SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

CAN MUSIC REFLECT GAYNESS?

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MUHI 395: CAPSTONE FOR MUSIC MAJORS

CWRU DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

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APRIL 28, 2017

The program notes to a recent Cleveland Orchestra concert of all-American music contain a jarring opinion about the effect of identity on the composition of music:

> This weekend's concerts feature three different works, all written by American composers. Two of those composers are household names in musical Americana. Those two were men. The third composer is a newer voice, and a woman. Not that gender has any necessary role in what a writer's music may sound like. Or hair color. Or sexuality (Bernstein and Copland were gay). Or . . .?[1]

Eric Sellen, the author of this statement, ignores an entire field of research, one that is dedicated to studying the intersections of musical composition and personal identity. Queer musicology in particular addresses gender and sexuality. While there is no clear answer as to whether composers can intentionally or subconsciously write their identity into music, there are many scholars who explore these connections.

The question to be explored in this document is simple yet complex: can music reflect gayness? Famous composers such as Tchaikovsky, Poulenc, and Copland were gay,[2] but does that mean they wrote their music in a way that consciously reflected their sexual orientation? Significant musicological research about gay composers and theoretical analysis of their music attempts to answer this question. Queer musicology explores the intersections between musical composition, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Philip Brett, an English musicologist, became a pioneer in this field when he published an essay in 1977 regarding Britten's music and sexuality.[3] In almost thirty years of subsequent work, he used his own personal experiences as a gay man to interpret the plots of several operas and interpret other compositions. The subfield of theoretical analysis began with a paper presented by Dr. Susan

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[1] Eric Sellen "American Sounds: Inspiration, Virtuosity, Imagination, and Grandeur," concert program, *All American: Copland and* Bernstein (Cleveland: The Cleveland Orchestra, March 2-4, 2017), 63.

[2] Thomas L. Riis and Patricia J. Smith, in *The Queer Encyclopedia of Music, Dance, and Musical Theater* (Berkeley: Cleis Press, 2004). Provide LGBTQ profiles.

[3] Philip Brett, *Music and Sexuality in Britten,* ed. George E. Haggerty (University of California Press, 2006). See essay "Britten and Grimes," 11-33.

McClary at the American Musicological Society national meeting in 1990.[4] An essay published by Maynard Solomon claiming that Schubert was a gay man[5] and the work of Philip Brett inspired her own adventurous research.[6] McClary's paper shocked the musicological community and ushered in the "new musicology" with an analysis that turned traditional scholarship to radically new ends in identifying "gayness" in Schubert's music.

Dialogue regarding the musicological research of Brett and McClary continues, but conversations often fail to include the opinions of living gay composers. Their ideas are key to understanding the current trends of identity within composition. Two contemporary American composers, Robert Maggio and Gary Schocker, allowed me to conduct interviews with each of them last October.[7] In our conversations, they discussed their work and offered their own thoughts about how music can or cannot reflect the sexual orientation of a modern composer. These conversations provide a critical component in understanding their music through a queer musicological lens. Collecting opinions from other living gay composers in this manner would allow scholars to base research on fact rather than assumption in the future.

Several authors have written about a gay aesthetic within music performance. Brett wrote about this phenomenon from his background as a trained classical singer, not just as a musicologist. He analyzed Schubert's Grand Duo, a piano duet, and suggested that the body can be engaged in producing music both physically and emotionally.[8] Pianist Mark Mitchell authored

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[4] Susan McClary, "Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert's Music," in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology,* ed. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas (New York: Routledge, 1994), 205-234.
[5] Maynard Solomon, "Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini," *19th-Century Music* 12 (1989): 193-206. Claims that Schubert was gay.
[6] Brett, *Music and Sexuality*, 2.
[7] Robert Maggio, Interview with the author, October 19, 2016 and Gary Schocker, Interview with the author, October 19, 2016.
[8] Philip Brett, "Piano Four-Hands: Schubert and the Performance of Gay Male Desire," *19th-Century Music* 21 (1997): 149–176.

a book in which he discusses a similar concept.[9] He states that gay virtuoso players often choose to play certain music or use body language that looks flamboyant in order to mark their performances as different from the heterosexual norm. As a gay flute player, I have my own ideas about how to make my sexual orientation apparent through musical performance. The aesthetic may also include elements of costuming and staging as well as the choice of music and body language ideas expressed by Mitchell and Brett.

