gould
Behind Bars. The Definitive Guide to Music Notation
 London: Faber Music, 2011
 xviii + 676 pp., illus.
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 GBP 65 (hardback), students GBP 45

With the publication of *Behind Bars* the scanty literature on music notation and music processing has become enriched with what is now the most comprehensive presentation on

this subject to date – weighing in at no less than 676 pages. Just 25–30 years ago, such a book would only be able to boast of a very small potential readership, supposedly to be found among members of two now completely extinct professions, namely, the music-engraver's and music-copyist's trades. But times have changed. Today, the production of print-ready music notation has come to be part and parcel of the composer's, the arranger's, and the music scholar's work. We are living in a time of transition, where the time-honoured traditions of craftsmanship in the music-engraver's and music-copyist's trades have vanished at an alarming pace without being replaced by new standards for computer-generated music notation or music processing that live up to the refined aesthetics of the past. This does not mean to say that our day's music software programs are inferior. On the contrary – when they are used by adept hands, the modern music software programs deliver altogether excellent results – and indeed, in many instances, they even surpass the standard set by earlier times' engraved notes. The problem is merely that it requires a great deal of professional expertise to operate a music software program in such a way that the finished product maintains a professional standard. Against this backdrop, *Behind Bars* is a highly relevant publication that will undoubtedly satisfy an urgent need in modern music life.

Music notation is not an entirely unambiguous or exact discipline. Traditional Western music notation builds upon a series of overall conventions around which there is essentially a consensus but you need not delve very far down into notation's manifold nooks and crannies before the sense of general agreement breaks off and becomes superseded by a profusion of different traditions that can be nationally/regionally conditioned or can be associated with the individual music publishers' 'house style'. For this reason, it has been anything but an easy task that Elaine Gould has set her sights on, in compiling this *The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*, as the book's ambitious subordinate title resounds.

Literature on the notation of music up to the present day has focused primarily on note-writing, note-engraving, and the specific notation-related factors that are related to the individual instruments. It is the latter topic that gives rise, moreover, to a gray area situated between instrumentation textbooks and the literature on notation. Finally, there are the often bulky manuals for music software programs, which constitute a whole new genre within the field of literature on notation. The most all-inclusive presentation so far has been Gardner Read's comprehensive *Music Notation. A Manual of Modern Practice* (Crescendo Publishing Co., 1969), which has more or less functioned as the standard reference work up until the present day.

Gould has organized her material in a way that calls to mind Read's *Music Notation*, aside from the fact that Gould has wisely refrained from conducting an historical overview of Western music notation's development from Gregorian chant to the present time. Such a synopsis naturally runs the risk of being cursory and superficial and would also fall outside this book's genuine purpose. Similarly, everything concerning manuscript music has been left out of the discussion here; unfortunately, we are presumably going to have to face up to the fact that in the future, the art of writing music by hand – in much the manner as is the case with ordinary handwriting – is bound to be to a discipline that will be cultivated only by very few specialists. What is equally remarkable is that computer music-software programs are not mentioned either, not even by a single word – supposedly in an attempt to make the book as timeless as possible, seeing especially that music-software programs are changing and developing so very rapidly in these years, while there is a different kind of stability that has become the order of the day within notational conventions. This is, at one and the same time, the book's weakness and strength. *Behind Bars* is accordingly, in its entire approach to the topic, the diametrical opposite of a book like Steven Powell's *Music Engraving Today: The*

Art and Practice of Digital Typesetting, which takes its mark in the music-software programs, *Sibelius* and *Finale*, and which, through a comparison of these two programs' facilities, points out how modern music processing can be carried into effect.

Behind Bars is apportioned into three main parts. First, there is an opening section that touches upon general notational conventions (General Conventions). This is followed by a sequence of chapters that treat of the specific notation for the individual instrument groups (Idiomatic Notation). Finally, in the third part, matters of score layout and part preparation are addressed, as well as various aspects related to newer music that do not readily lend themselves to being incorporated into the book's earlier chapters (Layout and Presentation).

Taken as a whole, *Behind Bars* is very well arranged, easy to grasp and easy to work with. Every one of the book's twenty chapters is introduced with an extremely user-friendly table of contents related to the current chapter. Moreover, the running text is supplied with useful cross-references so that the reader can easily find his/her way around in what could otherwise prove to be a very complex world of concepts. It must also be mentioned that this book's own typography and layout as well as the seemingly countless music examples have been executed in an exemplary way.

In her brilliant introduction, Gould takes up a stance as an advocate for the altogether sensible position that one ought to strive as far as possible to follow the prevailing practice rather than try to invent novel notation forms. We should therefore constantly envision ourselves in the musician's chair: for the musician, what is crucial is to be able to recognize – without delay – a music image. Every renewal – no matter how sensible it might seem to be – will tend to disturb the musician's reading of the music. Gould makes no secret of the fact that her exposition is subjective. She openly concedes that she has been influenced by the typographic principles that can be traced back to the music publishers Bärenreiter's and Henle's publications.

