

Harvard's Paine Hall
Musical Canon & the New England Barn



REINHOLD BRINKMANN
LESLEY BANNATYNE
Foreword by ANNE C. SHREFFLER

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC ♦ HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Cambridge, Massachusetts

*Harvard's Paine Hall
Musical Canon & the New England Barn*

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Cambridge, Massachusetts 2010

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COVER:

Music Building, 1914, from Walter Raymond Spalding, *Music at Harvard*, New York: Coward-McCann, 1935

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Foreword

The fact that music is intangible, and that it can move from heart to mind and across time and space with lightning speed and in often unpredictable ways, is inspiring rather than frustrating for those who love it. Scholars of music, in their search for answers to questions relating to how music is created, transmitted, performed, and understood, often choose to focus on material objects relating to music; scores, instruments, documents, paintings, and many more to gain entry into its paradoxically ephemeral but undeniably “real presence” (in the words of George Steiner).

Compared to other material sources, the buildings that house music have been relatively neglected. Yet the spaces in which music-making occurs can tell us much about the people who conceived of them and how they understood music and its role in society. Concert halls, opera houses, jazz clubs, and dance halls are living witnesses to the dreams and aspirations of the people who built them and the institutions that support them.¹ Some buildings for music outlive their usefulness and are torn down, like the giant pavilion in Boston that seated an audience of 12,000 plus 11,000 performing forces for the “Peace Jubilee” of 1869, or the late lamented Boston Opera House, razed in an ill-considered fit of urban renewal in 1958.² Others evolve and survive, whether by adapting to new circumstances, or simply by virtue of the quality of their original design, as with the acoustically superior Jordan Hall or the iconically democratic Hatch Shell on the Esplanade.

For almost one hundred years, the Music Building has served as a center for music at Harvard. Conceived as a concert and rehearsal space primarily for extracurricular student groups—all academic classes were supposed to be over by noon—the building, with its subsequent expansions, is today the hub of a thriving academic department, a beehive of concerts, rehearsals, lectures, meetings, and classes. As the original building became too confined for the Department of Music’s burgeoning activities, there was more construction: a Music Library wing was added in 1956, the Fanny Peabody Mason building in 1972, and the “infill”—adding office space and a new Department lounge—in 1997. These have provided needed space, at the cost, it must be said, of architectural unity and ease of movement

through a labyrinthian and haphazardly designed conglomeration.

The building that houses the concert hall named after the Department's founder, American composer and organist John Knowles Paine (1839-1906), now sits serenely at one end of the labyrinth. With its blend of neoclassical architecture and New England solidity acquired through the use of the ubiquitous red "Harvard brick," it harmonizes with many other buildings on the Harvard campus. Reinhold Brinkmann, professor emeritus of the Department of Music at Harvard University, with the assistance of Lesley Bannatyne, Managing Communications Coordinator for the Department, has produced its definitive history, and at the same time, building on the work of Elliot Forbes, has added significant new dimensions to the history of music at Harvard.³ When the new building was being planned, music was a young academic discipline at Harvard. Through persistence and with incontrovertible evidence of the Department's burgeoning growth, Paine successfully overcame the objections of those colleagues who believed that music was not a suitable object for serious study. In requesting a building dedicated solely to Music, Paine proudly points out that "Harvard was the first American university to establish the academic study of Music, and her example has been followed by Yale, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, Ann Arbor, and other seats of learning" (see below, p. 14). Paine died in 1906, seven years before the hall was completed.

The 437-seat Paine Concert Hall is at the heart of the original Music Building. It is distinguished by its tasteful, turn-of-the-century architecture, large, light-filled cathedral windows, and—the most unusual feature for modern audiences—its frieze of twenty-six composers' names inscribed across the proscenium and along the side walls. These names, arranged in (roughly) chronological order with Beethoven proudly front and center, are living remnants of a bygone and more self-assured age. (Who would dare to engrave the names of the most important composers today on a wall or building?) The frieze preserves the musical canon as Boston intellectuals at the dawn of the twentieth century conceived of it, and as they surely thought it would be handed down in perpetuity. It has already attracted some scholarly attention; Bergeron and Bohlman began their book on the musicological canon with a description of this unique frieze, remarking, "It is the Canon at a glance; a solemn spectacle of the disciplining of music."⁴

The Paine Hall frieze was also one of the first things that struck the

new professor, Reinhold Brinkmann, when he arrived at Harvard in the fall of 1985. Its uniquely American take on the European canon intrigued him, and he thought about it for years, mentioning it repeatedly in seminars and lectures. Finally, after his retirement in 2003, he found the time to immerse himself in the university archives and search for some answers. He unearthed an astonishing array of documents that shed new light on the early history of the Music Department and the Music Building's long gestation, as well as on the Paine Hall frieze and the selection of names. He places the frieze in the context of other similar friezes on the inside and outside of buildings in Europe and the United States. Ever the historian, Professor Brinkmann brought to the Paine Hall project the same passion, detailed research methods, and immense range of learning across the humanities that have sustained his ground-breaking publications on Schoenberg, Brahms, Eisler, Wolfgang Rihm, and many other topics in nineteenth- and twentieth-century music. After Professor Brinkmann was unfortunately struck by serious illness, Lesley Bannatyne rendered the invaluable assistance in research and writing that has enabled this book to be brought to completion.

Anne C. Shreffler
Chair, Department of Music, Harvard University

¹ For other histories of concert halls, see for example Leo Leroy Beranek, *Concert Halls and Opera Houses: Music, Acoustics, and Architecture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Springer, 2004); Richard Poate Stebbins, *The Making of Symphony Hall, Boston* (Boston: Boston Symphony Orchestra, 2000); Mark Clague, "Making Music, Building Culture: Chicago's Auditorium Theater and the Civic Imagination, 1885–1929," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2002.

² Joseph Horowitz, *Classical Music in America: A History of its Rise and Fall* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2005), 15.

³ Elliot Forbes, *A History of Music at Harvard to 1972* (Cambridge, MA: Department of Music, Harvard University, 1988).

⁴ Katherin Bergeron and Philip V. Bohlman, eds., *Disciplining Music: Musicology and Its Canons* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992, p. 1).

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Introduction

Part aristocratic Italian Renaissance elegance, part New England barn, Paine Hall rose up early in the twentieth century to house a burgeoning Music Department at Harvard. Despite the fact that music students had long outgrown their quarters in the basement of Holden Chapel, the building was opposed by many of the faculty, including science professors who begged the President to leave the site—a wedge of Ward 9 in Cambridge—vacant so as not to “steal our light.” (A present irony, given the shadow currently cast by the eight-story Science Center right next door.) It was Harvard’s first music professor, John Knowles Paine, who envisioned a building set aside exclusively for the study and making of music. It took three Harvard presidents, a long courtship of the Corporation and faculty, and the tireless campaigning of department chair Walter R. Spalding to make Paine’s dream a reality.

The original building was designed and revised several times. Its entrance was re-sited, its pipe organ never came, and a 250-seat lecture/concert hall on the first floor was scrapped. But on November 18, 1914 when the very first concert took place in John Knowles Paine Concert Hall, the audience looked up to see a recently constructed frieze of composers’ names cut into the wood above the cornice on three of the four walls. A music lover might have noticed the names were in chronological order—almost.

Wagner and Weber are out of place. Bach is substituted where Gluck should be. History has been subverted to allow the canon of Western, mostly German, composers to occupy the charged space above the stage, with Beethoven directly center, Mozart to one side and Schubert to the other. The Paine Hall frieze is a conservative manifesto, one beloved by the middle class that dominated European and North American culture at the dawn of the twentieth century.

There are many buildings both in America and in Europe that have crystallized a constellation of composers in decorative friezes, each specific to its own history and circumstance. Paine Hall is no exception: it was a place to enjoy music inspired by Beethoven, and the frieze might not have even existed if history had not given us Beethoven. Still, is it right to

“freeze” great art to a fixed point? Why are Medieval and Renaissance composers missing from the front row? Why no Purcell? Why Grieg and Franck rather than Mussorgsky or Dvorak? And why no American composers?

The decisions made about placement and canon likely came out of the men of Paine’s circle, and most probably from Paine himself, even though the frieze was not carved until eight years after his death.

It is a confession: the frieze speaks about music history at the end of the tonal era and gives us a canon relative to the standard bearer, Beethoven. It speaks of Germany, Europe, and the conjuring of powerful names. The whole Music Building itself hints at the history of New England, with its Transcendentalists and avid music journalists. Most of all, Paine Hall tells a story of men of music and passion carving a permanent place for art at Harvard and in education.

—LB

Part I

*Preparing the Institution:
Music Enters the Harvard Curriculum*

*The Paine
Music Building arose
modestly behind the
skirt of Lawrence
Hall.*¹



Paine Hall & the New England Barn

We will begin medias in res. Three photographs (above and on the next page) show the Harvard Music Building in three perspectives around the time of its completion, that is, in the fall of 1914. Still missing is the inscription on the showcase of the north façade, two lines from a Longfellow poem that were selected in 1915 after some struggle with a resistant Corporation, and installed only in 1916. Seeing the Music Building for the first time, I had the impression that it was a solid, carefully planned, architectural composition. The basic structure relied on simple rectangles or—in a three-dimensional perspective—on boxes, a larger one in the middle section and smaller ones on each side. Color, ornamentation, symmetry, and historical quotation are the means that make this structure visible. Everything appears as part of a strict order, even the large chimneys. The white middle section, lighter in “tone,” is highlighted; it features a surprisingly small main entrance door, turns the enlarged windows into round, arched ones, and adds a Palladian portico of six Corinthian pseudo-columns that carry, like an architrave, the horizontal band for the outside frieze. Despite the admiration in America for the grand Italian architectural style and its widespread reception (the abundance of majestic capitols, town halls, and other important public buildings with large portals and golden cupolas), this was still a bold move. The middle section gives an aura of importance, an aristocratic touch, to the building; for a moment the visitor might believe he or she is about to enter a castle or a majestic mansion.



Paine Hall, 1914. Above, construction is nearly finished on the new Music Building. Below, the building is finished except for the freize above the pseudo columns.

The professional classification of the Music Building was “Colonial type, built in Harvard brick with marble traceries.”² It was Walter Spalding, then an instructor at the Harvard Music Department and the most enthusiastic and active agent for the new building, who, as early as 1903, envisioned a Music Building of the “old-fashioned red brick—known as ‘Harvard Brick’—and a yellow limestone.”³ This prescription indicates that in the battle between tradition and modernity that occupied the aesthetic discourse at the beginning of the 20th century, the Harvard Music Department will find its place more with the traditionalists. Spalding’s use of the term “old-fashioned” as a contemporary category exhibits the conviction that the center of all thought and spiritual activity is located in the past. The decision to use the language of the so-called Colonial style—the adoption of the aesthetics of a revival movement—confirms the emphasis on “tradition” or “history” in the Music Department’s early days.

I dare to go one step beyond the mere descriptive mode. The difference between the white and the dark red parts of the building is constitutive. The interplay of the two colors and their shadings in the changing sunlight can be overwhelming. The large, white entrance displays its importance unmistakably: it is ornamented throughout, and framed by seemingly mighty columns (real columns at the original west entrance in the 1902 floor plans; mock-columns in the final version, protruding 4 1/2 inches from the brick of the building) and a frieze bearing the poetic quote of Longfellow’s lines about the “three great chords of might.” The portal is not an individual reference to a specific work of art, but it does quote a general element from the architectural language of the Italian Renaissance, mediated through the unique reception of Palladio.

But the red walls—the larger part of the building—dominate. Here the “tone” is heavier, darker; there is no variety of forms and the rigidity of the rectangle is uncompromising. Where it is interrupted, as by the small side door, it looks wrong. The building is designed to be, and to remain, one single block. And whereas the white part takes its character from the aristocratic elegance of the Italian Renaissance, the basic brick walls bring New England into the game. If we ask for a more concrete point of departure, my answer is this: open your eyes when you are driving through Vermont or New Hampshire. Here you will still find many



A prototypical example of a New England barn.

of these beautiful buildings, single structures in the open landscape, others as part of farms, mostly constructed from wood and then painted using an incredible red that is a quasi-natural ingredient in the “Harvard Brick.”

Yes, indeed, I mean it. It is the New England barn that has informed the architect of Harvard’s Music Building. This is not an act of imitating, but one of trying to adopt the essence, the spirit, of these buildings and their dialogues with nature, history, and society. This rural background for Paine Hall also explains the sometimes rigid, if not clumsy, character of some of its elements.

Once this general direction is accepted, other identifications are possible. In my view, the specific form of the roof for the Music Building is such a point of reference. The flat roof with its fence-like design (concrete instead of wood) reminds me of the “Widow’s Walk,” the platform atop a roof of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century coastal New England houses. The legend says that here the fishermen’s wives looked out for their husbands’ (unlikely) return. The architect did not suggest that this applies to the Music Building, but rather, he incorporated a significant and identifiable element of old New England houses to the new one. It seemed sufficient to create an allusion to the appearance of a New England structure. The architect even adds a second entrance to the building, albeit a rather strange one, and the reading of the Music Building as a descendant of New England gets additional support. I will come back to this in the discussion

of the architectural plans of 1907.

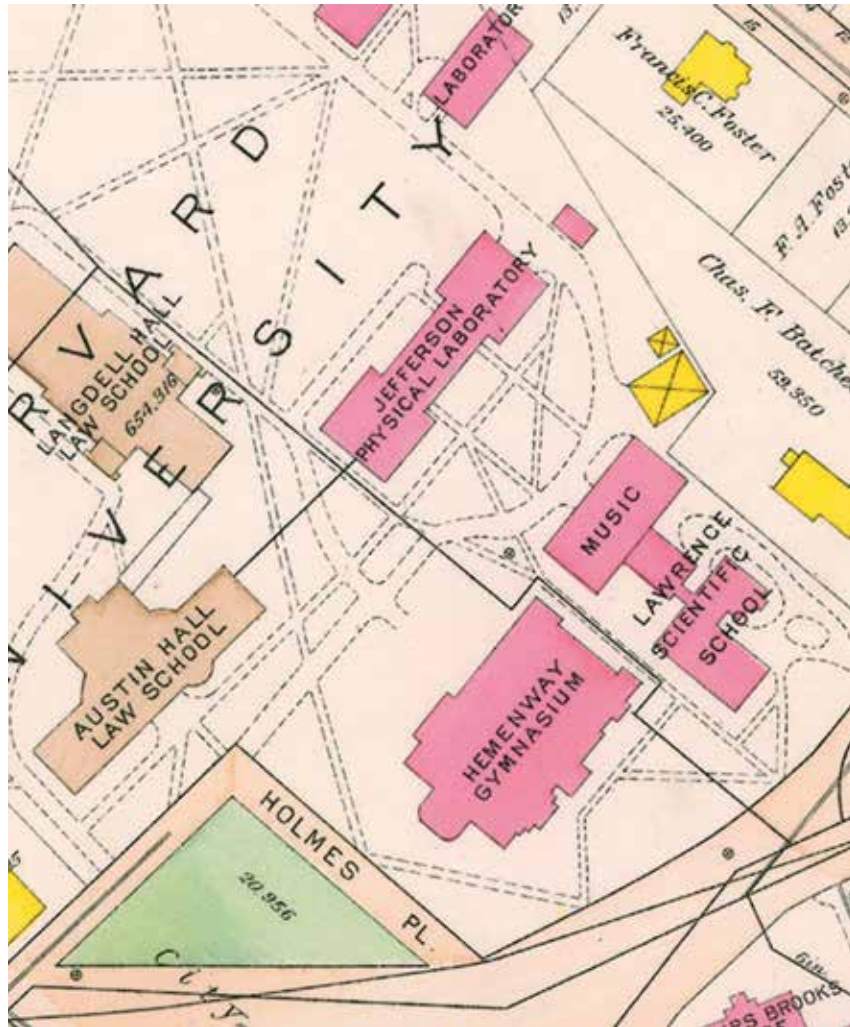
The hands and mind of a young American architect confronting the power and dignity of a great historical model with the space for artistic ideas and creative work in his own present—that was the challenge for Mr. Howells, Jr.