By discussing the research of several musicologists, the opinions of two living composers, and the performance choices of gay musicians, this Capstone document represents various opinions regarding the ability of music to reflect sexual orientation. The two interviews contribute to an oral history of gay composers whose ideas are imperative to the development of queer musicology. The conversations about identity in music have only just begun. In a subfield of musicology that is less than half a century old, the question of whether music can or cannot reflect gayness will continue to evolve as more LGBTQ musicians step into the limelight.

The study of sexuality and gender formally entered the field of musicology in 1977 through the pioneering efforts of Philip Brett.[10] Traditional analytical methods of music and cultural marginalization of the LGBTQ community rendered the topic taboo before this time, yet these setbacks were not enough to keep a gay English gentleman from protesting injustices and sharing his work in gay music criticism. Brett's collaborations with other musicologists such as Susan McClary and Elizabeth Wood inspired a generation of scholars to reflect on identity as a viable influence that affects musical composition. He founded the Gay and Lesbian Study Group

[9] Mark Lindsey Mitchell, *Virtuosi: A Defense and a (Sometimes Erotic) Celebration of Great Pianists* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).
[10] Brett, *Music and Sexuality*. See essay "Britten and Grimes," 11-33.

within the American Musicological Society, which now bestows the Phillip Brett Award to honor exceptional work within queer musicology each year.[11]

Brett's most important research pertained to the life and work of Benjamin Britten, a gay British composer of the twentieth century. *Music and Sexuality in Britten* is a collection of Brett's essays on Britten. The book was compiled by George Haggerty, Brett's life partner and colleague, after the unfortunate loss of Brett to cancer. Haggerty stated that Brett always wanted to write a "Britten Book" that would bring together all of his ideas about the composer and his sexuality.[12] A certain degree of repetition exists amongst the essays because Haggerty included each one in its entirety. Regardless, the essays are a groundbreaking body of work that addresses the question of sexuality within Britten's music.

An essay entitled "Britten and Grimes" is Brett's first official contribution to gay music criticism. Within it, he uses his own experiences as a gay man to suggest that Peter Grimes, the protagonist of the opera *Peter Grimes*, is a symbolic reflection of Britten's social experiences with oppression as a gay man himself. The tragedy of the plot overwhelmingly revolves around Grimes's alienation and inability to fit into society, just as queer people have been subjected to discrimination for centuries. Similar plot parallels regarding Britten's sexuality exist in many of his other operas as well, including *The Turn of the Screw, Billy Budd,* and *Death in Venice.*[13] According to Brett, Britten deals with male relationships in these libretti even more explicitly than in *Peter Grimes*. He asserts that it is through an internalized sense of oppressed identity that Britten purposefully crafted the homosexual undertones of his operas.

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[11] Brett, *Music and Sexuality,* 2-4.
[12] Ibid., xi.
[13] Ibid., 21-26.

Brett wrote two essays that appear in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology,* a book that he edited with Elizabeth Wood and Gary C. Thomas in 1994.[14] "Eros and Orientalism in Britten's Operas" looks again at the stigma of homosexual male relationships through a Western cultural lens. With new ideas to express in "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet," he examines the homophobic attitudes that marginalize men, queer or not, who are attracted to music as a means of self-expression. He exposes the danger of allowing dominant culture to erase the queer identity of composers. According to Brett, the hyper-masculine German art form of classical music is the reason Schubert still remains "closeted" in the work of many musicologists. Accepting gay identity in music is difficult because Western musical tradition adheres to a strict methodology of formal analysis. External influences such as sexual orientation complicate this approach.

Brett stood firmly against the systemic marginalization of queer identities within Western culture. He represented a school of musicologists who will not allow these identities to be erased. While Brett wrote extensively about the life and work of Benjamin Britten, he never analyzed Britten's music through traditional analytical methods. Still, his ideas pertaining to Britten's libretti were a foundation to queer musicology that shaped the development of the subfield.

