

ABSTRACT

Curating the Composer: Preserving and Interpreting Our Musical Heritage Through Composer House Museums

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Although historic house museums, especially those in which political or community leaders once lived, are quite common and have been analyzed by museum scholars, the sub-genre of historic houses in which European classical composers lived has not been explored in as great a depth. The purpose of this thesis is to review the history of house museums dedicated to interpreting a composer who once lived there. Following a discussion of the literature on the subject and the methods used in my research, one chapter will explore the history and current operations of several key composer house museums, and another will present a case study of one specific composer house museum. The former chapter is informed not only by mastering the literature on the subject but also by taking a European research trip in March 2012, which allowed me to experience the interpretations and to appreciate the rich variety of approaches used. The latter chapter focuses on the Handel House Museum in London, first examining in detail a master's thesis which was quite literally a blueprint for the museum, and then

exploring the ways in which that blueprint was realized. This thesis documents the diverse ways in which these museums bring to life these composers and their music.

Curating the Composer:
Preserving and Interpreting Our Musical Heritage
Through Composer House Museums

by

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Composer house museums are irreplaceable memorials that preserve the stories and lifestyles of the world's greatest composers. These homes are a crucial piece of every country's musical heritage, preserving the stories of the creation and inspiration behind the world's musical masterpieces and the men and women who wrote them. The homes may present two sides of a composer to the public: the composer and the private man. "The composer," of course, is the side of the person's life for which he is famous, and it is this fame that entices visitors to come to composers homes. On the other hand, "the man," (the composers in this particular study were all men) the very normal and often rather unremarkable side of the composer, may be what intrigues the visitor the most. This normal, human side, shows the composer's daily habits and the manner in which he lived, and it is this aspect of the composer's life that can only be truly depicted in the very place in which he once lived. It is for this reason that composer house museums are such a critical part of our musical heritage.

This thesis will focus on an understudied sub-genre of historic house museums, composer house museums. These are houses or apartments that were used as a residence by a well known composer or his family. They can range from the house in which the composer was born, to one in which he grew up, to houses or apartments in which he lived while actively composing, to the ones in which he died. This thesis will compare how museums take different approaches to curating the historical memory of a composer, even, in some cases, multiple museums dedicated to the same composer. It is my thesis

that composer house museums have played and will continue to play a critical role in preserving our musical heritage by interpreting both the ordinary life of a composer, juxtaposed with the extraordinary music he created.

Chapter Two will review the literature on the subject and outline my method. Unfortunately, there has been little scholarly assessment of this type of historic house museum. Information found about these houses came from a number of books about composers aimed at a popular audience and a few on the composers' houses themselves. Later in the chapter, I will discuss the method of documenting these museums through research in the existing literature, on the internet, and, especially, through personally visiting several of the most important examples of these museums. The heart of the analysis will be in Chapter Three, where I will document the rise and evolution of composer house museums. The genre will be contextualized in terms of earlier house museums such as Mount Vernon, and modern day incarnations analyzed in light of contemporary museum practices. Then, in Chapter Four, I will conduct an analysis on Julie Anne Sadie's "Blueprint for a Composer Museum: The London House of George Frideric Handel at 25 Brook Street, Mayfair." In this thesis, Sadie plans how to turn Handel's London home into a museum. Analysis shows that composer house museums use a wide variety of interpretation methods and governance.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature and Method

Composer house museums are museums that were previously the homes of composers, preserved and interpreted by museum staff. The composer house museum is a sub-genre of historic house museums. Such museums have their roots in pioneering home interpretations like Mount Vernon (home of George Washington) and Monticello (home of Thomas Jefferson). Whereas earlier house museums in Europe were palatial homes of royalty or the nobility, Mount Vernon and Monticello memorialize well-to-do common men who became great political leaders. While most Americans know the stories of Washington and Jefferson and their famous homes, composer house museums remain widely unknown, as the general public is often not as well versed in cultural history.

The two earliest historic house museums in America were both associated with George Washington. The very first was the Hasbrouck house in Newburgh, N.Y., which opened in 1850.¹ This Dutch colonial house had served as the headquarters of General George Washington at the end of the Revolutionary War. It was the first historic house museum opened in the United States. It was created by a local historical society, whereas Mount Vernon was a project of a national organization, the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union.²

¹ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Presence of the past: A History of the Preservation Movement in the United States before Williamsburg* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), 8.

² Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* (Plymouth: AltaMira Press, 2008), 126.

Though the Hasbrouck House was first, it was at Mount Vernon that the MVLA created a historic house interpretation of an important political figure, preserving his domestic environment, but also displaying original iconic objects. In so doing, they set a pattern which would be followed by many other historic house museums in America, but also in European museums, notably the houses of composers, literary writers, and other cultural figures. While the preservation of historic homes in America was largely the work of private organizations, European museums, including composer's houses, had a more varied group of founders. In many cases, the city or state government would step in to save the home of these national figures, while on occasion private groups or individuals would do so.

On an initial assessment of this topic, I expected to find much more information and analysis about composer house museums than there actually was. After all, these are some of the most influential and revered members of hundreds of different countries and cultures. However, scholarly literature relating specifically to composer house museums turned out to be quite limited. Thus, other resources were also consulted. The resources available relating to composer house museums could be divided into several categories: books aimed at tourists and a popular audience, composer biographies, books about historical houses and museums in general, books about music history, gallery guides available at the museums themselves, the museum's websites, and a few scholarly works relating to composer house museums.

There are three scholarly publications that related specifically to composer house museums. One of these publications is essentially notes presented at a museum conference, one is an academic thesis that presents a feasibility study on turning a

composer's house into a museum, and one is aimed at travelers, music enthusiasts, and the general public. The publication *Literary and Composer Museums and Research* contained all the papers and speeches given at the International Committee for Literary Museums' Annual Conference in 2008. Most of the ICLM's focus was on literary museums, but a few guest papers about composer museums were included. One of the three music related papers, "New Aspects of Research in Music" by Erling Dahl, focused on new media in music, and how museums can store electronic records. While this paper could be somewhat relevant to composer house museum's storage methods, it focused more on music museums of popular, rather than classical, music.³

Another paper in *Literary and Composer Museums and Research*, "The Chaikovsky State House Museum's Scholarly Publications Based on the Museum's Collections Research" by Galina Belonovich, was far more relevant as scholarly work on composer house museums. Belonovich discusses the museum's collection, the part of Tchaikovsky's life that is being displayed, and the upcoming projects the museum will have. One of these upcoming projects was creating a catalogue of all the jewelry that was ever given to the composer. The museum also plans to open an archival reading room, for scholars only, which will contain both original documents and electronic copies. Though Belonovich's work was very interesting, more attention needs to be given to how a composer house museum differs from an average historic home. Not explored were the

³ Board of International Committee for Literary Museums, *Literary and Composer Museum and Research: Proceedings of the ICLM Annual Conference 2008* (Paris: Board of ICLM, 2009).

questions of if the audience had different expectations for every institution, and whether the museums use different techniques in an attempt to satisfy these expectations.⁴

The work that was used more than any other in this thesis is *Calling on the Composer, A Guide to European Composer Houses and Museums* by Julie Anne Sadie and Stanley Sadie.⁵ This work, aimed at a non-academic audience, was originally a master's thesis for City University (London) and relates this couple's travels through Europe as they explored composer house museums. Stanley Sadie was the editor of the sixth edition of the Grove Dictionary of Music. The authors were the founders of the Handel House Museum in London. Clearly, their travels helped to provide them with a knowledge base for the restoration and interpretation at the Handel House. This publication is perhaps the single most informative and scholarly work relating to composer house museums. After a few introductory sections, the book is divided into maps of the sites, by country, and short sections that are arranged by composer. Each of these composer sections starts with the composer's birth, his birth house or city, the homes he lived in throughout his life, how these homes came to be museums, and the most notable works he wrote. In the introduction of their book, they explain why they wrote it, the sources they used, what they intend to cover, the information they will provide, and acknowledgements.

The final scholarly work relating to composer house museums is “Blueprint for a Composer Museum: The London House of George Frideric Handel at 25 Brook Street,

⁴ Board of International Committee for Literary Museums, *Literary and Composer Museum and Research: Proceedings of the ICLM Annual Conference 2008* (Paris: Board of ICLM, 2009).