Point of Departure

It is difficult to imagine today the original site of the Music Building in the wider context of the North Yard. There was no Littauer Building until 1937, and no Science Center until 1973. The first Hemenway Gymnasium existed until 1938, and Lawrence Hall was demolished in 1970. The back section of Gordon McKay Laboratories (built in 1953) was renovated twice (1961/62 and 2007). Jefferson Physical Laboratory and H.H. Richardson’s distinguished Austin Hall (both built 1882–84) are the only neighbors that accompanied the Music Building from its



The original Harvard College Hemenway Gymnasium, circa 1865-1895. A.D.
White Architectural Photographs, Cornell University Library.



1916 map of Cambridge, showing Hemenway I, Lawrence Scientific School, and Jefferson Physical Laboratory.

creation until today.

Paine Hall is still a bit complicated. It was built to provide the Music Division with sufficient space for both theoretical and practical studies. But with the new building in place, the number of students enrolled in music classes increased even more. Twice since 1914 it seemed necessary to enlarge the space. In 1956 a wing was added for the Music Library (Stanley Parker, architect). Stylistically (brick, colors, ornaments, forms, etc.) it seems similar to the existing Music Building. From the perspective of Austin Hall, however, the added wing looks separated, as if the architect wanted to alert the viewer to the end of the original. The boundary position is particularly crucial. No transition can hide the break between the old section and the first enlargement. The continuation beyond the old border (around the corner) carries an imbalance that affects both the old building and the addition. The result is in no way satisfactory.

The second enlargement is a special case, as it was designed as a critique of a work of art through another work of art. The new main entrance to what is now called the Fanny Peabody Mason Music Building (that is, coming from the Oxford Street area) seems to use the “Brutalism” of Boston’s City Hall (1968) as its model.

Thus the result today is a three-part Music Building in which the individual parts do not merge to form an architecturally united whole. It is not written in stone, however, that this constellation should last forever.

John Knowles Paine, Musician

In the second half of the nineteenth century Harvard University was making music history by establishing and developing music as an academic subject for both laymen and professional musicians. The spiritus rector of all these activities was John Knowles Paine (1839-1906). Besides receiving a solid training in music theory and musicianship in his native Portland, Maine, Paine had become a formidable organ virtuoso. His performances of the works of Johann Sebastian Bach were held in especially high regard; more and more, the professional critics recognized Paine’s extraordinary musicianship. In 1861, immediately after his return from the obligatory studies in Europe (in the mid-nineteenth century still primarily

in Germany) Paine accepted the prestigious position as the organist at Boston's Old West Church; the job included teaching organ, piano, and music theory (composition). Big neighbor Harvard reacted promptly and offered Paine the position of "teacher of sacred music." The positions of director of music and organist at the College were included in Paine's job description, thus only music history remained to be developed. And for better or worse, the one full professor in a small field will always be chairman of his department, a position that requires a good deal of administrative skills, especially in a fast-growing department. Fortunately for music at Harvard (and in the U.S.) Paine possessed these skills, and he used them with all his unbounded energy. Once he was associated with Harvard as an instructor in 1862, Paine's goal was to establish the study of music as a full-fledged University department. This did not happen without opposition among the faculty, the loudest from Professor Francis Parkman, a well-known historian who, in meetings of the Corporation, used to proclaim: "musica delenda est" (music must be destroyed).⁴

Against all adverse circumstances, Paine succeeded. It was both a professional and personal achievement, since all steps forward (curriculum, courses for credit, the position of music within the University, space, etc.) were mirrored in Paine's own marching through the ranks. John Knowles Paine was not able to experience the fulfillment of his professional dreams: the Music Building, which would have been the capstone of his work at and for Harvard, was finally realized in 1914, eight years after his death in 1906. Paine had discussed the project with the inner circle of the Department so intensely and in such detail that it is safe to say the 1914 building in fact still realized his ideas.


Preliminary Skirmish

The construction of a separate building to be used exclusively for music was Paine's answer to the longstanding problem of inadequate space for music. But before the building could become reality, three entities had to be convinced that music should be a priority for Harvard. First was the president. It was Paine's good fortune that the presidents who served during the 44 years of his work at Harvard loved and supported music: there were Thomas Hill (1862–68) and Charles William Eliot (1869–1909); but

BACH HAYDN MOZART BEETHOVEN SCHUBERT CHOPIN WAGNER

Handel
Gluck
Rameau
Couperin
Tartini
Scarlatti
Monteverde
Palestrina

“Harvard is the leader in this movement, and other universities have already adopted entrance examinations. As music may now be offered as a subject for admission both to the College and the Scientific School there is assured for the future a growth out of all proportion to that of the past.”



Schumann
Mendelssohn
Weber
Berlioz
Liszt
Verdi
Grieg
Tchaikovsky
Brahms
Franck

John Knowles Paine 1839-1906
1862 Instructor (Organ, Piano, Music Theory);
Music Director
1869 A.M. (h.c.)
1871 Harvard Establishes Music as Academic Study
1873 Assistant Professor
1875 Full Professor
1906 Dies 25 April
(1914 J.K.P. Building)

to this list we should also add A. Lawrence Lowell (1909–33), who was president when the Music Building got its final approval.

The second entity to convince was the Corporation, likely the most difficult task but also the decisive one. It seems as if the connection between Music Department and Corporation was not always as smooth as one would expect. A few remarks from the pen of Walter Spalding in his summary of the campaign for the Music Building briefly touch on the matter.⁵

For a number of years the policy of the Harvard Corporation, if not antipathetic, was, at any rate, sometimes lukewarm, the feeling being doubtless that such a young member in the regular curriculum as music would have to prove its right to exist before it could be especially favoured.

Avoiding a serious confrontation, Spalding continued in a conciliatory tone,

It is a pleasure to record that during the last ten years the Corporation has encouraged the growth of music, and has treated it with as much liberality as other subjects of the same nature.

The letter from Percy Lee Atherton to President Lowell (dated 3 February, 1912), obviously written in support of Spalding's academic career, confirms that an unresolved distrust was still dominating the Board's view of the role of music at Harvard:

As nothing succeeds like success, I believe that the erection of the Music Building will call the public attention to Music at Harvard in a vital way. It will even impress the Overseers, who up to this time have regarded and choose to regard Music as a luxury to be tolerated.⁶

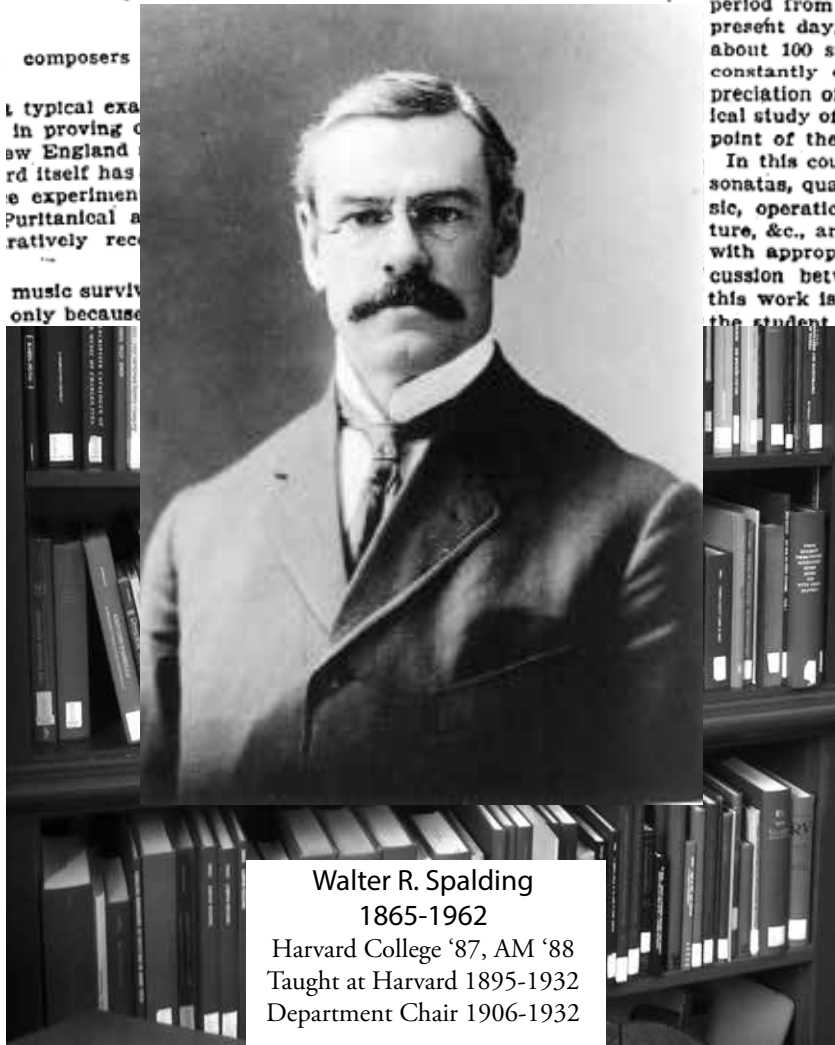
Finally, the faculty had to be won over. It seems that during his many years at Harvard, Paine had made a great number of friends and had

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Walter R. Spalding
1865-1962
Harvard College '87, AM '88
Taught at Harvard 1895-1932
Department Chair 1906-1932

established a reputation as a major figure in American cultural practice as well as an acclaimed organ virtuoso (especially in the earlier years of his career). He must also have participated in discussions of issues in higher education.⁷

A Story of Success

It was with great pride that Paine, in his report on the development of the study of music up to the year 1903/04, wrote:

During the last few years the number of students was more than doubled. There are at present about 250 students in Music, and at the same rate of increase there will be over 300 students next year.

This is a story of success, and success should be sustained, but, ironically, it created even more problems, especially regarding the budget. Paine and his friends did not recognize overcrowded music classrooms as an obstacle, but used the situation to call instead for a solution. Paine—and this shows his superior mind—went further in arguing his case; his development report also includes a description of the role Harvard played in the nationwide organization of the curricular aspects of music. Paine wrote:

In 1871 Harvard established Music as an academic study at my suggestion. During the 34 years I have taught it has been my privilege and good Fortune to develop this Department. ...Harvard was the first American university to establish the academic study of Music, and her example has been followed by Yale, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, Ann Arbor, and other seats of learning. Harvard has also recently established entrance exams in Harmony and Counterpoint, and the preparatory study of these subjects is being gradually introduced in the high schools and academies. Harvard is the leader in this movement, and other universities have already adopted entrance examinations. As music may now be offered as a subject for admission both to the

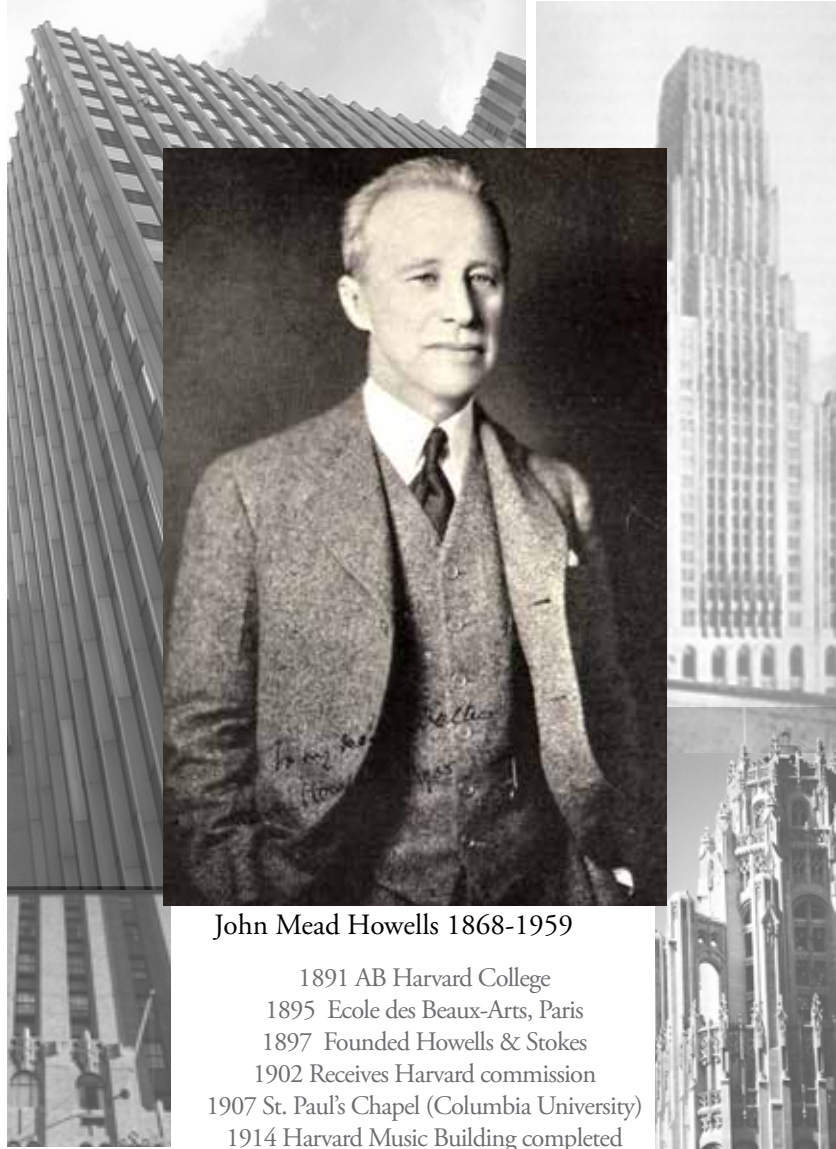
College and the Scientific School there is assured for the future a growth out of all proportion to that of the past.

In the second half of his report, Paine gives his readers information on teaching and researching music at Harvard. The effect of shortage of space must have been unbelievably acute: one hundred and twenty-five students shared the room.

Later, Spalding, like Paine, presents the grimmest picture. He repeats some details: one seminar has 80 students enrolled, another one 50, but the classroom does not accommodate more than 40 persons. This single room that the administration has assigned for music classes (Holden Chapel) was unbearably hot during the summer, extremely cold during winter months, and loud, loud all day...

Music on the executant side is a noisy art, and the University sorely needs a well-equipped special building where singers, scrapers and pluckers of strings, blowers on reed or brass, and pounders of drums may enjoy themselves, undisturbed and undisturbing.⁸

Both Paine and Spalding come to the same conclusion (how could they not!), namely, that only a separate building for exclusive use by the Music Department would solve all the problems. The two essays—Paine's and Spalding's—are already part of the building campaign, both include detailed information about estimated costs, and both turn at the end to the alumni, asking for their support. Spalding seems to be a bit more diplomatic ("This article is written in the earnest expectation that when those alumni who are interested in the growth of Music at Harvard know of the needs of the Department, they will come forward quickly and generously"), whereas Paine prefers a direct approach: "While much has been done by the Corporation to strengthen the Division of Music, very little has been done by the Alumni." To my ear, the last two or three sentences and the ending tone of both essays display their authors' nervousness—both inexperienced fundraisers. Neither the members of the Corporation nor the alumni would have appreciated this tone.