The individual notational problems are presented in an easily understandable and clear language, as the author perseveringly reviews various options in a sober-minded fashion. At the same time, she does not shy away from disclosing her own subjective preferences. Several sections end with the sentence, 'Some editions use ...'; here, the author is discreetly pointing out that even though these solutions are absolutely legitimate, the author herself does not recommend them.

The last chapters on the layout and the arrangement of the score and parts are nothing short of outstanding. It is most especially in these chapters that the book makes a contribution with mostly new material. Here, for the very first time, one reads a coherent presentation of one of music typography's most complicated areas, information that has hitherto belonged to the music publishing houses' professional experts but which has been available to only a limited extent in the specialized literature. In the chapter, 'Part Preparation', more than twelve pages are devoted to the sole topic of providing and notating cues. Here, all conceivable situations are examined.

The book's subordinate title, *The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*, is pretentious and bound to give rise to a number of comments: first, it has to be made clear that the notion of 'definitive' is necessarily limited, in the chronological sense, to little more than the past 200 years and, in the geographical sense, to the notation of music from the Western cultural sphere. The notation of music composed prior to Viennese Classicism is, generally speaking, not even touched upon. For example, it is not possible to find any guidance in the practice concerning the notation of figured bass in music from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not to mention in the notation forms that are associated with medieval and Renaissance

music. It is, perhaps, easy enough to understand why the author has resisted from treating of the older music's notation – that is to say, music from before c.1600: an adequate treatment of this complex topic could easily swell up to a self-contained treatise, on a par with Willi Apel's *The Notation of Polyphonic Music 900–1600*, but a few pages about figured bass notation would certainly not have been out of place here.

If it can be said that the book has a chronological limitation – looking backwards – to around 1780–1800, then the other end of the time scale is, naturally, limited to 2011. This seemingly self-evident fact deserves attention, especially because the author devotes no small portion of the book to the newer music's notation forms which, in contrast to the traditional notation, have – for the most part – still not established themselves as fixed notational conventions. Therefore the book's treatment of newer notation forms might quickly prove to have become obsolete. One might ask whether or not the new music's notation practice deserves – in the same manner as appears to be the case with the older music – to be treated in a separate publication. In all fairness, it must be mentioned that the book's author is an expert in the notation of newer and contemporary music.

The book's closing bibliography – a single page headed 'Further Reading' – is, 'highly selective' – twelve titles all in all (only English-language sources are listed here), seven of which have to do with the proper topic of music engraving and notation. Among these seven titles we do not find some of the most recommendable books on music notation: Read's previously mentioned *Music Notation. A Manual of Modern Practice* (1969); Albert C. Vinci's succinct but nonetheless excellent *Fundamentals of Traditional Musical Notation* (The Kent State University Press, 1985; published in German as *Die Notenschrift. Grundlagen der traditionellen Musiknotation*, Bärenreiter, 1988); and Herbert Chlapik's *Die Praxis des Notenschriftstellers* (Doblinger, 1987). Can it be that the publishing house has pressured the author to omit those titles that, within the compass of the very scanty literature on the topic, comprise the few which, in certain areas, at least, could be thought to be competing with *Behind Bars*? Should the reader feel inspired to become better acquainted with musical notation, there is, on the Danish Centre for Music Publication's website, a bibliography related specifically to the publishing of music, with a special section related to note-setting and notation: www.kb.dk/da/kb/nb/mta/dcm/udgivelser/bibliografi.html

Behind Bars is an altogether splendid and highly recommendable book. Nevertheless, it cannot be overlooked that this book, to a great degree, reflects a specifically Anglo-Saxon practice. The book is evidently targeted at the English readership, while users from other parts of the world are left in the lurch. And that is a shame. With a few strategic expansions, it would have been possible for this book to address itself to a much wider audience. For example, a summary of instrument names, tempo indications, expression marks and performance-technique instructions and their abbreviations in English, German, French, and Italian would have been very useful. On the whole, the book ought to have been making a running examination of the prevalent terminology in these main languages that are customarily used in the sphere of music composition and performance. Another area that the author has neglected to address is – as has already been mentioned – the practice of figured bass notation. With the inclusion of the expansions suggested here, the next edition of the book could bear the subordinate title, *European Music Notation from ca. 1600 to Present Time*.

Behind Bars might very well turn out to be the new standard reference work within the field of music notation – and hopefully the book will be successful in contributing to raising the standard within the countless typographically substandard music notation publications that are flourishing these years – especially on the Internet.

Niels Bo Foltmann