⁵ Julie Anne Sadie and Stanley Sadie, *Calling on the Composer: A Guide to European Composer Houses and Museums*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

Mayfair.”⁶ Julie Anne Sadie wrote “Blueprint” as her thesis for an MA in Museum and Gallery Management at City University in London in 1993. The work is an in-depth study on how Sadie recommends turning Handel’s old house into a Handel House Museum. It is, without doubt, the most comprehensive piece of literature written about the process of turning a building into a composer house museum.

Sadie bases her proposals in historical precedents, beginning her thesis with a review of existing composer museums to date. She included detailed projections for the best floor plans, collections, staff positions, and many other areas of the proposed museum. She also provided a detailed plans on how she proposed the building be acquired and turned into a museum. Included also are suggested exhibits and how best to acquire a collection. While not all of her ideas came into fruition, the museum as it exists today is very close to the vision Sadie had in 1993.

The majority of remaining literature related specifically to composer house museums was not produced as scholarly publications, rather as ones geared toward tourists and music enthusiasts. These books, aimed at a tourist or popular audience, are organized in a differing of ways; Simon Callow's book is arranged by city, Gerard Gefen's is done by composer. Gerard Gefen's *Composers' Houses* holds as many pages filled with Ghristine Bastin and Jacques Evrard's photographs as it does text.⁷ These pictures tell their own story. They illustrate the exhibits of these museums, the entrances, the gardens of some homes, and the neighborhood the homes rest in. Books such as this serve dual purposes, documenting the appearance of the museum at one moment in time,

⁶ Julie Anne Sadie, “Blueprint for a Composer Museum: The London House of George Frideric Handel at 25 Brook Street, Mayfair” (master’s thesis, City University, London, 1993).

⁷ Gerard Gefen, *Composers' Houses* (UK: The Vendome Press, 1998).

and serving as a souvenir for visitors. Gefen's book is different from the other tourist aimed books, in that it divides its chapters by composer. The work details who the composer was, what instruments he played, his musical career, the homes he lived in, and some little known facts about the composer. However, Gefen provides little information provided on how the museums themselves are run. He clearly visited these museums, and provided us with a well illustrated introduction to these homes.

Another approach to historical sites related to musical heritage is *Classical Destinations: An armchair guide to classical music* by the noted actor Simon Callow.⁸ He provides information not only about composer house museums but all music-related buildings in certain European cities. This "armchair guide" takes the reader into some of the most stunning buildings in all Europe, and the focus is much broader than just composer house museums. Within chapters of different cities, Callow's book offers information about the composer's primary residence (often, the house that was chosen to be preserved and made into a museum), the composer who lived there, and various other homes that the composer may have had. However, though it documents the appearance of these museums at the time of its writing, it does not address the way in which the museum evolved to its current state.

The only other type of publications related specifically to composer houses was gallery guides. These are not easily available, and I found most of these while I was visiting the houses, while others were found during my initial literary search as rare books from Amazon.com. At first I only obtained four works: two publications for the Handel House in Halle, one about Mozart's Apartment in Vienna and one on Houses in

⁸ Matt Wills, Paul Burrows, and Simon Callow. *Classical Destinations: An armchair guide to classical music* (Pompton Plains: Amadeus Press, 2006).

Finland, which included one page on Ainola, Sibelius's house. These works focus on providing information about objects in the collection and detail how and where various objects are exhibited in the house. The *Handel House in Halle, History of the Building and Museum Guide*, by Edwin Werner, also provides information on how the museum was preserved and made into a museum.⁹ These short publications provide more information on how the composer houses are run, *as museums*, than any other publication I saw in my research. As I visited these museums, I collected more guides, and discovered that they were indeed the most current and informative works available about each individual museum, especially in regards to current exhibits.

In addition to literature related specifically to composer house museums, there is a good deal of relevant material available relating to museums and historic homes.

Interpreting Historic House Museums, edited by Jessica Foy Donnelly¹⁰ provides ample evidence of the exhibit and other interpretive techniques used in historic homes. It also covers other aspects of these homes, including what the house itself and the surrounding landscape can tell us about the owner. Subsequent essays deal with more specialized aspects of his house interpretation. The first chapter, "Past Present and Future, The Place of the House Museum in the Museum Community" by Patrick H. Butler III, provides an introduction into American house museums by discussing early efforts at Mount Vernon, and other sites relating to founding fathers, continuing through stages of professionalization, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and Colonial Williamsburg, and explores the present shape of these museums, and the future

⁹ Edwin Werner, *The Handel House in Halle: History of the Building and Museum and Guide to the Handel Exhibition* (Halle: Handel-Haus, 2006).