John Mead Howells 1868-1959

- 1891 AB Harvard College
- 1895 Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris
- 1897 Founded Howells & Stokes
- 1902 Receives Harvard commission
- 1907 St. Paul's Chapel (Columbia University)
- 1914 Harvard Music Building completed
- 1922 Howells and Hood win international architectural competition to build Chicago's Tribune Tower
- 1925 Tribune Tower completed
- 1928 Beekman Tower (New York City)
- 1930 Daily News Building (New York City)

The Architect

Paine's (it was his!) choice of architect is John Mead Howells (1868-1959), a 34-year-old Harvard alumnus, class of '91. He is the son of William Dean Howells, the renowned author, critic, and Harvard professor. John Howells received his professional training in France at the École des Beaux Arts. Together with his Harvard classmate Isaac Stokes, he opened an architectural office in New York City and conducted his business from there. Paine Hall was among his first major commissions. One of the reasons for Paine selecting Howells was that such a youngster was more flexible and open and ready to accept advice, even from a non-professional. Howells was willing to put Paine's ideas on paper. He was also ready to cooperate years before the University officially gave him the commission. A letter from Paine to William Dean Howells, the father, gives an impression of the familiar, collegial tone in which the choice was made. And—for sure—it's all Harvard.

Facsimile of letter from Paine to William Dean Howells. Paine goes on to request Howells to ask his son for a meeting to discuss rooms and details, and notes that President Eliot is interested and has, with Paine, selected the probable site "on Holmes Field."

Cambridge, Jan. 22
1902

Dear Mr. Howells,

Your interesting letter gave me great pleasure. I remember your son both as a small boy and as a college student. I have a most pleasant impression of him. I have heard such high praise of his taste and ability as an architect that we are fortunate in having him to draw sketches for the proposed building.

Genesis Phase 1: 1902–06

And the players were: John Knowles Paine (the Initiator & Spiritus Rector), Walter Spalding (the Faithful Executer), and President A. Lawrence Lowell (the Silent Chief of Operations). The genesis of Paine/Howells' Music Building occurred in three clearly distinguishable phases. The first, 1902–1906, includes early informal conversations between alumni and faculty, the first attempts to agree on some general principles, a discussion about the historicism of the proposed building, and deliberate advice for the architect. The second, from 1907–13, saw the design and construction of the building, and in the third phase (1913/14[16]), its completion and the addition of the indoor and outdoor friezes.

The actual history of Harvard's Music Building began in early 1902; the building was Paine's idea and was to crown his life and work. It was in 1902 that a "committee in charge of the building" was assembled to raise money. The Corporation determined that an amount of \$80,000 was necessary to pay for the costs of the construction, with an additional amount of \$50,000 for a maintenance fund. Besides the two memoranda by Spalding and Paine (in this order) a flyer was created and mailed to everyone who had expressed interest in the project. It does not carry a date, but the copy, preserved in the Harvard University Archives, has a stamp with its date of acquisition: "Mar 26, 1902."

A First Version

This 1902 flyer contains plans for the first and second floors and a sketch of the entire building in a diagonal front perspective (drawn by the architectural firm of Howells & Stokes and supervised by Paine). The "1902 flyer" (to be distinguished from the "1907 flyer" in the text that follows) also contains

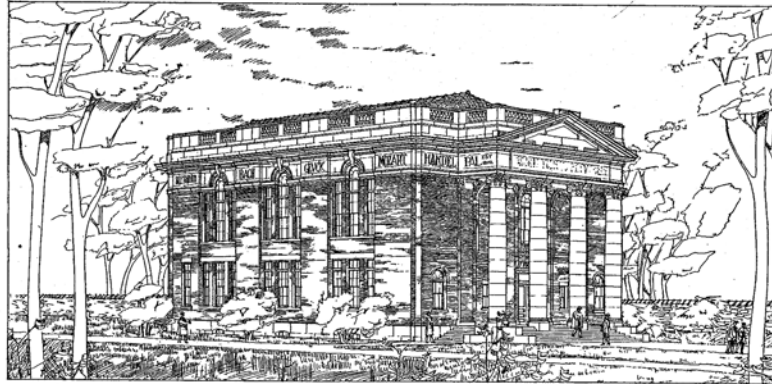
some important information. President Eliot writes that he has allotted a site for the Music Building, not across the river, but on Holmes Field at the beginning of the North Yard, between Jefferson Laboratory and the Lawrence Scientific School. Eliot calls the site a quiet place, and gives this as the reason for the selection. The design has also been determined: following the general orientation of the musical culture towards history, the “building will be of the old-fashioned red brick known as ‘Harvard brick’—and white lime-stone.” This is Spalding’s hand; it is a quote from his memorandum and proves his early influence. The 1902 flyer is also good for some surprises. Here are four of them.

ONE, the sketch for the whole building shows a compact, heavy, monumental edifice. The model for its design is the classical Greek temple. No doubt this deep reaching into the treasures of history could be quite enlightening, but it leaves no space to breathe. It needed rethinking.

TWO, there is an outdoor frieze of composers’ names circling around the upper part of this sketched building. I can decipher six names from the left side of the sketch: Beethoven, Bach, Gluck, Mozart, Handel, and Palestrina (left to right). The portal also carried an inscription, but the letters are unidentifiable. The martial look of the building and the intimate character of the interior were at odds, and the sequence of the six names followed no detectable order. The sketch remained an isolated fragment and was not used by Howells for the completion of his study.

THREE, there are the two floor plans that were part of the 1902 flyer, drawn as a result of consultations between John Knowles Paine and John Mead Howells. The 1st floor shows a strong emphasis on teaching. The one and only entrance to the building passes through the four mighty columns into a vestibule

The 1902 flyer. On Howells' initial sketches for the building the exterior frieze included Beethoven, Bach, Gluck, Mozart, Handel, and Palestrina.



PERSPECTIVE.

NOTE.

The accompanying plans are for the proposed building of the Harvard Musical Department at Cambridge. President Eliot has allotted an excellent site, between the Jefferson Physical Laboratory and the Engineering Building, accessible from both Oxford and Kirkland Streets. The building will be of the old-fashioned red brick—known as “Harvard Brick”—and the white lime stone, in keeping with the sentiment of the old buildings in the Yard.

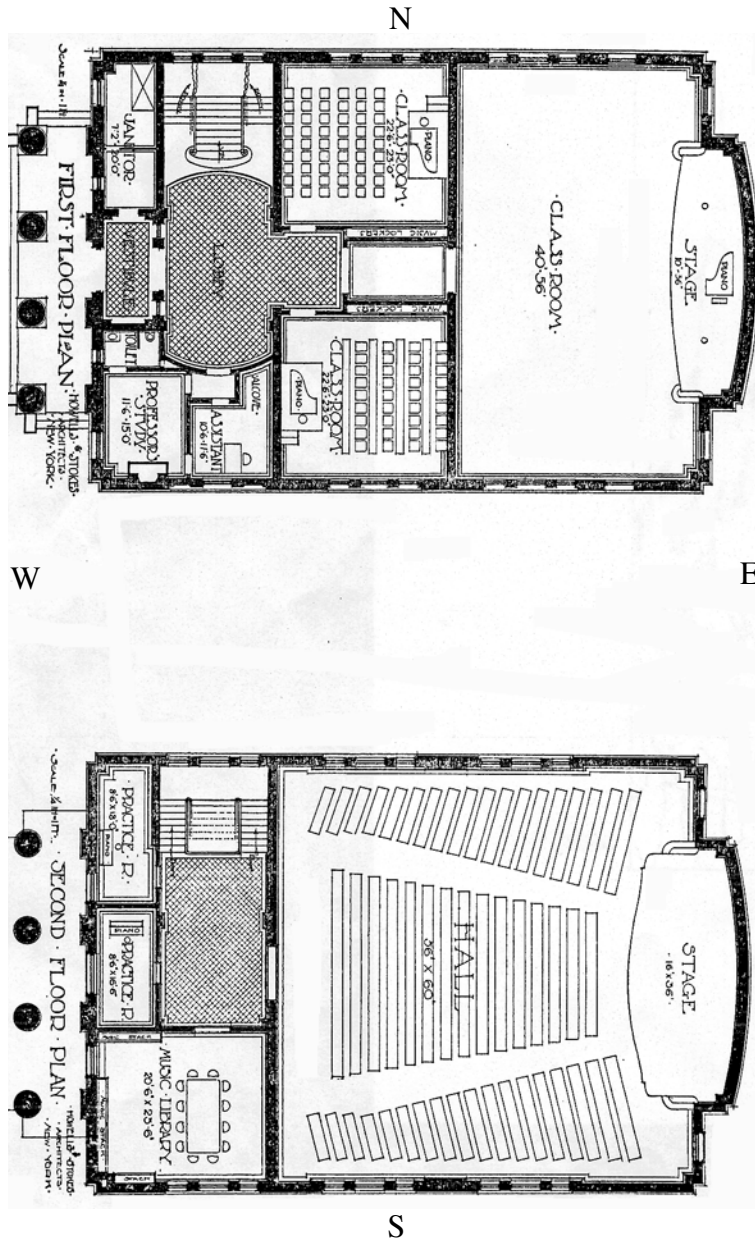
On the ground floor will be a tiled lobby going directly into the various class rooms and the professors' study, and in the vestibule is the janitor's lodge. The next floor will have the library, two practice rooms, and the main hall of the Music Department, which last will be used, both for concert and recitation purposes, and will seat nearly 500. There is a space available for building a pipe organ at the back of the hall over the lobby and practice rooms. The construction throughout will be fireproof. General toilet rooms are in the basement.

Neither the name of the building nor of the concert hall has been decided upon, but the former will be cut in the frieze under the pediment. The plans have been drawn by a Harvard firm of architects under the supervision of Prof. Paine, and are now approved by him and the Department, subject to further corrections.

The estimated cost of the building is \$75,000.

JOSEPH H. CHOATE, JR.;
W. K. BRICE,
DAVE H. MORRIS, *Chairman*;
Committee in charge of building fund.

The 1902 flyer, continued. The Music Building was oriented east to west, with its grand, four-columned entrance to the west. At the last minute, in 1913, a second door was added to the north side to form the building's "main" entryway.



and arrives at a relatively large lobby. To the right, one finds the academic offices of Professors and Assistant—both tiny little rooms. There is no space for a piano, certainly not for a grand, in either of these offices. To the left is the custodian's room, which almost hides the beginning of the large staircase that leads to the 2nd floor where the concert hall and two practice rooms are located. The rest of the 1st floor is occupied by three classrooms. The largest one seats 250 and could also be labelled a small concert hall (with a small stage), and the other two offer 40 and 90 seats, respectively. Altogether this would have been almost ideal for multifunctional use of classroom space.

FOUR. Another difference between the first and the final design of the Music Building is that the 1902 and 1907 flyers introduce the main entrance at the short side of the building (the west side) and the final version moves the entrance to the long, north side. This is a substantial alteration with many consequences, and I will come back to it.

But again, another new development took place.

The Collective Voice

Despite all the committee's efforts, the campaign of 1902/03 stagnated after a few years. And on April 25, 1906, at exactly the moment he was most needed, John Knowles Paine passed away, leaving behind an incomplete project and a handful of music teachers, none of them of Paine's caliber. It became Walter Spalding's hour. Spalding was a member of the committee to plan a celebration for the Pierian Sodality centennial in 1908. (The Sodality later became the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra.) A side effect of these meetings was that the members talked informally about Harvard events and Harvard problems in general. At one point a member of the Sodality proposed an idea to unite all the

Musical Union Plans New Building

The graduate members of the Pierian Sodality last spring appointed an executive committee to arrange for the celebration of the centennial of the Sodality in 1908. On Commencement Day there was a meeting in Harvard Hall, called by this committee, of all alumni interested in the advancement of music at Harvard, to consider in connection with the celebration of the centennial a broader movement. This movement is to include the federation of all members, graduate and undergraduate, of all the musical societies into a union to support the Department of Music, and to aid in its advancement; the erection of a building for the use of the Department of Music, and all the musical societies; the co-operation of all persons interested in music in the general celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the Pierian Sodality.

The result of this meeting was the formation of the Musical Union of Harvard University. Officers were elected as follows: president, A. Foote '74; first vice-president, H. L. Higginson '82; treasurer, H. A. Lamb '71; secretary, J. W. Saxe '88.

The executive committee is composed of Dr. C. H. Williams '71, chairman; J. W. Saxe '88, secretary; F. F. Collier '99, E. B. Terhune '99, A. P. Rice '05, Professor W. R. Spaulding '87, F. S. Converse '93, W. A. Locke '69 and H. A. Lamb '71.

G. L. Osgood '66 was elected chairman of the musical committee to take charge of the musical festival and celebration in June, 1908.

The main feature of the meeting was the appointment of a building committee to have charge of the proposed building for the Department of Music. This building will contain Headquarters

for all the musical societies of the University. In view of the fact that the late Professor J. K. Paine established the Musical Department at Harvard, and during his long professorship rendered great service to the cause of music in America, it is proposed that the new building, or one of the halls therein, shall take the form of a memorial.

A subscription committee is to be appointed, composed of graduates and undergraduates interested in the cause of music in the University, including all former presidents of the Pierian Sodality, Glee Clubs, and other musical societies, which will compose the union. The duty of this committee will be to raise funds for the new structure.

Another important committee appointed was that on publication, with H. T. Finck '76 of New York, chairman, to take charge of the history of the musical societies at Harvard, especially that of the Pierian Sodality.

different and isolated musical “societies” under one umbrella and redesign the plans for a Music Building in order to give each group their own room. There was also the opinion that the administration, having to deal with the single voice of one music community, would be more flexible and accessible. And Spalding most likely assumed that the ailing campaign for a new building would not only receive a boost, but being renewed, would also make an impact on the administration. The agreement within the Musical Union had been that the “genuinely” departmental classes would be scheduled during the morning hours, leaving the afternoon hours to the societies. For Spalding, the advocate of the department = building equation, this decision must have been quite difficult. But it may also be that Paine was still alive when it was decided.

The floor maps of the 1907 fundraising flyer display a need for more space. Even the addition of a basement floor and the assignment of every square inch to a union group could not provide enough space for the individual teacher’s interaction with the individual student.

HARVARD CRIMSON,
December 18, 1906

MUSICAL UNION BUILDING
**Will be Erected for the
Department of Music and
the Musical Societies.**

Detailed plans for the Musical Union Building, to be erected for the use of the Department of Music and all the musical societies in the University, have been prepared by prominent New York architects and accepted by the Graduated Executive Committee of the Pierian Sodality, under whose direction the preparations are being made. The building will be erected in the vicinity of Holmes Field near Pierce Hall. This site has been selected by President Eliot because of its accessibility and of the probability of its always being quiet. The main features of the plans are these: A hall, capable of seating 500, for chamber concerts, lectures, concerts by the Pierian Sodality, Glee Club and other college societies, organ recitals and organ practice; a smaller hall, to seat 250, for lectures, rehearsals, etc.; a large room for the musical library; seven smaller rooms for class work and for the use of the Pierian, Glee Club, Mandolin Club, Banjo Club and the Musical Club. The cost of such a structure would be about \$100,000. It is hoped that the building will be completed in time for dedication upon the 100th anniversary of the Pierian Sodality in 1908.

Genesis Phase 2: 1907–13

In 1907, after Paine's death, it looked very much as if this would also be the fate of the Harvard Music Building campaign. Again, it is Spalding's hour. In an attempt to direct a prospective donor toward placing an offer, Spalding refrains from talking at the crucial moment, remains silent and waits, just waits, and waits.... We'll let Walter Spalding himself tell us about a visit to Germany during which he took some time to call on a major donor for the Music Department, James Loeb:

In the summer of 1910 the writer was visiting the donor at his Villa on the Staffel Sea in Bavaria. One day on a walk the question was asked by his host, "How is the Music Department at Harvard getting on?" "Very finely," was the reply, "save that we have no adequate home." To this Loeb instantly answered "I will give you \$85,000 toward a new building." "That is most handsome of you," the writer replied, "and I accept on the spot."