Alongside Brett's gay criticism of musical composers through personal experiences and cultural norms stood an analytical subfield with an even deeper approach. Susan McClary presented a paper titled "Constructions of Subjectivity in Franz Schubert's Music"[15] at the American Musicological Society national meeting in 1990 and sparked a debate about analyzing the form and theory of music for traces of a composer's sexuality. A year before, Maynard

[14] See particularly Brett's essays "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet" and "Eros and Orientalism in Britten's Operas," 9-26 and 235-256.
[15] McClary, "Constructions of Subjectivity."

Solomon published essays concerning Schubert's participation in gay subculture while living in early nineteenth-century Vienna.[16] McClary felt influenced by Solomon's work and turned to Schubert's Unfinished Symphony for her groundbreaking research. Her essay addresses the sexual orientation of Schubert alongside theoretical analysis of the music to create a convincing argument that the composer was gay and that his gayness was reflected in his style of composition. The incorporation of formal analysis in her essay stands out among the work of other queer musicologists.

McClary insists that it may be possible to notice intentional ways in which Schubert made his "difference" apparent through composition. To begin, McClary pays close attention to the cultural context and compositional norms of early nineteenth-century Vienna. Around Schubert's time, "the self" became a prominent fixture in the arts. Masculinity was not a concrete identity in Western culture. Influenced by the growing emphasis on the self in philosophy and aesthetics, some composers created their own constructions of gender and sexuality as a deliberate dimension of their work. This practice defied a two-hundred-year-old precedence of self-containment that saw music as concerning only itself. Composers like Schubert broke this boundary and expressed their identities, either intentionally or subliminally, through music.[17]

Sonata form is an important compositional technique within the exploration of the self. In this form, the opening subject passes through episodes of destabilized identity and ultimately arrives at the original key and theme before the end of the movement. For composers like Beethoven, the subject hammers away throughout the form and resists secondary themes for the sake of its own development. In his *Eroica,* he created a narrative in which the prevailing, main

[16] "Franz Schubert" (see footnote 5 above).
[17] McClary, "Constructions."

theme can be considered "masculine" and all secondary themes "feminine." Consequently, this heroic model established a standard for what masculine subjectivity sounds like in classical music. Many composers of the past and present aimed to emulate this model and consequently reinforced its cultural validity.[18]

McClary analyzes the second movement of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony to support her claim that Schubert defied the standard masculine constructions of subjectivity. He approached sonata form with a different method. The subject does more than seek self-fulfillment in the standard, Beethovian model of dominant resolving to tonic in a series of dramatic climaxes; it explores multiple subthemes and keys as a means for deflection and expression. The first statement of the subject alerts the listener to this exploration. The key center switches from E major through C# minor, G major, E minor, and then back to E major without warning. This flexible sense of self does not provoke anxiety like the quest for self-fulfillment in Beethoven's *Eroica*. Instead, it encourages even more transformations. The movement abandons its key identity and floats from D major to G major to C major. In Beethoven's music, according to McClary, this would be considered vulnerable. In Schubert's symphony, it is enjoyable and expressive.[19]

Perhaps the most defiant construction of subjectivity within sonata form is Schubert's fusion of the primary and secondary themes. Schubert composed a second theme that is more rigid than the first, similar to the resistant primary theme of Beethoven's symphony. The difference is that Schubert's secondary theme reaches a release point and emulates the ideas of the first theme. Eventually, the themes fuse into one idea to close the movement. The synthesis of these two themes is forbidden in the Beethovenian standard yet celebrated and embraced in

[18] Ibid., 213.
[19] Ibid., 215.