¹⁰ Jessica Foy Donnelly, *Interpreting Historic House Museums* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2002).

in this field. Of course, this book does not provide information about every type of historic house, so information on homes such as composer or literary house museums must be found elsewhere.

Another type of resource that was of use, but not directly related to composer house museums, was composer biographies. There are a plethora of books about these composers, and several of them even mention the composer's homes. While they do not provide much information about the museum or how it is run, books such as *Haydn* by Neil Butterworth provide many stories about the composer's families, his daily life, and the historical context of the time.¹¹

One additional source of information about these institutions is each museum's website. The layout and information of most of these websites was similar, providing the composer's biography, the history of the house, how it became a museum, information about visiting, and summary of the collections and exhibits. Additionally, some websites provide a composer timeline, a snippet of music, either visual or audio (in the form of written scores or recorded music) a description of the group that governs the museum, and a gallery of images of the home. With these websites, one can enjoy a "virtual visit" to the homes, and gain useful information about the museum and its operation, in a readily accessible manner. Of course, there are other websites that also hold other information about the composers. While sites such as Wikipedia may not always provide completely accurate information, they can serve as a starting point from which more in - depth research can be done, as well as providing a useful view on just what inaccuracies, myths, or beliefs the general public may have about these composers.

¹¹ Neil Butterworth, *Haydn* (London: Omnibus Press, 1977).

All these resources shall serve as a the basis for my research and writings about composer's homes. As most of my content is based on literary and other sources, taken together with the fact that these museums change every day, please be aware that some information may be out of date. I have discovered that some composer houses have been preserved that have not become museums. Some are still privately owned while others may have a plaque on the building to commemorate the composer. For one reason or another, however, some homes have not been “rescued” and turned into a museum. However, the majority of the homes that are still standing, have been made into museums and are open to the public. I shall attempt to build on the analysis offered in the publications I have consulted thus far, and hope that my work will inspire other scholars to research and write more about these fascinating historic houses. In addition to analyzing the existing literature, I used numerous methods to gain new information about these museums.

Method

My initial review of composer house museums revealed that there were many such museums to choose from. With hundreds of composer museums in Europe, I chose to focus on former homes of composers that had a great impact on our classical music heritage, as well as those that I was able to visit personally. Unfortunately, I found that, as helpful as the relevant publications were, many were out of date.

My undergraduate, a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance, was received from The Juilliard School in May 2010. My focus has shifted towards the visual arts, specifically museums, and I sought to a successfully blend music and museum studies through this thesis about European composer house museums. In the research phase, I

found only a few books that were specifically related to composer houses. I soon realized that there were going to be few books or articles specifically about these houses and widened my scope to include books relating to relevant musical history, the historical house museum field, and the composers themselves. Even when resources were available, they were often out-of-date.

Almost every composer house museum had a website that was available in English, but even this fell short in conveying what it was like to experience the home for yourself. Websites were very helpful in providing information about the composer's history, however, often highlighting the time of his life in which he lived in the historic house, the collections that the museum held, and the layout of the exhibits. The sites also provided information about the services and entertainment the public could expect from the museum, including tours, special events / concerts, rentals, special exhibitions and educational programs.

It became clear that only firsthand experience would provide the information that I wanted about these museums. Thus, from March 9 through March 16, 2012, I travelled to London, Vienna, Salzburg, Mürtzschlag, Halle, and Bonn. During these visits I toured the facilities, interviewed staff, took pictures, and noted what did and did not appear to work well at the museum. Seeing the museums firsthand was immeasurably helpful, and many staff members at the museums I visited were kind enough to take the time to meet with me and answer any questions I had. Often, after arriving, I would interview a staff member with whom I had an appointment (ranging from the deputy director, to a member of the governing body of the museum, to the curator), many of whom allowed me to record our meeting. Then, I would take a tour of the house, often

guided by the staff member I met with, view the types and styles of the exhibits, noting which ones seemed especially well done and the ones that perhaps could have been arranged in a better way. Each museum arranged its exhibits differently, with each home focusing on different times of the composer's life and varying levels of interactive exhibits. The most common interactive exhibits were the audio stations, where a guest would sit down, put on a set of headphones, select one of the composer's works, and listen to the music. I would purchase the literature they had on their houses, usually in the form of gallery guides, and gather any available brochures. When allowed, I would take photographs of the house and the exhibits inside. My visits to these museums provided me with irreplaceable information and a general sense of the home, its environment, and how it functioned as a museum, which became the basis for my analysis.