That was the breakthrough for the entire project. Loeb acted as "Deus ex machina" at the right time, with exactly the estimated amount set by the Corporation. It seemed to be quite generous, and it is generous, no doubt. Nevertheless—it soon became clear to the small group of active supporters that the money available around this period did not cover the expenses. On December 27, 1910, John Howells wrote a lengthy letter to Walter Spalding discussing the alarming financial figures. Howells therefore began a process of critical evaluations searching for possible cuts (wood instead of marble could save about \$25,000, whereas fireproof construction was indispensable). The famous acoustician Wallace Sabine, in his assessment from June 26, 1913 on the Paine Hall acoustics, holds the budget responsible for acoustical problems which he was expecting from "...the necessity for extreme economy." (letter on following page)

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

THE GRADUATE SCHOOLS OF APPLIED SCIENCE

16 UNIVERSITY HALL
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
June 26, 1913.

Mr. F. W. Hunnewell, 2d,
5 University Hall.

My dear Mr. Hunnewell:

I am in receipt of your letter stating that the Corporation wished me to report on the plans of the proposed Music Building with reference to the acoustical problem.

I have from time to time discussed these plans with Mr. Howells. It has been impossible for Mr. Howells to carry out some of my suggestions because of the necessity for extreme economy. On the whole, however, the auditorium is one which will have good acoustical quality, and is as good as can be planned under the necessary limitations.

For the sake of economy, it will be necessary probably to use plain hard wood seats. In this case, the auditorium will be satisfactory acoustically only when there is a reasonably large audience. In the total absence of an audience, there will be excessive reverberation. This is not, however, a matter which concerns the design.

Very truly yours

Wallace C. Sabine

Letter from faculty member and Symphony Hall acoustician Sabine pertaining to cost-cutting during the construction of Paine Hall.

At a meeting held in Harvard Hall last Commencement Day, the Musical Union of Harvard University was formed, for the purpose of providing a building for the Department of Music and the Musical Societies of the University. The following officers were chosen :

President

ARTHUR FOOTZ, Boston

Vice-Presidents

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Henry L. Higginson - Boston | B. J. Lang - Boston | William D. Howells - New York |
| George Foster Peabody - New York | Emil Paur - Pittsburg | Robert Bacon - Washington |
| Arthur F. Estabrook - Boston | George W. Chadwick - Boston | Richard H. Dana - Cambridge |
| Samuel Carr - Boston | Frank van der Stucken - Cincinnati | J. Ellerton Lodge - Boston |
| Francis E. Peabody - Boston | Dr. Karl Muck - Boston | Richard C. Cabot - Boston |
| J. M. Seawell - San Francisco | Walter Damrosch - New York | Thomas M. Osborne - Auburn, N. Y. |
| James Reed - Boston | Frederick A. Stock - Chicago | Charles S. Hamlin - Boston |
| Samuel W. Langmaid - Boston | Franz Kneisel - New York | David B. Chamberlain - Washington |
| John L. Norton - Memphis | Wallace Goodrich - Boston | W. Franklin Brush - New York |
| William P. Blake - Boston | Myron W. Whitney, Jr. - New York | William Endicott, Jr. - Boston |
| Charles G. Saunders - Lawrence | William J. Winch - Boston | Reginald C. Robbins - Boston |
| Dawes E. Furness - Boston | Eben D. Jordan - Boston | Walter W. Naumburg - New York |
| Warren A. Locke - Cambridge | Walter R. Spalding - Cambridge | Herbert Lyman - Boston |
| W. M. Davis - Cambridge | Lewis S. Thompson - Boston | Arthur H. Dakin - Boston |
| Edward Bowditch - Albany | Louis A. Coerne - Boston | Nicholas Longworth - Cincinnati |
| William F. Apthorp - Boston | Daniel Gregory Mason - New York | Dave H. Morris - New York |
| Richard H. Soule - Brookline | Henry T. Finck - New York | Edward Burlingame Hill - Boston |
| Walter C. Learned - Chicago | James Loeb - New York | Richard C. Dixey - Boston |
| Charles H. Williams - Boston | Frederick S. Converse - Westwood | Henry S. Nash - Cambridge |
| Edward F. Whitney - New York | George L. Osgood - Brookline | Alexander Forbes - Milton |
| Frank Merriam - Boston | Phillip H. Goepff - Philadelphia | J. Arthur Beebe - Boston |
| Charles Harrington - Boston | George A. Burdett - Boston | Joseph Wilby - Cincinnati |
| George D. Markham - St. Louis | Benjamin Carpenter - Chicago | Richard Aldrich - New York |
| Maurice H. Richardson - Boston | Percy Lee Atherton - Boston | William C. Heilman - Cambridge |
| Paul Dana - New York | Owen Wister - Philadelphia | Charles Peabody - Cambridge |
| F. W. Taussig - Cambridge | Arthur S. Hyde - Boston | Albert A. Howard - Cambridge |
| Herbert E. Greene - Baltimore | Jerome D. Greene - Cambridge | D. Crosby Greene, Jr. - Boston |
| C. H. W. Foster - Boston | Joseph H. Choate, Jr. - New York | Philip L. Spalding - Philadelphia |
| Elliott H. Pendleton - Cincinnati | Jacob Wendell, Jr. - New York | Joseph Dorr - Cambridge |
| Morris Loeb - New York | Morris Earle - Philadelphia | Ernest H. Abbott - Yonkers |
| Samuel A. Elliot - Cambridge | William G. Farlow - Cambridge | Atkins B. Cunningham - New York |
| Edwin Hale Abbott - Cambridge | Arthur J. Garceau - Dedham | Forrest F. Collier - Boston |
| Edward S. Dodge - Cambridge | Byron S. Huribut - Cambridge | Everit B. Terhune - Boston |
| Henry G. Pickering - Boston | John D. Long - Boston | Alexander Steinert - Boston |
| W. Kirkpatrick Brice - Boston | Clayton Johns - Boston | C. M. Loeffler - Boston |

Treasurer

Horatio A. Lamb - 27 Kilby Street, Boston

Secretary

John W. Saxe - 16 State Street, Boston

Subscriptions to the fund for the proposed building may be sent to Horatio A. Lamb, 27 Kilby street, Boston, Mass., or to any member of the Local Subscription Committee who will forward the same to the Treasurer.

The cost of such a building as planned will be \$100,000, and a maintenance fund will also be required of \$50,000, to provide an annual income for light, heat, care and repairs.

It is hoped that the building will be completed in time for dedication upon the 100th anniversary of the Pierian Sodality (one of the oldest musical organizations in the country) and upon the 50th anniversary of the Harvard Glee Club, which occur in 1908. For this purpose the building should be started in the Spring of 1907, and the money subscribed before that time.

With care

Edward S. Dodge } Local Subscription Committee.

Charles Lealoy

Part of the 1907 flyer, announcing the formation of the Musical Union for the purpose of providing a building. Note that all the signers are given the title of Vice President.

A STATEMENT CONCERNING THE RECENT GIFT OF \$80,000 FOR A NEW MUSIC BUILDING AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

During the last ten years the Department of Music at Harvard has more and more felt the need of a well-equipped building for its exclusive use. This need is caused by the peculiar requirements for the effective study of music, and by the marked increase in the number of students in the Department.

In the courses on Musical History and the Appreciation of Music, in connection with which there is a great deal of vocal and instrumental illustration, it is particularly desirable that the building where the teaching is done, and its general locality, should be as quiet as possible, and also somewhat isolated. For not only may music itself suffer from outside disturbance, but may in the nature of things be a cause of annoyance to workers in other departments.

Within the last fifteen years the number of those who elect music each year has more than quadrupled. The Department now always contains over two hundred men, and one year had as many as two hundred and seventy-five. The growth indicated by these statistics compares very favorably with that in other subjects offered at Harvard, and is a fact which lovers of music should be glad to know.

Holden Chapel for nearly twenty years has been the only available room, accommodating about eighty-five to one hundred and twenty-five men, and since no two courses of the ten offered by the Department can be held at the same time, the practical difficulties in making an arrangement of lecture hours may readily be seen.

The situation of Holden is likewise so noisy that in the spring and autumn (the seasons of open windows) it is quite impossible to do good work in such unfavorable surroundings.

At last we may hope that the time has come for the Department of Music and the closely allied organizations, the Pierian Sodality Orchestra, the Glee Club, and the Musical Club, to have a suitable habitation, since a Harvard alumnus, who for the present wishes his name withheld, has promised \$80,000 for a music building, on condition that there is raised before January 1, 1913, \$50,000, this sum being required by the Corporation as a maintenance fund. A balance of \$5000 remains to be raised before the above date, as the donor will not hold open the offer beyond that time.

The undersigned hereby make an earnest appeal to all graduates and other friends of Harvard, and to lovers of music who desire to promote University instruction in the subject, for subscriptions to this undertaking, so that the generous offer of this friend of music at Harvard may be secured.

Subscriptions may be sent to Professor W. R. Spalding, 5 Berkeley Place, Cambridge.

A. LAWRENCE LOWELL
CHARLES WILLIAM ELIOT
HENRY LEE HIGGINSON
GEORGE D. MARKHAM
OWEN WISTER
HORATIO A. LAMB
FREDERICK P. FISH
CARROLL DUNHAM
THOMAS MOTT OSBORNE
FREDERICK SHEPHERD CONVERSE
ARTHUR FOOTE
DAVE HENNER MORRIS
RICHARD ALDRICH

A House Is Being Built

The Corporation first had to take care of some unfinished business. For example, they had to appoint the architect, John Howells. Howells had cooperated since 1902, but had not been formally contracted for the job. The Corporation announced Howells's contract as the chief architect, but appointed also Eugene J.A. Duquesne, professor of architectural design, as collaborator. (It is not quite clear to me what exactly the function of the second architect was—was it simply to support Howells in questions of interior design? Or was it done out of distrust of the younger colleague? What in Paine Hall originated with Duquesne, or was he only a paper tiger?) The Building Committee (Professors Spalding, Walter S. Burke, Wallace C. Sabine) was important because Sabine, the famous acoustician and expert for concert halls, could exercise direct input during construction. Sabine's masterpiece, Symphony Hall in Boston, needed several years of experimentation to complete. Today it is, together with the Vienna Musikverein, considered to be one of the very best concert halls worldwide.

Harvard's business regulations dictated that funds be collected before construction could begin. In the fall of 1911 when President Lowell was already in office, a sum of \$5,000 was still needed to fulfill the Corporation's request for a sufficient maintenance fund. A group of 13 supporters of the Music Department published "A Statement concerning the recent gift of \$80,000 [sic] for a new Music Building at Harvard University." The purpose of this statement was manifold. Certainly it was aimed at a successful conclusion of the fund drive, as references to the deadline of January 1, 1913 are worded rather strongly. But the statement is also a text of vindication.

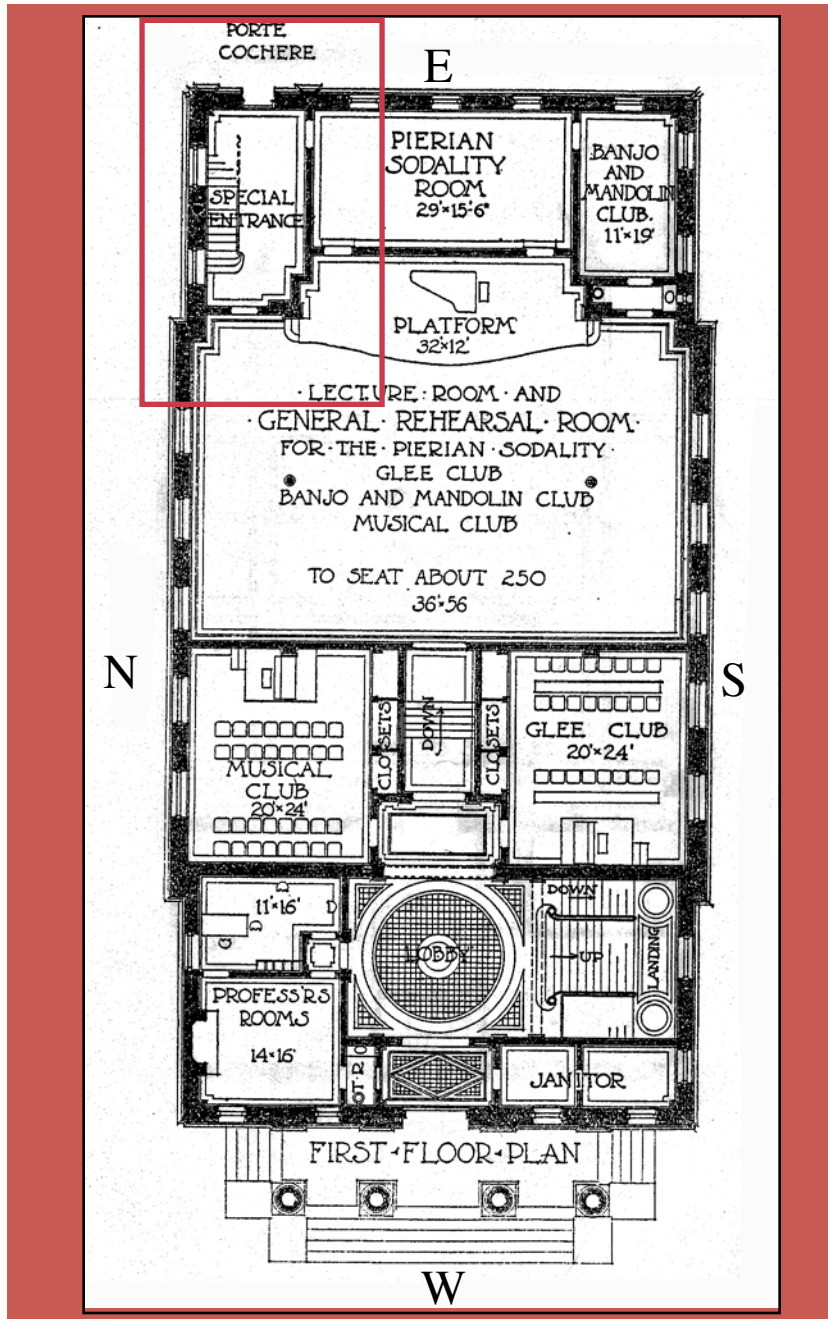


Three reasons are given for the urgency of action. First, there are “the peculiar requirements for the effective study of music.” The cryptic wording means that scholars in music need a quiet place in order to read music, that is, to study scores. A second reason concerns the opposite: musicians make noise and could be “a cause for annoyance to workers in other Departments.” The third reason is the enormous increase in the number of music students. The horror stories about Holden Chapel are told again in the “Statement”—probably (hopefully) for the last time. With the support of two Harvard presidents, the current and the previous topping the list, there should have been no problems. And indeed, in November 1914 the building was declared complete, though in fact it was not. The text for the outside frieze was not selected; and the proposal for an organ (for which space had been reserved on both the first and second floors behind the stage) remained unsatisfied. The organ is still missing today.

A Carriage for the Harvard Music Department?