Schubert's compositional style. The lack of a prevailing primary theme marks Schubert's symphony as "feminine" in comparison to the "masculine" standard of Beethoven's *Eroica*. Scholars like McClary embraced Schubert's style because it is a construction of male subjectivity that defies the heterosexual norm. The characteristics expressed in Schubert's symphony align with notions of gender that are homoerotic. Gay men actively construct an alternative version of the masculine self. Schubert rejected a rigid, heroic narrative and evoked an image of pleasure and openness in his symphony. His sexuality could be the very reason that he chose to write his music differently. If Schubert was gay, his own experiences involving self, intimacy, and social disapproval could have influenced the atypical constructions of masculine subjectivity in his Unfinished Symphony.[20]

McClary's initial presentation of her research in 1990 received a heated backlash. Audience members at the American Musicological Society meetings of 1991 issued statements to "defend" Schubert's reputation as a heterosexual composer. Many musicologists believed that homosexuality would taint rather than strengthen Schubert's status as a great European artist.[21] Similar sentiments surfaced during McClary's presentation at the Schubertiade festival of 1992. *The New York Times* published three adverse reactions to the Schubertiade presentation without the opportunity for McClary or her supporters to issue responses. A musicologist by the name of Bernard Holland wrote one of the three articles, drawing parallels between the Schubert analysis and the nursery rhyme, "Tea for Two."[22] His article takes the form of a disrespectful write-off. He acknowledges Maynard Solomon's theory about Schubert's sexuality as an influence on Susan McClary's research and then belittles the thinking of both scholars. With a satirical tone, Holland conflates McClary's analytical process and insists that according to these investigations,

[20] Ibid., 214.
[21] Ibid., 206.
[22] Bernard Holland, "Dr. Freud, Can Tea Really Just Be Tea?" in *New York Times,* February 17, 1992.

"all tonal music, written by no matter whom, may be by nature homosexual." In a similar fashion, he suggests that celibacy may be analyzed in all atonal music because it is a "school of composition in which nothing attracts anything."[23]

Another musicologist named Edward Rothstein wrote the other two dissenting articles. Unlike Holland's satirical approach, Rothstein makes a more constructive argument against McClary's research by proposing technical flaws within it. He asserts that McClary does not provide a "new harmonic analysis" of the Unfinished Symphony but rather "metaphors, most of which were deliberate attempts to frame the work in a contemporary fashion."[24] Rothstein agrees that the effect of sexual orientation on composition is "one of the great unexplored aesthetic issues," but that danger lies within imposing contemporary, political notions on a different era of music. The challenge for musicologists should be to find the most resonant analyses of music, not the most limited. Rothstein identifies old-fashioned formalist criticism as the most resonant option for analysis, because McClary's new methods will always see the patriarchy or homosexuality in a given piece of music and distort its true meaning.[25] The ideas that McClary presents are too hypothetical for Rothstein, given that we know little about how homosexuality looked in nineteenth-century Vienna. While he believes that music must contain elements of its origins, he cannot justify drawing conclusions through a contemporary lens.

Despite the harsh criticism, other musicological research related to gender surfaced after McClary's analysis of Schubert. Susannah Clark, a Schubert enthusiast, used the same sort of cultural lens to evaluate the composer's compositional output for implicit elements of sexuality. Her book, *Analyzing Schubert*, reaffirms McClary's initial research on the composer and

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[23] Ibid.
[24] Edward Rothstein, "Was Schubert Gay? If He Was, So What? Debate Turns Testy" in *New York Times*, February 4, 1992.
[25] Rothstein, "And If You Play 'Bolero' Backward. . ." in *New York Times*, February 16, 1992.

questions other curious subjective constructions in Schubert's music.[26] McClary herself dared to go further with a sexual interpretation of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony. Her essay, "Sexual Politics in Classical Music," identifies an "oppressively patriarchal backdrop" that marks the eventual defeat of a hypersensitive primary theme in the symphony. She holistically describes the work as "a composition by a man who was tormented by his situation within his homophobic society," thus a symbol of his struggle.[27]

Following on the musicological work done by Brett and McClary, Rick Noyce's dissertation treats the role of sexual orientation on the social network and music of the openly gay American composers, Aaron Copland and Virgil Thompson.[28] He identifies Copland, Thomson, and several other composers in New York City as a gay community of musicians who acknowledged, honored, and supported one another's homosexuality. Together, they created a form of expression that was identifiably American and possibly reflective of sexual orientation. While Noyce does not attempt a cultural analysis like McClary or Clark, he does highlight similar compositional techniques as used by Copland and Thomson in their flute music to support the claim that sexual preference can impact a musical style.