After returning, I assessed and organized the information, typed up transcriptions of the recorded meetings, compared the photographs with the literature available, and organized the information by composer and city. This information was compiled with my previous and future research and analysis, and then incorporated into individual chapters. While the information compiled during my trip added exponentially to the total knowledge that could be found on the subject, there are still many unexplored areas in this field, and I hope that others will continue the work that I have started on this topic.

CHAPTER THREE

Preserving and Interpreting Composer House Museums

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of numerous composer house museums, examining their historical context and their current operations. This thesis will focus on classical European composers of the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras. The seven composers chosen for this chapter each play an integral part in our musical history, and each man has at least one composer house museum in his honor. In the (alphabetical) order they will appear in this chapter, these seven composers are: Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms, George Frideric Handel, Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Jean Sibelius, and Richard Wagner. This chapter will provide an overview each of the homes belonging to these composers, and include information about each museum's history, collections, exhibits, layout and educational programs.

Inside these homes, museum staff interpret the composer's daily life through exhibitions and programs. They exhibit the composer's musical manuscripts and personal items he may have used every day. These museums often attempt to create "period rooms," in which the room is made to look, as much as possible, as it would have at the time the composer lived there. The rooms in which the composer slept or composed are those that are most often restored as period rooms. Composer house museums also often include "gallery rooms," rooms that make little attempt to appear as they would have in the composers time, but are instead arranged to hold display cases and exhibits. These gallery rooms often include exhibits and technology that would ruin the historic illusion

presented in the period rooms. A person walking from a period room into a gallery room would notice a distinct shift in atmosphere, a dichotomy where immersion into the living state of a past composer transforms into a modern interpretation and exhibition. Exhibits in gallery rooms, interactive and many other types, can appeal to a wider variety of audiences than the period rooms alone would.

These two types of rooms, though the most common, are by no means the only tools of interpretation that composer house museums utilize. Some of these museums contain libraries, preserving and presenting original scores and documentation related to a specific composer. Other museums utilize interactive exhibits, classrooms, and recorded music, allowing the visitors with varied learning styles to achieve a closer connection to the composers of the past. Finally, it is increasingly common for composer house museums to interpret the composer's music via live concerts—a means by which the past is truly brought to the present before our eyes and ears. Music, after all, is an intangible "object" that can only be experienced through performance, either recorded or live. Live performance is an especially effective museum interpretive tool, because such concerts are performed in the very similar manner the music was originally intended to be enjoyed at the time the composer created it. Some of these museums even construct adjacent concert venues, (often buying adjacent homes or properties in which to construct them) while others host concerts within the composer's home itself. In such cases, a visitor might be hearing a live performance of a composition that was written in the very room in which he or she is sitting.

A comprehensive understanding of these museums can only be truly grasped by viewing the examples that exist today. Thus, the rest of this chapter will provide a glimpse into a few of the homes of the seven genius composers listed above.

Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven was a restless spirit, often moving his home several times a year. Beethoven's constant wandering was partially due to his gruff and stubborn personality, and partly due to his penchant for banging out music on his piano at all hours, which often caused tension between himself and other residents. Here, I will discuss only a few well known homes that have become museums, though that number itself is quite impressive, and speaks to the reverence that the public still holds for the great composer. Ludwig van Beethoven's birth house museum (Beethoven-Haus Bonn) is a member of the European Musician Museums consortium, a group that has several other composer houses as members, including the Handel House in Halle, the Richard Wagner Museum in Bayreuth, and the Brahms House in Baden-Baden.

Beethoven altered his personal musical style several times during his life. Musical historians have thus separated his life into three style based periods: early, middle, and late. His middle period, also known as his Heroic Period, due to the massive works he produced and the tone of the music, was well loved by the German Nazis. The music of Beethoven's Heroic Period could easily be described as emotional, patriotic, and inspirational. In fact, the Nazis used the rousing tone of Beethoven's middle period, as well as several of his other works, as musical propaganda, to spread German unity, pride and patriotism.