In the 1907 plans (opposite) we see that a second entry has been added in the northeastern corner, that is, the left back corner. Here Howells subtracted a small piece of space from the first floor main hall, a rectangle of approximately 11x19-feet. (For reasons of symmetry the same space is “cut out” of the right side, barely enough to be used as two upstairs dressing rooms.) A small stairway leads to the second floor. The room there is labeled “Rear Hall,” and its proportions are almost identical with the “Special Entrance” on the first floor. A door labelled “Extra Exit” on the second floor opens to the concert hall. But something is wrong with this new “exit” at the northern corner of the building. It seems that it serves no purpose. The dressing rooms on the right side can be accessed easily from the stage by using the rear door, the small stairs, and continuing through the narrow “passage” behind the prospective organ. Why add a second entry?

One explanation could be that Howell’s first rendering had only one entrance/exit, which was not sufficient for a building that could easily host 700 people. The Cambridge Fire and Police Departments had to inspect the plans and approve of them. In this case they probably requested that another outside door be added. And the wording of the exit sign in the “Rear Hall” seems to support this conclusion.



1907 flyer, first floor. The "Special Entrance" and "porte-cochère" are outlined.

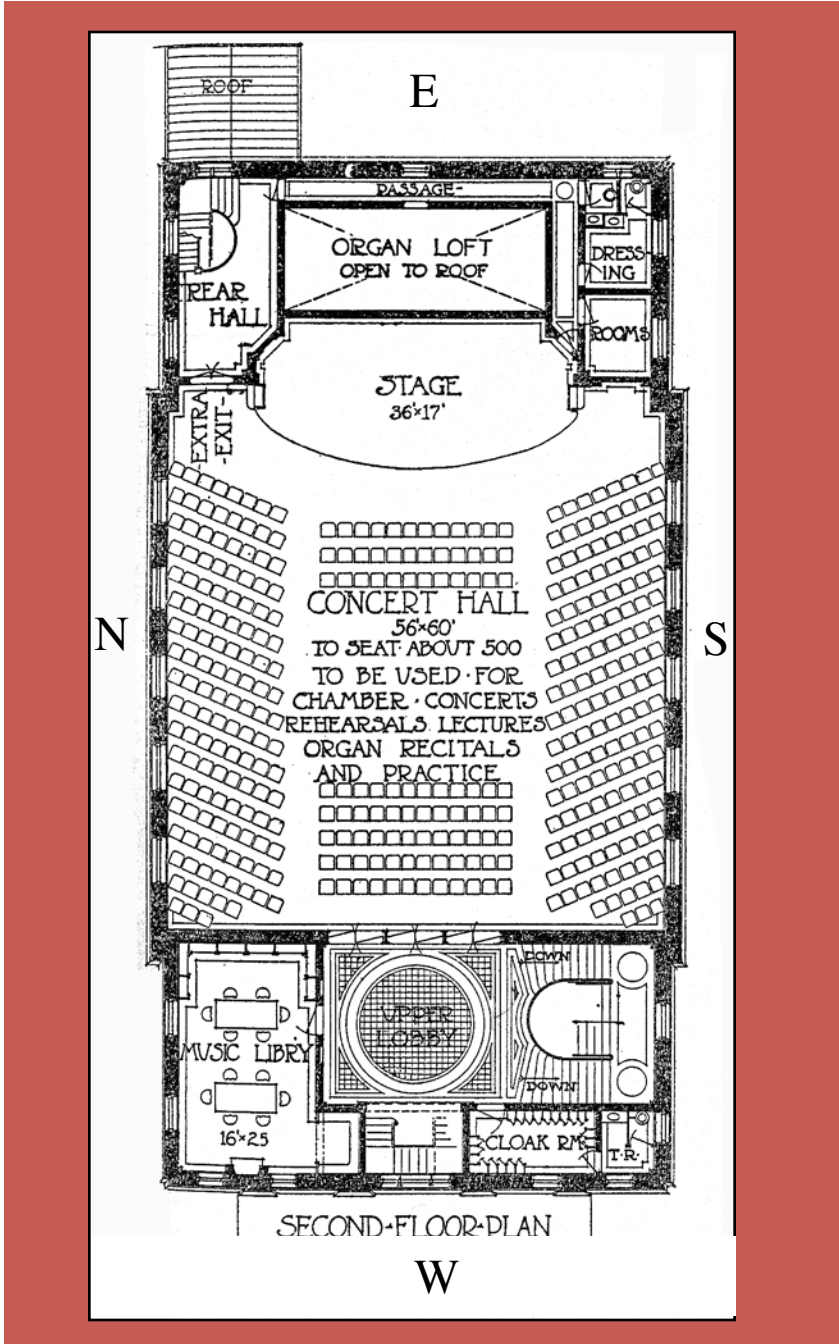
But John Mead Howells would not have been the Howells that he was, had he not turned this on its head. The special entrance on the first floor is identified with the French term “porte-cochère,” that is, carriage door.

“What next?” A carriage for the Music Department? Or—even more arrogantly—a “porte-cochère”? I think it was a joke, Ein musikalischer Spass without sounding music. I am sure that John Howells never seriously considered installing a carriage driveway for the Music Department. It is possible that he resisted adding the rear door, and in return made fun of those who insisted he did. Howells certainly knew of the huge mansions which were built by rich families to demonstrate their wealth in communities like Newport, Rhode Island, or on the southern Connecticut coastline. These mansions indeed had large porte-cochères and correspondingly large and splendid carriages.

It also could be that the carriage Howells imagined was a rural carriage, one that was affordable for the average farmer and fit into smaller storage space in barn or even in an annex to the farm house. The real effect of the theory of Howells’ bringing another “rural” element into the game is the support it gives my thesis about the building’s dialogue with New England’s local architecture.

A Late Change of Concept

We have mentioned that both the 1902 and 1907 floor plans place the main entrance, that is, the Palladian part of the building, on the small, west side, directly opposite Hemenway Gymnasium. And the orientation of rooms, doors, and windows—the entire interior, including the concert hall—is based on an east-to-west axis. Even though the Palladian style dominates architecturally, the New England component is strengthened when the main entrance is moved to the north. This conceptual change occurs rather late in the genesis of the building. The 1902 flyer does not have this reading, nor does the 1907 flyer. But the latter has the new interior order already incorporated, assigning rooms for all the societies that form



1907 flyer, second floor



Lawrence Hall, on the site of the current Science Center.

the Musical Union. Thus, the date for the change is somewhere between 1907 and 1913. My guess is it came later rather than earlier, because of either financial concerns or problems of space at the selected site.

There are signs of a general shortage of funds that resulted in the use of lower quality building materials. The problem of space regards the distances between the proposed hall and its three neighboring buildings. At this point, the distance to Jefferson seems to be satisfactory if the Music Building could be placed as far to the south as possible, that is, it had to touch the annex to Lawrence Hall. This was negotiated by the presidential "Committee on the proposal for the site of the Music Building." The light tone and the bold signatures of their letter to the President bring a touch of humor to a serious matter. But this meant Hemenway would be only a couple of yards to the west of the Music Building. This was one of the reasons why the location of the main entrance had to be changed.

Cutting and Pasting

Shortage of money and difficulties with the existing buildings—that seems trouble enough. The 1907 floor plans reveal that the architects had to drop several items, and it is almost certain that funding was the main reason, as such adjustments came late in the process. Consulting the Ward 9 map again (p. 8) one realizes what it meant to "insert" an entire building into the already existing configuration, with heavy pedestrian traffic and the necessary trees and green space.

June 5, 1913

Dear Sirs:-

The Committee on the proposal for the site of the new Music Building desire to report that it is now unanimous in its belief that the building should be placed with its back directly touching the one-story addition to Lawrence Hall in the position shown on the accompanying map.

Very truly yours,

*Nelson R. Spalding
(for James Loeb)
Walter Morris,
A. Lawrence Lowell*

President and Fellows
of Harvard College

OF RECORD

Spalding, Loeb, Morris, and Lowell signed this tongue-in-cheek letter and dashed off a drawing to satirize how boxed-in the music building would be.

The Spiritual Model: Phillips Brooks House

There is almost a Phillips Brooks *Leitmotiv* in Spalding's writings whenever an aesthetic or historical conclusion is called for. He will always point to the Phillips Brooks Society and, with the highest Phillips Brooks expectations, request that the now-united musical societies do for the unification of musical life at Harvard what the Phillips Brooks House has done so adequately for the religious and social activities. Music is, in this context, understood in the broadest manner as a great social and democratic activity.⁹

This is a definition of music from the perspective of a university scholar, and Spalding is aware of the specific nature of his conception of music: "Harvard lays stress more on the cultural than on the vocational aspects of the art."¹⁰ Whether such an opposition is valid or can be theorized is another story. The happy music chairman envisions a turnabout and sees music as a leading discipline: "The enthusiasm for music at Harvard is unique, and in the coming years is certain to alter the academic atmosphere in the most beautiful manner."¹¹ Music—making music and thinking about music—at the core of Harvard's curriculum? We will let him dream.



Phillips Brooks House, 2010

Part Two: The Composers' Frieze

Making of a Musical Canon

Genesis Phase 3 1913/14 (16)

The last year of work on Harvard's concert hall must have been as frustrating as it was exciting, because the building was moving quickly toward completion. The required change from a west façade to a north façade, that is, a change from a narrow entranceway to a broad one, was a major operation. Howells "moved" the Palladian portal, and in so doing (on paper for sure), kept a connection to the great architecture of the Renaissance and the notion of something important, elevated, and dignified.

The material that documents this critical period is mostly preserved in the Property Information Resource Center (PIRC) and covers sources from October 1913 through February 1916. The majority of items are blueprints (on tracing cloth, paper, vellum, and information on the frieze). The material also dates architectural changes.¹²

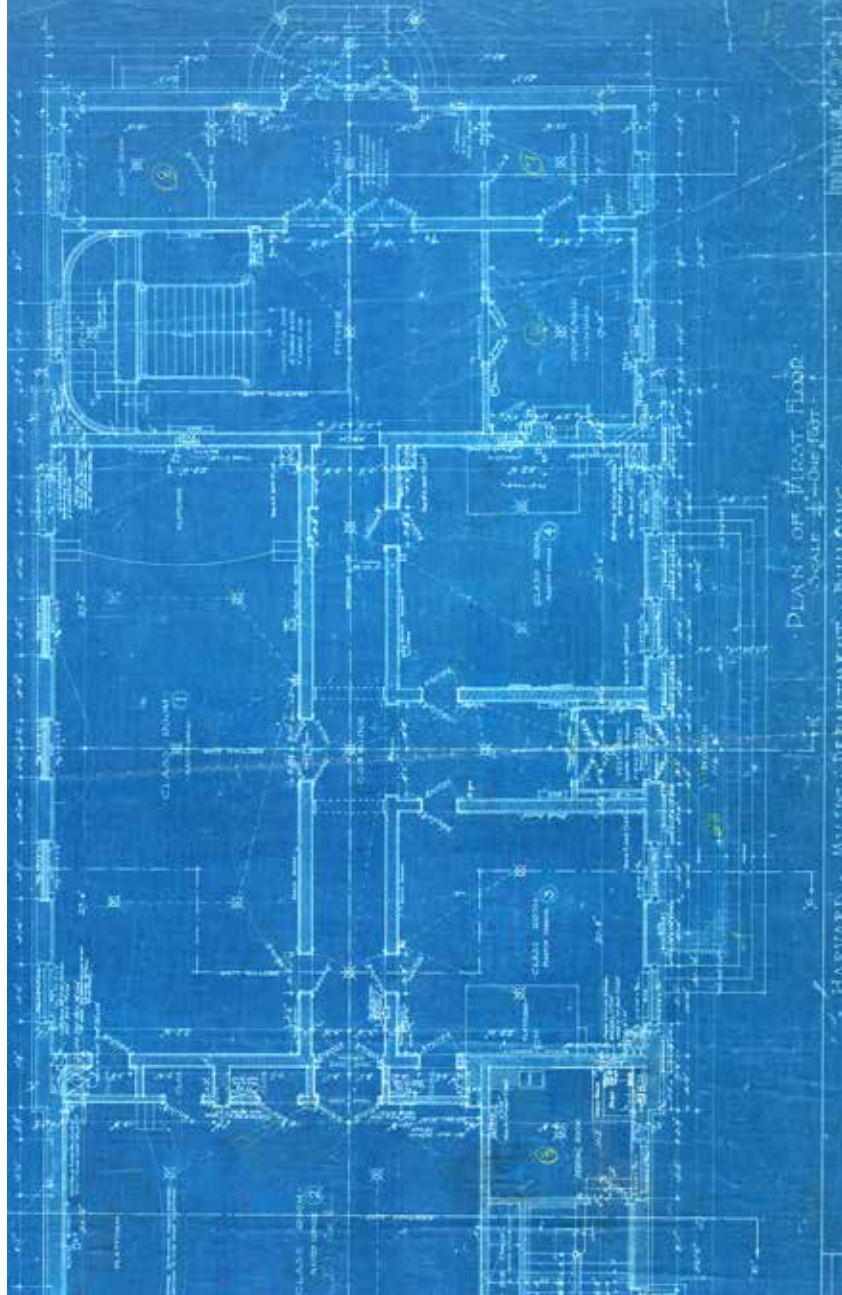
There is one blueprint from as early as March 8, 1913, but 25 more are from July through October 1913. In a letter dated June 12, 1913, architect Howells writes to President Lowell:

We send herewith a set of prints of the plans for the new building for the Music Department. These builder's plans are practically the same as they have been all along, and have been seen and approved by President Lowell, Professor Spalding, Professor Sabine and others interested. They have also passed the Cambridge Building and Police Departments. Work is still going forward on them and on the specifications, so that it will be some weeks before builder's estimates will allow us to determine whether work can be started at once under the appropriation.

We learn there that the actual construction work had not started, and we can safely conclude that the third generation of floor plans date probably from June 1913 at the earliest.

Another source for documenting the late genesis of the Music Building is the *Harvard Crimson* newspaper. The *Crimson* writes on October 31, 1913: "There are to be two entries and porches, one on the west and the other on the north side of the building..."; the final conceptual changes have been made, but the actual construction, again, has not yet started.

The floor plan of the 1907 flyer is a revised and enlarged version of the earlier 1902 flyer. The 1913 plans are actual blueprints, much more detailed, and much larger.



1913 blueprint (330A0005)

This reproduction of the floor plan for the first floor is dated September 2, 1913. One recognizes the overall shape of the projected building, with a massive “insertion” of the new north entrance. This door does not lead to a significant place in the building, such as a vestibule, a meeting place, or an office. Instead we find a short corridor which ends at a long hallway; if you do not want to run your head into the wall, you have to turn left or right. The main entrance ends at a wall after four or five steps; not a very congenial solution.

The interior design and its purpose were victims of the late changes of concept, which moved around the outside of the building and left the interior behind. Thus we have an east/west axis for the interior of the building and a north/south axis for the exterior. Howells kept a relatively large door at the west facade with the result that, in the minds of the users, the north door was never considered a main entry and remains almost unused to this day. The Paine Hall north entrance has no function (except during the annual Department picnic and as a setting for photos of the Department members.)

“Exceptionally Attractive”

We enter the building on the first floor and walk up the stairs to the concert hall on the second floor. It is a room flooded with light, with large windows, almost too tall by today’s standards. There is a podium and a small gallery at the back—details that could almost be called classical (although the ornaments on the lighting structures below the ceiling might be considered obtrusive). This is architecture that seems not to interfere with the listeners in the audience, but leaves them with their music. Since photos of the original design are *rarissima* I quote from the earliest newspaper article:

From the entrance hall on the first floor, a broad staircase with white balustrade and mahogany rails, branching at the mezzanine level, leads to a similar space on the second floor, and from this second-floor hallway the ‘John Knowles Paine Concert Hall’ opens through three ample, arched doorways.