Conversations with gay composers about their music can provide insight into how their music relates to sexual orientation. Just as there is merit in interpreting the male relationships of Britten's operas as representative of his sexuality or in analyzing the subjective constructions in Schubert's music to show that he was intentionally separating himself from a cultural standard, there is importance in soliciting the opinions of gay, living composers. In order to further explore the question of whether or not music can reflect gayness, I interviewed Robert Maggio and Gary

[26] Suzannah Clark, *Analyzing Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[27] McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).
[28] "The American Homophilic School of Composition" (DMA diss., University of Nevada, 2011).

Schocker, two American composers. Each composer offered his own reflections on the role of sexuality in his work.

I intentionally organized these interviews to progress from general information to specific ideas about composition and identity. I first asked each composer to talk about their experiences in the music industry, compositional or otherwise, and to explain how those events led to an official career in composition. Then, I posed more detailed questions regarding sexuality and music. I asked each composer if the experiences of coming out, being gay, and having relationships with other men affected their interest in compositional subjects, sounds, or tastes. I ended my interviews with questions about McClary's analysis of music with sexual orientation in mind, whether or not music should be used as a tool for advocacy, and the value of a composer's intentions versus the audience's interpretation of a piece of music. Although the interviews took different paths, each composer was enthusiastic to share his opinion and contribute to the research.

Robert Maggio actively pursues opportunities to write music for purposes of LGBTQ advocacy and to incorporate his own life experiences regarding sexuality into his compositions.[29] He attests that his identity is relevant to every composition that he creates because his experiences as a gay man define his personality and being. Maggio has written numerous pieces tied to queer culture, including a forty-minute piece called *Quilt Panels* commissioned by the Lesbian and Gay Chorus of D.C. in conjunction with the Different Drummers Band. This piece recounts the story of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, a piece of community folk art that celebrates the lives of people who have died of AIDS related causes. Maggio personally worked as a volunteer for Action AIDS in Philadelphia and knows of several people in the LGBTQ community who died of the disease, so his participation in such a commission takes on personal and political

[29] Robert Maggio, Interview with the author, October 19, 2016.

meaning. To him, music is a language that is meant to tell stories. Whether or not the composer's intention is realized, he wants his music to provide an experience that transcends everyday life.

When asked about his response to Susan McClary's work, Maggio offered an example of a class that he taught at West Chester University involving the queer analysis of music videos. His students viewed work by artists such as Madonna, Queen, and k.d. lang with the goal of isolating masculine and feminine attributes within the content of the videos. The stereotypical association that men are "masculine" and women are "feminine" did not hold true for many of the videos examined in the class. Maggio suggests that some of these differences stem from the sexual orientations and gender identities of the artists. In his experience, analyzing a music video for elements of sexuality is generally easier than analyzing music alone because costumes and scenery often contain symbolism. He does not say that theoretical analysis of music for sexual orientation is impossible, but the evidence may be less concrete than what a music video can provide.

Gary Schocker explains that his sexuality takes a more passive role in his music-making.[30] He has not always been openly gay and has taken time to come out to family, friends, and professional colleagues. He says that his sexuality is an important part of him that should not be suppressed, but he does not focus on it intently in his work. To him, his sexuality is separate from his personality. Realizing his sexual identity was a gradual process, one unrelated to his musical sensitivity and tastes. He rarely uses music as an opportunity to make a political statement. The only LGBTQ related composition in his output is a piece called *In Memoriam*, written in 1982 for a friend who died during the AIDS epidemic. He supports gay organizations privately and prefers not to engage in public demonstrations of gay culture such as gay pride parades or festivals. This privacy might also contribute to the fact that he does not actively seek

[30] Gary Schocker, Interview with the author, October, 2016.

commissions or associate himself with LGBTQ music organizations. He takes the middle ground within the musicological discourse of sexuality in music. Schocker assumes that gay composers will unconsciously include their internal struggles with self-identity or acceptance in their music, but this is not an excuse to reduce composers to their sexuality when analyzing their work.

