

Music History and Cosmopolitanism / abstract & bio  
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### **Cosmopolitan Nationalism in the Anglophone Reception of *Der Freischütz***

Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* has a conflicted reception history. Hailed by some as an archetypal German opera, it was nevertheless widely transmitted and proved highly adaptable. In the years following its 1821 Berlin premiere, it was translated and otherwise modified for audiences from London and Paris to New York and New Orleans, suggesting an appeal that outstripped its German-ness. Michael Tusa resolves this apparent tension by arguing that early-nineteenth-century German identity *was* cosmopolitan, at least in part. This helps to explain the influence of foreign traditions like *opéra comique* on this self-consciously German work, along with its popularity abroad.

Yet scholars have said little about what the foreign consumption of *Der Freischütz* actually looked like. This paper investigates Weber's reception in the English-speaking world by considering arrangements of music from the opera, along with newly composed interpolations, that appeared in Dublin and New York in the late 1820s. These documents shed light on the meaning of *Der Freischütz* in the United Kingdom and the United States—specifically, they show how Weber's music was implicated in the formation of Anglophone national identities and in the simultaneous formation of a transatlantic musical culture.

For instance, “The Horn of Chace,” a song composed in the United States by Charles Gilfert for inclusion in *Der Freischütz*, was fraudulently credited in Dublin to “Carl von Gilfert of Prague.” Citing the related concealment of American authorship in London newspapers, the *New-York Evening Post* explained this misattribution as a reaction to the rising global influence of the United States. A U.S. adaptation of the *Freischütz* overture, published in New York as an “American Serenade,” similarly asserted cultural sovereignty by masking Weber's authorship. Blending transnationalism and localism, these examples suggest that nineteenth-century cosmopolitanism and nationalism were mutually reinforcing categories.

**Myron Gray** teaches music history at Haverford College in Pennsylvania and Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. A recipient of awards from the American Antiquarian Society, the American Musicological Society, and the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, he completed a Ph.D. in musicology at the University of Pennsylvania in 2014. His dissertation, which was a finalist for the Zuckerman Prize in American Studies, connected French musical influence in federal-era Philadelphia to the emergence of American partisan politics. Parts of this work have appeared or are forthcoming in *American Music* and *Common-place*. A new project considers opera transmission and music reprinting in the nineteenth-century United States. Myron is also a consultant and commentator for colonial music programming at the Fraunces Tavern Museum in New York.