This concert hall is the feature of the building. It is nearly square, about forty to fifty feet in length and width and about thirty feet from floor to ceiling. The hall has the full width of the building from south to north and in the walls on each side are five high arched windows. Between the windows are wall lights and in the ceiling, four concealed chandeliers while the fifth ceiling opener, in appearance like the others, is a ventilator. The hall and

balcony contain 567 seats—seats with frames of antique mahogany and backs and cushions of silk plush of a delicate olive-green. The room has wainscoting to just below the window-sills and the panelling in between and above the windows, though seemingly of plaster, is in reality a thin felt, to give the proper resonance and to obviate any blurring echo. The walls are tinted a salmon color, and the woodwork is of white enamel. Above the cornice on the four walls are the names of famous musicians cut in the plaster... The hall is exceptionally attractive...¹³

The zone above the windows and the stage displays a very special feature that gives Paine Hall its charm as well as its historical perspective. There is a series of letters, fixed to the wall, whose sense and function become clear only from the middle of the hall: it is a frieze of composers' names that follow each other in apparent chronological order along three walls. The back wall remains empty. There are 26 names: ten at the right, nine at the left, and seven which occupy the privileged place above the stage, a central row that can be seen from all the 567 seats that were counted in 1914. (Today—after several restorations, including an enlargement of the stage—Paine Hall seats 437 people.)

And here are the seven frontrunners:

BACH – HAYDN – MOZART – BEETHOVEN – SCHUBERT – CHOPIN – WAGNER

The front row of names is loaded with meaning. Here are few observations. The position number one of the central row should belong to Gluck, who, although born almost 30 years after Bach, is now placed too early along the side wall. Exchanging Gluck with Bach, however, is by no means a mistake, but a small piece of ideology. Similarly is Wagner displaced. He has thrust aside Weber, who would come between Beethoven and Schubert chronologically, but here falls behind even Schumann and Mendelssohn. In both cases the impulse of correcting history is driven by the desire have the strongest representation of the canon in the front row. Another perspective is the order of corresponding names. Since Beethoven occupies the middle position of an odd series, the remaining six names appear in three pairs, embracing the center. Bach and Wagner take the outer positions, outside the proscenium arch. Haydn and Chopin come next. Then, closest to Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert.

The affinity between Bach and Wagner which our frieze realizes through structural



The early days: Paine Hall, ca. 1914; later, the Harvard University Orchestra poses on the Paine Hall Stage.



Paine Hall today. The large names appear on the frieze directly above the stage, the smaller ones line the sides of the hall.



audience left



center stage



audience right

licenses should not come as a surprise. The decades around the turn of the century witnessed the extraordinary success of Albert Schweitzer's book on the life and work of J.S Bach. The title of the French edition of Schweitzer's book reads *Le Musicien-Poète*, which adds a touch of French culture. The subtext here is the same ideology as that which promoted Bach to membership in the society of front row marchers. What is going on here, what is at stake? These questions become even more pressing when other issues catch our attention: six of the seven names from the central group are German. The solitary non-German name is that of Frederic Chopin.

Let me begin my central discussion *quasi* from the outside. I will present a series of music friezes first, and then return to Paine Hall. But before turning to these concrete examples, I feel the need to add a few thoughts about the implications of the formula, "calling by name," to which our friezes of composers belong.

Nomen est Omen

To address a person with her/his name has many contextual facets. Calling the name means, in the simplest form, identifying the person who has been called. The level or grade of identification depends on

the familiarity with the person who was called, the grade beginning at zero. The name is not necessarily more than a label. For example, the label that I receive when I attend scholarly conferences consists of my first and second names on a “name tag” that I am advised to place on my jacket so that it is easy to read. There is not a lot of information, and it includes nothing personal or substantial. The function of “name” is also to mark something that does not need to carry meaning. In order to present more meaningful information I could add to my “name tag” my profession, affiliation, position, and more, but increasing the “weight” of the component “word” decreases the component “name.” It’s too much information. The modern theory of language proposes that for our present consciousness the “calling by name” no longer carries with it magical properties or the ability to use power in order to enforce the biblical calling by name.¹⁴

I cannot quite agree with clear-cut historical separation of an age with “name tags” and another one without (just as I believe that the realm of the arts is equally spellbound by external forces throughout the eighteenth to twentieth centuries.) One of the most striking examples is from Isaiah (43:1), from the Old Testament. The paragraph includes the “calling by name” formula.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, o Jacob, and he that formed thee, o Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

The consequence of calling the name is a gesture of possession, of exerting power. For sure, the God of the Old Testament is a difficult God, dangerous and unpredictable. In the New Testament, however, people enjoy calling the name of God: gatherings meet “in his name”; life begins with the ceremony of baptism, the act of assigning a name (“in the name of Jesus”); many more examples and contextual aspects exist. The anthropomorphic appearance of the Name has, under the umbrella of the New Testament and in a kind of counter-movement, turned toward the sphere of wonder, of the magic, the super-rational. It is not by accident that composer

Helmut Lachenmann has tried several times to ennoble the term “magic” as a category with a specific place in the compositional process.¹⁵ After the passage through time dominated by the quest for rationality and purity of structure we have come back to allow again for expression, emotion, motionality, the artist as conjurer; these are all leading historical principles for the production of art. And here again, magic comes into play, with the enchanting and powerful fascination of the arts vs. the might of super-rational agencies.

This is not our topic here but it lurks in the background and reminds us of the depth that art such as Beethoven’s *Hammerklaviersonate* or Ives’ *Three Places in New England* represent and communicate. In Theodor W. Adorno’s most personal book, *Minima Moralia*, we find the sentence, “Art is magic delivered from the lie of being truth,” together with the direction for use, “The task of art today is to bring chaos into order.”¹⁶ This is certainly a position, giving testimony of a “damaged life” at a specific point in history, “after Auschwitz.” (And in the same author’s *Aesthetic Theory*, written almost a generation later, he uses a more flexible but strictly dialectical approach.) “The task of art” today (to use Adorno’s words) is the rescue of the great European tradition, but from a contemporary perspective. Here our frieze has some major shortcomings.

This is the situation: twenty-six composers have been “called by their name.” There is no contemporary avant-garde composer among them. Beethoven, the grand old revolutionary, is tamed by history, though his music’s power of innovation seems unbroken. The idea and construction of the Harvard frieze, though, required a fixed text. No deviation from the canon was possible; the frieze was not open toward the future. This is confirmed by the last addition possible: the choice was César Franck, not at all a bad composer, but an artist whose aesthetic orientation points toward the past. Despite his Symphony in D minor, or the Piano Quintet in F minor, the Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major, and a few other instrumental works that assured Franck his place in nineteenth-century music history, his instrument remained the organ. I cannot help but think that Franck’s and John Knowles Paine’s musical physiognomies look quite similar.

Let us turn to some comparisons in order to put the Paine Hall frieze in context. The difference between the friezes of Paine Hall and Rob-



Robinson Hall, Harvard University. The frieze above the door includes (left to right): Bronica, Michaelangelo, Giotto, Brunelleschi, Arnolfo, Fra Giocondo, Alberti.

inson Hall, for example, is significant. Paine Hall displays an “ordered set” of 26 names. (I borrow here a term from music theory). The identifying features of Paine Hall are the approximate chronology, the symmetrical placement of Beethoven, and the reordering of Bach and Wagner. In contrast, Robinson Hall has a large frieze with names of visual artists up to the Renaissance; but an internal ordering is nowhere discernable. The same is true for the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. The Gewandhaus in Leipzig, however (or more precisely, the Old Gewandhaus, from 1872–1894), with its placement of Mendelssohn and Beethoven as the two epicenters of the twelve selected names, forces a very strong structural concentration on Leipzig. (We shall return to the Concertgebouw and Gewandhaus freizes.)

Dialogues on Outdoor Friezes

John Mead Howells had a passion for friezes. Even when the verdict regarding the Music Building's outdoor frieze was troublesome, the architect fought for his convictions. And wasn't Howells the expert, not a certain Dr. Walcott, though the latter played the role of Hermes for the mighty Corporation. Howells began his internal campaign immediately after the building was declared open. On December 31, 1914 he wrote to President Lowell:

This frieze was specially built of extra thick clear wood (...)
I would very much like to see action taken on this, as I feel
that the outside of the building is not doing itself justice...

In his answer of April 13, 1915 President Lowell reported,

With some diligence and the cooperation of other professors
some proposals for an inscription for the new Music Building
were prepared and submitted to the meeting of the Corporation
yesterday. The Corporation would approve none of them, and
therefore I am afraid that, for the present at least, the building
will have to go without an inscription.

However in a note of April 26, 1915 to Mr. Howells, President Lowell communicated that

An inscription has finally been suggested by Dr. Walcott,
satisfactory to the Corporation, and is as follows:
"To charm, to strengthen and to teach
These are the three great chords of might."

frieze n. 1. Arch. a) the part of a classical entablature between the architrave and the cornice. b) any decorative band bearing lettering, sculpture, etc.



The exterior frieze as it exists today.

I quote one of Howells' letters to President Lowell, dated May 4, 1915, to give an impression of the intensity of this dialogue:

I duly received your letter of April 26th, giving the new possible inscription suggested by Dr. Walcott and satisfactory to the corporation provided it is adapted to the space. In order to give this question the most careful consideration, I have had the words placed correctly at scale on several sketches of the front of the building, the best of which I enclose. This gives 35 letters and spaces in the upper line and 41 in the lower. The criticisms are obvious.

An inscription forced to use two lines loses the simplicity and the monumental character of the single line of letters. A frieze of this sort in the best ancient and Renaissance examples was always filled with a single line of letters, unless in special cases it was closely filled with many lines as a decorative treatment; but the effect of two lines is unfortunate in that it divides the frieze horizontally and gives forcibly a little of the aspect of a sign rather than that of an inscription.

I send at the same time another sketch on which I have had placed one of the earlier inscriptions proposed, which has always seemed satisfactory to me because it contains 48 letters and spaces, which is almost

ideal in this case. This earlier inscription was, if I remember correctly, suggested by ex-president Eliot, though I may be mistaken as to this. I am not sure whether it is a quotation like the last one, but it seems to me to have not only much the same dignity but the same sentiment. Among all of the inscriptions so far proposed I wonder if the Corporation and yourself will not give this one further consideration and possibly approve it, since it so well fits the exigencies.

I want to say again that as the inscription will be incised like an inscription on stone, it will not stand out very clearly like a sign but will be as much for the purpose of interesting the surface of this blank frieze as for actually being read.

But despite his eloquence, Howells did not succeed. Longfellow, the poet of New England, “ornamenting” Harvard; that seemed to be the more interesting constellation. There is, however, a tiny piece of hair in this soup. Sensitive ears detect something off in the rhymes and meter of the lines Dr. Walcott selected, with good reason. Longfellow’s poem has seven stanzas; each stanza has 2+2 lines which rhyme in pairs (a b a b). The two selected lines have a different position in their stanzas: “To charm, to strengthen and to teach” is the fourth line of stanza six. “These are the three great chords of might” is the first line of stanza seven. Lines from a split origin do not rhyme. Nevertheless the poem is worded in such a way that one expects an end rhyme for each line. Moreover, the line pairs have an inner antecedent / consequent structure that binds them together. Due to the selection, this crossover structure is gone. The Corporation wanted to teach the Musical Societies and the Department a lesson; in the end, they fell into their own trap.

It is too bad. President Lowell conducts a lengthy dialogue with a real expert and then ignores his expertise. Howells warns the President not to select a text that proves to be too long for one line—Harvard does just that. Howells argues convincingly against a double line of words. Harvard will realize just that. The result is a clumsy, uneven outdoor frieze—not far away, H. H. Richardson’s Austin Hall shows a beautifully written one-line frieze using Exodus 18:20 as text.



And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk and the work that they must do.—Exodus:18:20

John Mead Howells, the young architect of Harvard's Paine Hall, loved Renaissance palaces and their mighty portals. Howells's first sketch for the Music Building is de facto a palace from the Italian Renaissance with an outdoor frieze of names. Surely buildings such as Austin Hall with its outdoor inscription were a lifelong inspiration for this group of young architects.

Outside the Harvard campus there are two other buildings in the Boston area that bear an outdoor frieze that is exclusively musical. The Musician's Mutual Relief Society (1913) decorated their newly purchased and renovated domicile at the crossroads of Follen and St. Botolph Streets in the very center of the city with a frieze of composers' names. Seven names face Follen Street and seven face St. Botolph Street. What principles were used to select and place the names are not known. Obviously, an American was requested, and MacDowell was chosen. It seems that shorter names such as Bach or Verdi were placed, for reasons of space, in the smaller corners. Pairings could also have been planned; Bach and Gounod could be such an example, as Gounod forced his rhapsodic melody "Ave



The Boston Musician's Union building, where the frieze extends across two sides: Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Palestrina, Brahms, Wagner (St. Botolph St. side), and Bach, Gounod, MacDowell, Tchaikovsky, Schubert, Grieg, Verdi (Follen St. side).

Maria” on to Bach’s little C-major masterpiece of preluding. On the other hand, Palestrina resides lonely and lost between Brahms and Beethoven.

A second “building” I pass on my way to Logan Airport, located at the Charles River Park, is most likely the largest document listing composers’ names: The Hatch Memorial Shell (1940). It is also said that the original Steinert Hall was a unique jewel. Built in 1896 in the middle of the Boston Theater District as part of a music center, the concert hall was “a restrained Adam Style auditorium with fluted Corinthian pilasters separating round arches.”¹⁷ The original hall was damaged by a flood, and concerts now take place in a different part of the building. I was not able to see it.

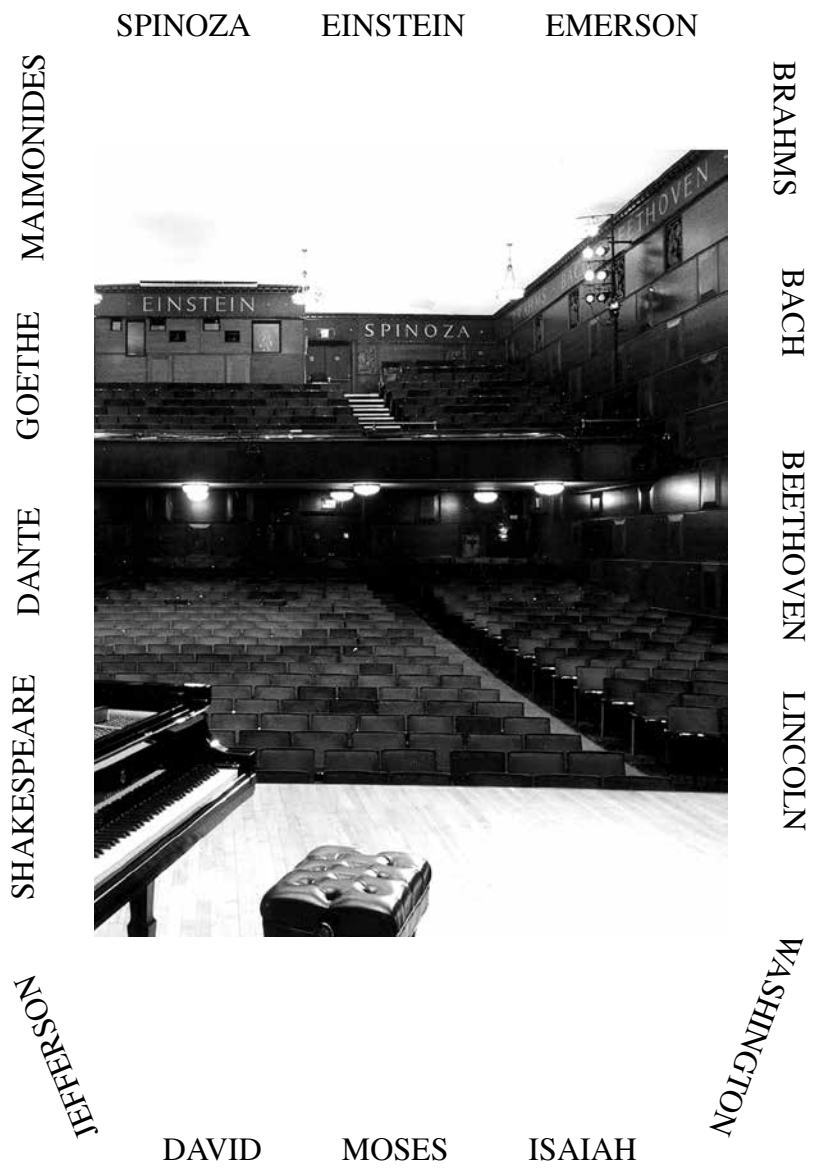


The Hatch Shell on the Charles River in Boston.