Both composers expressed the belief that queer analysis can sometimes have a reductive effect on music. This stems from the "masculine" and "feminine" aesthetic approach articulated by Maggio when discussing how his class handles the task of analyzing music videos. McClary employs the use of this binary system to stage her argument about Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. Schocker was particularly hesitant about adopting this system as a proper means for queer analysis because it implies that gay music will always be feminine. It reinforces the stereotypes that homosexual men are feminine and heterosexual men are masculine when this is often not the case. To exemplify the effect of this system, Schocker suggested that Cecile Chaminade's *Concertino for flute and orchestra* could be analyzed as the "gayest flute piece of all time" with its feminine features, but there is no evidence that Chaminade herself was gay.

According to Schocker, reducing composers to their sexuality is a possible danger in queer musicology, but it can be avoided by characterizing subjects on a sliding scale rather than by using a strict dichotomy. The divisiveness between masculinity and femininity is not as severe of an issue as it was when queer musicology began. Societal constructions of gender and sexuality are much more fluid now than in decades before, and this fluidity allows detailed character analyses of music without the negative repercussions. Scholars can avoid reduction of their subjects by using gender characteristics regardless of the stereotypes previously assigned to men and women in our society. Coupled with primary-source information from queer composers,

the characterization of sexuality could be a useful replacement for the old binary system of analysis.

While my intent was not to place these two composers into opposing camps, it was beneficial to hear their different viewpoints regarding the analysis of music in regard to sexual orientation. As reported, Maggio sees no issue with interpreting a piece of music for a reflection of the composer's identity, especially one that is not already programmatic. The analysis stands separate from the composer's intentions. Therefore, queer interpretation of music is valid. Schocker guards against the idea of allowing audiences and musicologists to dissect a piece of music with the intention of reading sexuality into it. He maintains that "music is larger than sex" in that it should stand without scholarly impositions of sexuality or gender. This opinion is similar to traditional approaches to musical analysis.

While musicologists and composers discuss the role of sexual orientation in the construction of music, there are musicians who believe that gayness can also exist within the art of performance. This theory empowers the professional performer with as much authorship as scholars and composers. Few musicians have written about the manifestation of a gay aesthetic in musical performance, so there is a need to think critically about the ways in which music can be used as a means of queer self-expression.

Brett published an essay about Schubert's Grand Duo, a piano duet, in the aftermath of McClary's controversial theory about the Unfinished Symphony. The title of his essay, "Piano Four-Hand: Schubert and the Performance of Gay Male Desire,"[31] leaves little to the imagination. Brett authored this paper from the standpoint of a performer in order to render a homoerotic reading of a piece that supports a reflection of Schubert's supposed sexuality and the

[31] In *19th-Century Music* 21 (1997): 149–176.

ability to perform the music in a way that highlights the composer's queerness. To Brett, Schubert's piano music is essentially domestic, a trait which links his compositions for the home to an exploration of sexuality within his own effeminate masculinity. After all, Schubert wrote his piano music in the academic company of other men. He was actively involved in a circle of male friends and composers, and he eventually lived with a patron named Johann Mayrhofer. As Brett suggests, "the best-kept secret of the age of sensibility has been the love that men of feeling share."[32] A four-hand piano duet could be a clever way of allowing two "men of feeling" to make sensual music together while still passing as nothing but virtuosic performers on stage or in the home.

From 1992 to 1994, Brett played duos with another gay man. He states that this partnership became a marriage of two people, an aspect of duo performance that is undeniably intimate. He recounts the ability to "lovingly emphasize" key gestures of the Grand Duo with his partner and how, in general, the bodies of the two performers must be fully engaged in order to produce the desired sound. This example of two gay men who worked together to deliver a passionate performance of the piano duet reveals the erotic intentions behind Schubert's composition. Otherwise, there are times when the approach or crossing of hands may be embarrassing for performers who dare not be intimate.[33] In Brett's case, having the same sexual orientation as his partner allowed the men to deliver a "gay performance" that highlighted Schubert's supposed desire for same-sex interaction. This may also apply in general to music of any gay composer played by a gay musician.

[32] Ibid., 153-156.
[33] Ibid., 157.

In a similar manner, pianist Mark Mitchell offers his ideas regarding a way to explore the presence or absence of gay elements in music, particularly in virtuoso piano performance.[34] Mitchell claims that a gay virtuoso aesthetic of interpretation exists through a heightened sense of beauty and style. At the core of this style is a beautiful tone that accentuates the compositional beauty of even the most technical pieces of music. He suggests that "for the homosexual, the idea of a beauty that answers only to itself may be part of a larger effort to ennoble an embattled form of love."[35] To Mitchell, a homosexual aesthetic of musical performance is symbolic of a less-than-glamorous history of discrimination and persecution of gay men, a history that is rapidly changing yet still an important communal memory.

Mitchell also claims that a homosexual aesthetic is not only evident in how a pianist plays but also in what a pianist chooses to play. For example, Stephen Hough has premiered and recorded works by a number of gay composers and transcribes his favorite American musical theater songs in the virtuoso tradition. These pieces reflect his own promotion of gay composers and his personal taste for Camp, a taste that many other gay virtuosi share. Along with this generalization, Mitchell states that gay virtuosi are not "size queens" because they gravitate towards smaller concert works in which the focus is on beauty rather than spectacle.[36]

As a gay flutist, I resonate with many of the claims that Brett and Mitchell make about a gay performance aesthetic. In response to Brett's article, I find that my body is fully engaged in music-making, regardless of whether the piece was written by a gay composer or not. This stage presence is crucial for communication with my audience. While it may not be an explicitly "gay" component of performance, body language comes more naturally to me, an effeminate gay man,

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[34] *Virtuosi.* See chapter "Possibilities of a Homosexual Aesthetic of Virtuosity," 113-118.
[35] Ibid., 116
[36] Ibid., 118.

than it does to some of my straight colleagues. Within a gay aesthetic of performance, the body is an instrument that must reflect the mood of the music at all times.

I also find that my personal gay aesthetic of performance reflects the claims that Mitchell makes about the importance of tone and an affinity to smaller pieces of music. I consciously focused more of my early music training on the production of a pure tone rather than the mastery of technique on the flute. While I did not make this decision with Mitchell's "embattled form of love" theory in mind, I found that a brilliant tone allowed me to play shorter, sensitive pieces of music with better emotional communication. I still prefer shorter, expressive pieces of music to longer, technical ones. There is a good chance that I will always prefer these pieces, no matter how much I perfect my technique, because it fits the gay aesthetic of my artistry.

Finally, I feel an inherent association to music written by gay composers and have recently used this music to promote LGBTQ issues. My entire Senior Capstone Recital features flute music written by five gay American composers. Each piece of music connects to a different milestone or memory within my development as a gay man and a professional musician. A duet written by Robert Maggio titled *Phoenix* holds particular emotional importance to me because it memorializes members of the LGBTQ community who have died from AIDS. I plan to continue this advocacy in the future by constructing other programs with LGBTQ themes in order to promote advocacy and awareness for the community within the music community. This effort is perhaps the most blatant and effective part of my own gay performance aesthetic.

As this document reveals, the question "Can music reflect gayness?" does not have a definite answer. Conflicting opinions exist within circles of musicologists, composers, and performers alike. My artistry, from the music that I play to the way that I move on stage, is

reflective of my sexual orientation. As a proponent of the theory that music can reflect gayness, I want to expand on my own ability to express how this phenomenon manifests itself. Interviewing other living gay composers and performers and exploring more academic work within queer musicology will help me to achieve a better personal understanding of the connections between identity and music. I will continue to explore the central question of this document in an effort to contribute my own thoughts to queer musicological research in the future, and to find for myself what it means to be a gay musician.

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Presents collection of Britten essays written over the course of thirty years. Begins with first essay about Britten, which draws parallels between the plot of the opera *Peter Grimes* and Britten's sexuality. Reflects the oppression and marginalization of being gay in subsequent essays.

Brett, Philip. "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet" and "Eros and Orientalism in Britten's Operas." In *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology,* edited by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, 9-26 and 235-256. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Includes more work regarding the intersection of sexual orientation and music composition within two specific essays. Examines the pervasive homophobic attitudes that underlie musicology in "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet." Also contains references as to why queer musicians are drawn to performance. Says that other operas written by Britten also portray male relationships in a way that reflects the stigma of the time in "Eros and Orientalism in Britten's Operas."