Harvard was by no means the only American university cultivating a specific way of ranking artists. Names “cut in stone” create publicity for generations to come. Such long life expectancy can safely be assumed for the names adorning the music building at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (built in 1925). It has on the façade above its doors three short friezes: four names (Handel-Bach-Beethoven-Wagner) above the main



The Brown building at University of North Carolina, Greensboro has several friezes. Pictured is the north side (Palestrina, Mozart, Schubert).



Kaufman Concert Hall at the 92nd Street Y, New York, NY. Brahms, Bach, and Beethoven are on the stage right frieze; David, Moses, and Isaiah are above the stage.

entrance, and three names each (Chopin-Verdi-Haydn / Palestrina-Mozart-Schubert) above the two side doors. The selection and placement of the ten names seem to have been done at random.

Friezes inside buildings are equally frequent. A strange case is the configuration of the genii from various disciplines (three per field) in the Kaufman Concert Hall at the 92nd Street YMHA. As one would expect from a prominent Jewish institution, the Old Testament is represented by the three Patriarchs—David, Moses, and Isaiah. The field of American politics is represented by three presidents—Lincoln, Washington, and Jefferson. Both “trios” take center stage with the presidents Washington and Jefferson framing (or “embracing”) the three biblical figures, while Lincoln’s name, for reasons of space (no more than five names per line), has to move to the left side. On the opposite side along the back wall are the philosophers Emerson and Spinoza, framing the singular Albert Einstein. Like Lincoln, the Jewish philosopher and physician Maimonides has to move and take a seat at the right side wall. This right wall belongs to the world of literature—Shakespeare, Dante, and Goethe. Space for three more names remains, and they are given to music (thus the visual arts do not participate). The three musicians selected are (what a brain-wave!) Hans von Bülow’s three great B’s: Bach – Beethoven – Brahms. I do not believe that Bülow’s equation of the three composers with the Trinity “Father, Son and Holy Spirit” and any German-nationalist understanding of this statement played a role when the names were selected for New York. I would not be surprised if this background was unknown in the U.S.

(This booklet is not a Bülow publication, so let me briefly refer the reader to the latest in Bülow research. Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, musicologist in Zurich, ends his discussion of Bülow’s “Three Bs” with this conclusion: what Bülow supported was not primarily Germanomania, but a new paradigm for the aesthetics of reception based upon an investigation into the structure and syntax of the music in question. In other words, Bülow’s 1883 statement, “Bach is father / Beethoven Son/ Brahms holy spirit./ The rest are ordinary mortals” is not primarily political [though the nationalistic attitude is part of the game], but is rather a moment in which art and religion converge.¹⁸)

Crossing the ocean, the number of music friezes becomes legion. I am not interested in any form of completeness, as my goal is to develop

a broad enough background for the discussion of the Harvard frieze. Two major realizations of the frieze as ornament—in the Paris opera, and in the “old” house, for sure, the downgraded Palais Garnier—come to mind simply because of the abundance of names, and also because of their use of sculpture. But these cannot be sufficiently dealt with in this short booklet, and I will also not touch Vienna.

Sculptures are also used for the Berlin Schauspielhaus, the “Hauptwerk” of Berlin’s famous Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841), which opened in 1821. The modifying rebuilding after its destruction in World War II was informed by the need of the GDR for a large concert hall in its capital, Berlin. The two projects were united: the smaller, original “Sprechbühne” became a much larger “Konzertsaal.” The transformation was exactly proportional, thus the result was a relative, not an absolute, Schinkel. And the sculptures grew with the building, both in size and in number. For the Music Room of the old Schauspielhaus, Berlin’s great classicist sculptor Johann Gottfried Schadow (1764-1850) created busts of the following artists: George Frideric Handel, Johann Friedrich Fasch, Ferdinand Fleck, Karl Friedrich Lessing, Johann Gottlieb Naumann, Johann Gottlieb Graun, J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, Johann Adolf Hasse, Franz Benda, and, belatedly, Felix Mendelssohn (1848). Today, 36 such busts have been placed on the longitudinal sides of the Concert House, along with 28 allegorical figures from Greek mythology.¹⁹ It was an interesting decision not to include composers from before Bach’s time. Was it because of the dominance of church music since the Middle Ages? The selection includes busts from the twentieth century only up to classical modernists such as Stravinsky, Schoenberg and Bartók. Webern, Berg, and Ives are not mentioned.

A particularly rich collection of composers’ names is on display at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. There are two halls, one small and one large, and both feature parts of this collection. The hall has two independent series of names running parallel. The first series is at the balustrade of the balcony with names 1–17. Up the wall and circling the four sides of the room (a frieze in its narrower sense), are names 18–46. Number nine was and is Gustav Mahler. From 1940 to 1945, during the German occupation, the name was covered with tapestry. Number three, with his first name missing, is (Ferdinand) Hiller, whose Jewish descent is explicitly noted. The “normal” friezes in both the large and the small hall were established in

1888. Each of the two series of names in the large hall (Bach–Handel and Stravinsky–Dvorak) start to the right side of the organ and continue clockwise. The starting point in the small hall is in the middle above the podium: there are 12 names, partly overlapping with the names in the large hall. And all that in the most beautiful disorder.

The Concertgebouw is also well known for its generosity to composers situated in the second rank. The image below shows the frieze section Zweers-Bruckner-Mahler-Franck-Diepenbrock from the balcony of the large hall, a group of five, including two Dutchmen. One of them (Diepenbrock) belongs to an international ranking (Nicolas Slonimsky categorizes him in the middle of his rating system as an “eminent” composer.²⁰

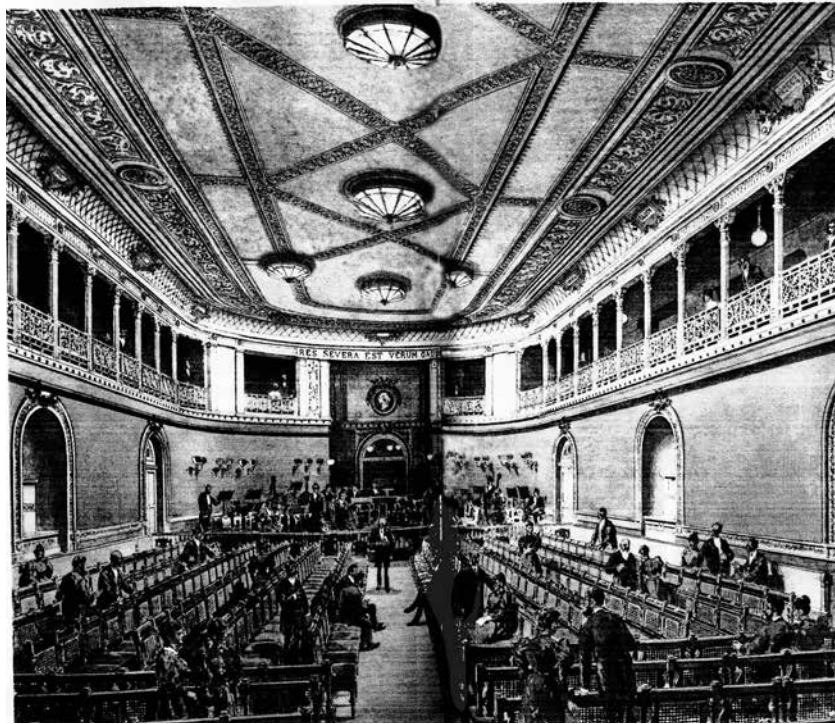
ZWEERS BRUCKNER MAHLER FRANCK DIEPENBROCK



Amsterdam Concertgebouw: along the back wall, pictured, are Zweers, Bruckner, Mahler, Franck, and Diepenbrock. (Photo enhanced to clarify position of names)

Bernard Zweers (1854-1924), however, remains a local figure (and Slonimsky gives him no *epitheton ornans* to rise from his position), but he belongs to the Amsterdam cultural scene and that justifies his place on the frieze. It is indicative of the Dutch spirit and temperament that public discussions took place about such esoteric things as a music frieze and that essays were written when a name was added or changed. It is important to see that—in contrast to the customs in other countries—a composer frieze is not sacrosanct to the Dutch. The case of Richard Strauss serves as a prominent proof. When he conducted the Dutch premier of his *Heldenleben* on the 30th of October, 1998, he realized that they had added his name to the frieze at the expense of Gounod.²¹

At the Altes Gewandhaus in Leipzig, the frieze was added in 1872 when the concert hall was renovated, and did not survive the construction



Altes Gewandhaus, Leipzig. The frieze is located above the balcony.

MENDELSSOHN

SCHUMANN

BACH

MENDELSSOHN WAS HONORED IN TRIPLICATE: HIS LARGE MEDALLION PORTRAIT HANGS DIRECTLY ABOVE THE DOOR; WRITTEN ABOVE IT IS THE MOTTO OF THE GEWANDHAUS, "RES SEVERA EST VERUM GAUDIUM" (TRUE HAPPINESS IS A SERIOUS MATTER), WHICH IS RELATED TO MENDELSSOHN; AND FINALLY, MENDELSSOHN'S NAME IS PART OF THE FRIEZE.

SPOHR

HANDEL

WEBER

GLUCK

SCHUBERT

HAYDN

CHERUBINI

MOZART

BEETHOVEN

Altes Gewandhaus frieze, Leipzig

of the new building in 1895. Here the selection and placement are clearly programmatic. For one, it concerns the composers of the eighteenth and early- to mid-nineteenth centuries; more specifically from Bach to contemporary music, that is, music up to Schumann. Secondly, in one of the two epicenters, the one above the great box, Beethoven's name appears. Beethoven was especially honored in Leipzig and had been, since the "Eroica" performance of 1807, the favored composer of the Gewandhaus. Exactly on the opposite side is the beloved Mendelssohn, the great director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus and founder of the conservatory. He is honored in triplicate: his large medallion portrait hangs directly above the door; written above it is the motto of the Gewandhaus, "Res severa est verum gaudium" (True happiness is a serious matter), which is related to Mendelssohn; and finally, Mendelssohn's name is part of the frieze. This is local patriotism certainly, but it is remarkably forward thinking, and is a sign of the *freie Stadt* and its commercial capital, in that Mendelssohn's Jewish upbringing did not affect his preferential treatment. (It would continue in Leipzig far into the Third Reich as the affair of the Mendelssohn memorial shows.)²²

The Gewandhaus arrangement of twelve composers is based on the special status of Beethoven and Mendelssohn and on the assignment of five "secondary" names to each of them. The first series of six starts with Bach, the senior of the twelve, and reaches the "peak"—Beethoven—in this order: Handel, Gluck, Haydn, and Mozart. The second series starts with Cherubini and reaches the goal—Mendelssohn—through Schubert, Weber, Spohr, and Schumann. In the composers' gallery Mendelssohn stands between Bach and Schumann, beyond time, in a way—before and after the history presented. Both Mendelssohn and Beethoven, however, achieve their outstanding positions through a simple manipulation of chronology. The Gewandhaus was reconstructed in 1894, and the gallery of honor was abandoned. That included the demolishing of the famous ceiling painting, Adam Friedrich Oeser's allegorical Masterwork. With this the composers' friezes lost their innocence. There are now on both sides of the orchestra pillars on the wall, in groups of four, the sixteen names of the concert masters and conductors of the Gewandhaus Orchestra since its foundation. In this way the members of the orchestra honor themselves.²³

Paine Hall

The message of the frieze is evident. European music is defined from the Renaissance through the present; its history is seen as a sequence of great individuals who can be represented by their names, with seven composers central to the period. This music-historical process culminates in the decades between Bach and Beethoven. The position of Beethoven exactly in the middle of the stage indicates his place in the center of history. Everything that was, leads to this center; everything that is, comes from there. The formula “after Beethoven” emphasizes the “after” in the sense of an historical judgment.

There is also a strong German accent to the names above the podium. Six of the seven composers are German; Chopin stands among them like an exotic Other. If we were not in the U.S. one would take this for German nationalism. But in Chicago, it’s even more purely expressed. There, five names adorn the front of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Hall,



Frieze on the home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra: Bach-Mozart-Beethoven-Schubert-Wagner. (Photo enhanced to clarify names.)

built in 1904. There are Bach – Mozart – Beethoven – Schubert – Wagner. All German, and again Beethoven occupies the center.

In Boston's Symphony Hall (1900) Beethoven was left alone from very early on, the only name above the stage, separated from history and contemporaries, setting the standard for music, and a criterion for what was being heard down below on the podium. Let us not be misled: this was



Beethoven's name sits directly above the stage at Boston Symphony Hall. Photo courtesy of Ira Wyman Photography.

and is the reality of the bourgeois culture of music from the first decades of the nineteenth century until today. For the great majority of citizens participating in musical culture, Beethoven's music determined what and how music should be. Historical energies had successfully formed a canon of classical music. Harvard's concert hall was a means to hear music inspired by both the power of Beethoven's art and by the result of his early influence. Although there are countless attempts to establish similar hierarchies in the humanities, none are as successful as the Beethoven model. In Boston's Symphony Hall no attempt was made to connect the series of sixteen sculptures with the single composer above. Each single statue should have something in common with music but they do not. The Boston copy of the Apollo Belvedere statue, for example, was taken from the original (which is itself a Roman copy) in the Vatican Museum. The statues in Symphony Hall were all selected from a catalogue of the Caproni Brothers, who specialized in casting replicas of Greek and Roman statues (and had purchased some of the most famous artifacts).

Another picture of Beethoven, residing at the center of music history and surrounded by his fellow composers, is presented in a drawing of a fictive meeting from the musical magazine *The Etude* (inserted in the December issue, 1911, and reproduced on page 65). Raphael's Vatican Stanza *The School of Athens* (also reproduced, p. 64) was obviously the point of reference for this rendering. In the *Etude* drawing, Beethoven is sitting in the position of a sovereign on a big, ornamented throne. The figure of the muse or goddess up on high, directly behind Beethoven, hints at a religious theme: Beethoven in the place of God the father, and Wagner, stepping forward and pointing with his finger at himself, as the son. But Wagner plays more the role of an impresario; he acts as if he were Loge. He is the only one who is talking, and most likely about himself, as indicated by the pointing finger. This is a bit of irony within a very serious world.

(A parallel example in the literary realm is a painting by Otto Knille, with the title "Weimar 1803."²⁴ Despite Schiller's popularity in Weimar it is Goethe whose omniscient mind sets the tone; his colleagues accept the arrangement.)