Brett, Philip. "Piano Four-Hands: Schubert and the Performance of Gay Male Desire." *19th-Century Music* 21 (1997): 149–176.

Summarizes the work done by several musicologists regarding Schubert since the work of Solomon. Offers ideas about sexuality within Schubert's Grand Duo piano duet, including how the body can be engaged in producing music both physically and emotionally.

Clark, Suzannah. *Analyzing Schubert.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Provides thorough analysis of Schubert's music, especially regarding his sexual orientation through subjective constructions. Reaffirms work done by McClary in queer musicology.

Holland, Bernard. "Dr. Freud, Can Tea Really Just Be Tea?" *New York Times*, February 17, 1992.

Responds to McClary's essay about subjectivity based on sexuality in the work of Schubert. Written by one of many musicologists opposed to her ideas.

Maggio, Robert. Interview with the composer. October 19, 2016.

Serves as core of the Capstone supporting document alongside Schocker interview. Focuses primarily on composer's experience with identity in composition, formative influences on career, composing for flute, and whether or not gayness can be reflected in music.

McClary, Susan. "Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert's Music." In *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology,* edited by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, 205-234. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Defines work in the field of queer musicology. Contains a collection of essays written about various questions and observations in musicology pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity. Discusses relevance of gay and lesbian music and serves as good historical support for the Capstone project.

McClary, Susan. *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

Specifies approach called "New Musicology," whereas music studies are intermingled with cultural criticism. Discusses the incorporation of gender and sexuality in the work of several composers. Includes specific essay that analyzes Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony for reflections of sexuality and another essay about inclusion of gender in work of Vandervelde.

Mitchell, Mark Lindsey. *Virtuosi: A Defense and a (Sometimes Erotic) Celebration of Great Pianists*. Indiana University Press, 2000.

Explores many domains of the virtuosic pianist, including music composition, the child prodigy, and erotic musical performance. References McClary's work on Schubert and provides counterexamples and author's own analysis of homosexuality in music.

Noyce, Rik. "The American Homophilic School of Composition." DMA diss., University of Nevada, 2011.

Describes a group of gifted gay musicians and composers in New York City during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. Contributed to American Homophile Movement. Focuses on Copland and discusses how the "American sound" influenced *Duo for Flute and Piano*. Offers historical facts and interpretation about whether sexual preference can impact musical style.

Riis, Thomas L. and Patricia J. Smith. *The Queer Encyclopedia of Music, Dance, and Musical Theater.* Berkeley: Cleis Press, 2004.

Includes 790 entries that highlight many queer historical figures in the arts. Contains biographical information for many gay composers. Provides insight that could be useful in a discussion about the intersection of sexual orientation and musical composition.

Rothstein, Edward. "And If You Play 'Bolero' Backward. . ." *New York Times*, February 16, 1992.

Responds to McClary's essay about subjectivity based on sexuality in the work of Schubert. Written by one of many musicologists opposed to her ideas.

Rothstein, Edward. "Was Schubert Gay? If He Was, So What? Debate Turns Testy." *New York Times*, February 4, 1992.

Responds again to McClary's essay about subjectivity based on sexuality in the work of Schubert. Written several years after initial introduction of controversy by one of many musicologists opposed to her ideas.

Schocker, Gary. Interview with the composer. October, 2016.

Serves as core of the Capstone supporting document alongside Maggio interview. Focuses primarily on composer's experience with identity in composition, formative influences on career, composing for flute, and whether or not gayness can be reflected in music.

Sellen, Eric. "American Sounds: Inspiration, Virtuosity, Imagination, and Grandeur." Concert program. *All American: Copland and Bernstein.* The Cleveland Orchestra. March 2-4, 2017.

Includes an opinion that gender and sexual orientation do not play any role in what a composer's music may sound like. Sets up an interesting introduction to the supporting document by providing an opposing view to the thesis.

Solomon, Maynard. "Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini." *19th-Century Music* 12 (1989): 193-206.

Claims that Schubert was a gay composer. Supports claim with historical evidence regarding Schubert's inner circle of male friends and the suppression of homosexuals in nineteenth-century Viennese culture. Sparked further scholarly research and analysis by other queer musicologists such as Brett and McClary.