But back to Paine Hall and the question of who was not admitted to the canon of the frieze. To the twenty-first-century mind the total absence of women is telling. Who could have been nominated? It is difficult



The School of Athens. (Plato and Aristotle, disputing, in the upper half of the picture, walk towards their waiting colleagues, the philosophers, who are assembled in small groups)



Pl. XI. *The Musical Hall of Fame*, a painting distributed in reproduction with the magazine *The Era*, December, 1911. From left to right: Chopin, Handel, Gluck, Schumann, Weber, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven—the reigning figure (Apollo) in this European musical Parnassus.—Mendelssohn, Wagner, Meyerbeer, Verdi, Tchaikowsky, Liszt, Bruckner, Brahms, Grieg

The Musical Hall of Fame.

to answer, but perhaps names such as Hildegard von Bingen, Barbara Strozzi, Maria Antonia Walpurgis, Fanny Hensel, or Clara Schumann. It would be much easier to name women as performers. (In musical composition, because of discrimination, women were included “late.”) Felix Mendelssohn’s argument against women composers in general and his sister Fanny in particular reveals his absolute backwardness in matters of gender, and one can speak of cultural lag—at least in my twenty-first-century view. When Paine Hall was built the gender issue was just about to become a powerful vector in modern society. Female musicians in the nineteenth century had brought about a breakthrough in the performing arts, but in musical composition the ideology of the superiority of men’s creativity still prevailed.

Another case: the complete absence of names from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance on the front frieze catches the eye right away. This is not quite as surprising as one should assume from today’s point of view. Knowledge and research of music in the Middle Ages and Renaissance was relatively undeveloped even in 1914. The fact that names like Machaut or Josquin and the entire body of the “Dutch” in general are absent reflects—despite the extraordinary quality of works by Friedrich Ludwig or Peter Wagner—the scholarly knowledge of music history rather than a purposeful omission of names. There is not even a bow to British musical culture: no Purcell, no Elgar. But Tartini, and not Corelli or Vivaldi? Here the problem of selection, given the place and the establishment of a center, starts. In those decades Tartini’s so-called “Devil’s Trill” Sonata must have been extraordinary popular, perhaps accounting for his inclusion. But on the other side of the hall: no Rossini? Meyerbeer? And, with all due respect, no Strauss Jr? (Especially since he had the greatest success of his life in Boston.) Not Mussorgsky or Dvorak, but Grieg and Franck instead? The later still-contemporaries of the hall, for example Richard Strauss or Mahler, Fauré, or Puccini, had not reached the age that qualifies for acceptance. The initiators of the frieze obviously shied away from taking on a U.S. composer. Paine himself was not a possible selection, and rightly not!

We don’t know the authors of the frieze, nor do we know who had the idea or was responsible for choice and placement. It is possible that there was more than one initiator. The architect, for instance, who already planned a frieze in his first version of the Music Building could have been involved, but he certainly was not in the position to recognize,

interpret, and make use of the music-historic applications in order to line up 26 names. That would require an expert. This could only have been a person from the inner Harvard/Paine-circle. The frieze was something like a confession. Paine, a successful teacher, had a group of loyal followers who passed on his ideas. His influence at Harvard, even after his death, was perceptible for a long time. Loyal among the most loyal was Walter Spalding, later the author of *Music at Harvard*, who was already in 1903 (during the first attempt to construct a Music Building on the Harvard campus), one of the most dependable. To him, this project was his teacher's legacy. Paine had prepared the ground very well, but Spalding was more successful in moving the building project forward.

That Spalding had gotten a tight grip on things is evidenced also by the fact that it was he who published all news during the building process. The first discussion about installing a frieze, for example, took place in July of 1913. In the Harvard University Archive I found a note about a discussion in the Paine circle where a decision had been made with regard to the material and design of the frieze. The names were marked only with abstract letters AB CD EF. The entire right side of the frieze is preserved in original size as model.²⁵

The architect's blueprint drawing of the name, "Schubert," showing actual size and placement of the letters on the frieze. Here, the "S" is visible in the bottom half of the photo.



The public got the first news about the composers' frieze from Spalding. In June 1914, that is, shortly before the opening, he writes: "An attractive feature in the concert hall is to be a frieze on which in raised letters will be all the great masters of music in chronological succession from Palestrina to Franck... A special building of this kind was the dream of Professor Paine's life, and Harvard can never be too grateful to him..."²⁶ The decision to add a frieze thus was made relatively late, and Spalding's mention of Palestrina and Franck proves again that at least the concept of the composers' frieze existed by mid-1914 at the latest. Spalding's extraordinary praise for Paine in connection with the hall and frieze seems to indicate Harvard's Music Department had a special role for its first chair. There is no use speculating, however, as the idea could have been discussed within the Paine circle, particularly with Spalding, even before Paine passed away. Considering the great homogeneity of this circle, it wouldn't be surprising if Paine's conceptions held sway even eight years after his death.

Paine Has the Last Word

There is a source that represents Paine's view of music history in more detail. In the spring of 1871 Paine delivered a series of eighteen public lectures at various venues in Boston under the title, "The History of Music." (In 1907, more of Paine's work was published in a full volume of music history and criticism, *The History of Music to the Death of Schubert*). There is nothing extravagant about them: Paine simply narrates music history. His method of structuring his materials is straightforward: epochs, styles, genres, and composers, ornamented by performances on the piano.

There is no discrepancy in value judgment between the lectures and the Paine Hall frieze, except in the case of Wagner's aesthetics—the latter presentation is considerably more positive. Paine, who had studied in Germany as a young man, was an adherent of the classical school of Brahms and Hanslick, and therefore opposed to the "modern music" that Wagner represented. Yet over time he found his way to Wagner, even re-writing some of his compositions to make them more chromatic.²⁷ In 1903, Paine traveled to Berlin for the inauguration of sculptor Gustav Eberlein's Wagner monument. Paine's music must not have been considered entirely

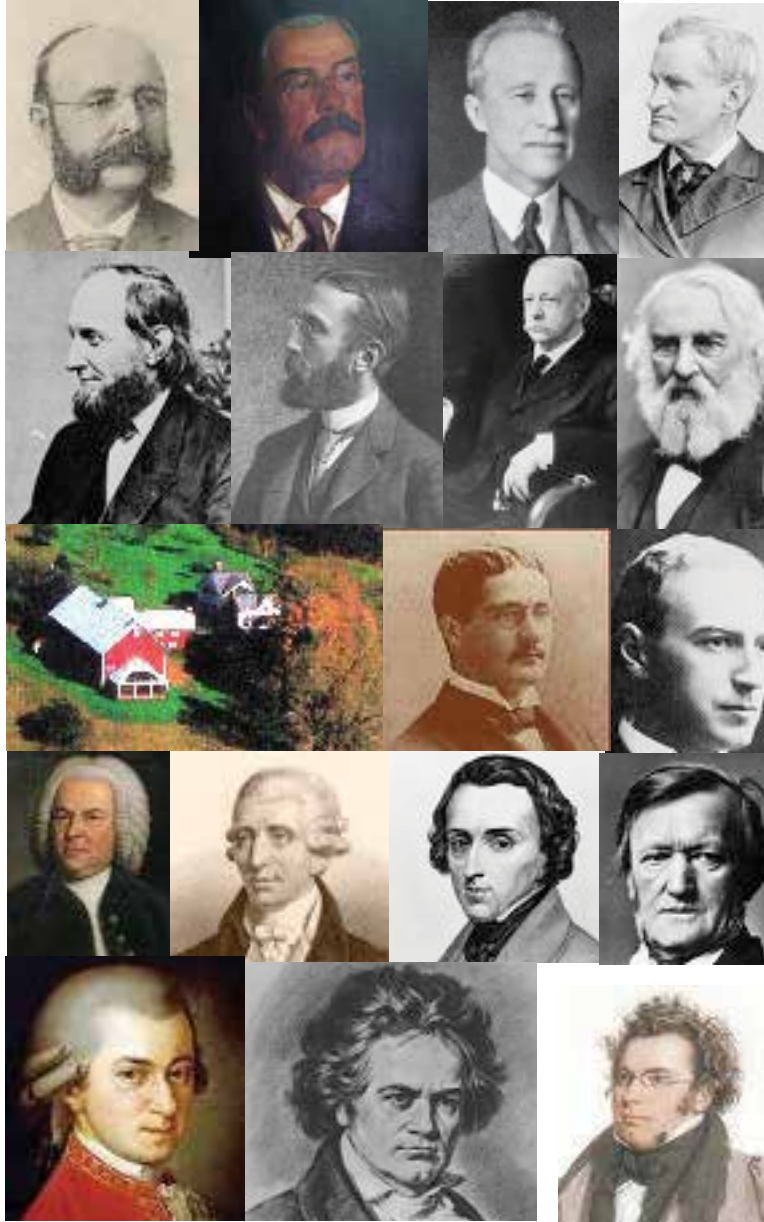
antithetical to Wagner's, since a composition of Paine's was played on this occasion.

Paine's lectures also give insight into the Tartini question. In Paine's words, he was "the first Italian violinist of this time ... He was called by his countrymen 'the master of nations.'" Paine continues with the reputed story of Tartini's dream of the devil playing his sonata with the "Trillo del Diavolo" in the last movement. So it is this side of his playing, experienced as demonic, which accounts for Tartini's superiority. And in his placement in the frieze, Paine's influence can be seen.

But there is also Frederic Chopin, who stands on the Paine Hall frieze front row as the only non-German. He wrote exclusively for piano. Positive mentions of Chopin's name occur in Paine's writings here and there. But at the same time Chopin did not get his own paragraph in Paine's lectures, as, for example, Schumann and Mendelssohn had. My impression is that had Paine participated in selecting the final names for the frieze, Chopin would not have been chosen. At the end of his penultimate lecture (it was the seventeenth), Paine remarked that there were two remarkable artists who demanded attention: Chopin and Robert Franz. Then Mr. Paine went to the piano to conclude the lecture with music. But he did not play Franz, nor did he play Chopin. It is telling that he performed Schumann's "Waldszenen" instead.

The Paine Hall frieze is a piece of sounding historiography. It reflects on musical documents and writing about music history at the end of the tonal era, and develops a canon of musical masters which share a Beethovenian heritage.

And ... New England? Transcendentalism had its heyday in these northern provinces in the nineteenth century. Many of the transcendentalists were Beethoven enthusiasts; among them, for example, John Sullivan Dwight, a member of the Brook Farm commune and editor of the most important American music journal of the nineteenth century. One wishes that the New England barn and the utopian ideals embodied by Brook Farm, inspired as they were by German idealism with a healthy dose of American pragmatism, be returned to their rightful place of honor in American culture. In Paine Hall, they are.



Paine, Spalding, Howells, Francis ("Musica delenda est") Parkman, Presidents Hill, Eliot, Lawrence, & Lowell, Longfellow, Loeb, Sabine, Bach, Haydn, Chopin, Wagner, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert.

Endnotes

¹ Samuel E. Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard 1636-1936*, Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press 1936, p. 450.

² Nelson C. Metcalf, "Newest of Harvard's New Buildings," *Boston Transcript*, November 11, 1914.

³ Walter R. Spalding, "The Proposed Music Building," *Harvard Graduate Magazine* 11, 1903, p. 378.

⁴ This is an allusion to the Latin phrase, "Carthago delenda est" (Carthage must be destroyed).

⁵ Walter R. Spalding, "The New Music Building," *Harvard Alumni Bulletin* 17, 1914, pp. 128-30.

⁶ Percy Lee Atherton to President Lowell, 3 Feb. 1912, quoted in Elliot Forbes, *A History of Music to 1972*, Department of Music, Harvard University, 1988, pp. 41-42.

⁷ Spalding briefly characterizes professional and especially amateur musicians from the Boston area and describes their relationship to Paine. See Walter R. Spalding, *Music at Harvard*, New York 1935, pp. 192-212.

⁸ Spalding, *Music at Harvard*, p. 270fn.

⁹ Spalding, "The New Music Building," *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, p. 129.

¹⁰ Spalding, "The Music Building," the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, 21, 1913, p. 444.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² PIRC 1903—002 Music Building original construction # 330A.

¹³ Metcalf, “Newest of Harvard’s New Buildings.”

¹⁴ H. Gipper, Chapter IV of entry “Name,” *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, 6, pp. 387-88. For the biblical considerations I have also used Hans Schmidt (et alia), “Namenglauben,” *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 4, 2. Aufl., Tübingen 1830, p. 408 ff. On Anne Shreffler’s suggestion, I used the King James Bible for biblical quotes.

¹⁵ Helmut Lachenmann, *Musik als existentielle Erfahrung*, Wiesbaden, 1996, p. 198. See also R. Brinkmann, “Der Autor als sein Exeget,” *Nachgedachte Musik. Studien zum Werk von H. Lachenmann*, ed. J. P. Hiekel and S. Mauser, Saarbrücken 2005, pp. 116-27.

¹⁶ Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia. Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben*, Berlin 1951 (*Gesammelte Schriften* 4, pp. 254f). Engl. transl., E.F.N. Jephcott, London 1974, p. 222. For Adorno’s later “Aesthetic Theory” see the edition in *Gesammelte Schriften* 7, pp. 87-88.

¹⁷ Susan and Michael Southmark, *The Boston Society of Architects*, Boston, [2nd edition] 1984/5, p. 123.

¹⁸ Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Musikalische Interpretation. Hans von Bülow*, Stuttgart 1999, pp. 92-113.

¹⁹ Thanks to Ulrike Fege-Wenau who provided me with documents from the Concerthouse Archive about the old as well as the new decoration. Schinkel’s original is discussed in Helmut Börsch-Supan and Lucius Grisebach, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Architektur Malerei Kunstgewerbe*, Berlin 1981.

²⁰ See Slonimsky and Kuhn, eds., *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Music*, New York 2001, v. 2, p. 879.

²¹ Literature: Marius Flothuis (ed.), *Het Concertgebouw orkest 75 jaar*, Amsterdam 1963; N.P.H. Steffen, Componistengalerij,” *Preludien* 53, No. 9, May 1995. I thank Johan Giskes, Ineke Voneken-Zwart, and Paul Op de Coul for their generous help.

²² A large statue of composer Felix Mendelssohn that stood in front of the Gewandhaus in Leipzig was removed by the Nazis in 1936 because of Mendelssohn’s Jewish origins and presumably destroyed. Mendelssohn had deep roots in Leipzig; he founded the Leipzig Conservatory and conducted the Gewandhaus orchestra from 1835 until his death in 1847. See Gesine Adler, “Das Leipziger Mendelssohn-Denkmal (1892-1936), in Thomas Schinköth, ed., *Musikstadt Leipzig: Beiträge zu einem verdrängten Thema* (Altenburg: Verlag Klaus-Jürgen Kamprad, 1997), pp. 395-404.

²³ For details of the Leipzig composers’ freize see: *Die Geschichte der Gewandhauskonzerte zu Leipzig*, Vol. I: 1781-1881, ed. Alfred Dörrfel, Leipzig 1884, Vol. 2: 1781-1981, ed. Johannes Forner, Leipzig 1981. Vol. 1, p. 19 (Artworks), 71-72 (Concert Hall), p. 106 (Concert Hall), p. 176 (Frieze), p. 177 (Wall Pillars), p. 248 (History of Concert Hall), Vol. 2 p. 723 (Old Concert Hall).

²⁴ Wilhelm Voßkamp, “Bildung ist mehr als Wissen,” in: *Mitteilungen der Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung*, no. 76, December 2000, p. 33.

²⁵ Signature UA Music Building, section # 330. Thanks to Ms. Maureen Jennings for sharing her expertise with me and for giving me competent advice.

²⁶ Spalding, “The New Music Building,” *The Harvard Graduates’ Magazine*, 22, June 1914, p. 586.

²⁷ Kenneth C. Roberts Jr., and John C. Schmidt. “Paine, John Knowles,” In Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/20712> (accessed January 20, 2010).

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