Beethoven-Haus, Bonn

Beethoven's parents moved into a house at Bonngasse 20, in Bonn Germany, in 1767. The family occupied four rooms on the first and second floors of the house. Ludwig van Beethoven was born here in December 1770 and lived there until 1774, when the family moved out.¹

The house was in danger of being demolished in 1889, but a group of citizens in Bonn set up the Beethoven Haus Society, bought the home, and opened it as a museum a year later. The society also bought a nearby home, and so the museum today is a combination of two houses. The Beethoven family shared this facility with others, and only occupied rooms at the back. The museum now holds the largest Beethoven collection in the world.² As with many composer homes, Beethoven's birth house is a mix of authentic period rooms and exhibit or gallery spaces, with the floors and rooms organized by themes related to the composer's life and works.

The first floor consists of galleries that present Beethoven's childhood and early accomplishments by displaying a variety of objects. One such object is the announcement for his first concert given at age eleven, though his father presented Beethoven as an eight-year old in the announcement, so that the young composer would be associated with musical prodigies such as Mozart. Also on display is the Beethoven's first composition, published at age fifteen. Here also are displayed several silhouettes of Beethoven's family and important composers of the time, as well as materials relating to Beethoven's childhood friends. Beethoven's viola and Franz Gerhard Wegeler's biography of

¹ Sadie and Sadie, *Calling on the Composer*, 102.

² Beethoven-Haus, "Collection," Beethoven-Haus, http://www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=39078&template=&_mid=39078 (accessed June 28, 2012).

Beethoven (the first authentic biography of Beethoven) and a fragment of an organ that Beethoven played are also on display here, the rest of which was destroyed in World War II.³ Because Beethoven spent a good deal of time in Vienna, one room on the first floor is dedicated to his Viennese teachers.

The second floor includes several of the best depictions of the composer, including oil paintings, sketches, and sculptures. This includes what is probably the most well known painting of Beethoven, done in 1820 by Joseph Karl Stieler, a bust of the composer done by sculptor Franz Klein, and Beethoven's death mask. The ground floor was once the Beethoven family's kitchen, but it now displays information about the Beethoven House Society. In addition to the twelve rooms dedicated to interpreting Beethoven's life and works, there is a Studio for Digital Collections open to visitors, and concerts are held both in the house and in a nearby Chamber Music Hall that seats two hundred. Visitors to the museum are encouraged to pick up audio guides and gallery guides, both of which are available in several languages.

Beethoven Wohnung Heiligenstadt, Vienna

In the Vienna suburb of Heiligenstadt, Beethoven found a home at Probusgasse 6, where he spent the summer of 1802. The home is most famous for its correlation with the "Heiligenstadt Testament" – an anguished letter that Beethoven wrote, but never sent, to his brothers. In the letter, Beethoven recognizes and despairs over his growing deafness.

³ Beethoven-Haus Bonn, "Beethoven-Haus Bonn, A Brief Guide," Beethoven-Haus, http://www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de/sixcms/media.php/38/kurz_museum_2012_en.pdf (accessed June 28, 2012).



Figure 1. Concert Hall adjacent to Beethoven-Haus Museum in Bonn, Germany.
Photograph by Whitney MacDonald.

Although there is no certainty that this was the exact residence where Beethoven lived in the summer of 1802, the home was restored as a memorial in the 1930s. The Wien (Vienna) Museum now owns the house, and in it displays memorabilia relating to Beethoven's Heiligenstadt summer, compositions he wrote here, materials relating to the letter, and to his death on March 26, 1827. He died in Schwarzspanierhaus 15, but that house was greatly damaged in World War II and is not open as a museum. Therefore, the house at Probugasse 6 is the only house still standing in that area and also cover's his death.

Beethoven Eroicahaus, Vienna

In the summer of 1803, Beethoven moved to a house at Döblinger Hauptstraße 92. In Beethoven's time, the home was in Oberdöbling, the suburb then known for its wine production. Over the centuries, it has become part of Vienna. It was in this house that he wrote one of his best known works, his third symphony, the "Eroica." Thus, the house is named after that famous work. On a side note, Beethoven originally intended to name the work after Napoleon, but changed his mind in disgust when Napoleon's imperialistic goals came to light. Like the Heiligenstadt home, there is no certainty that Beethoven stayed in the exact building where the museum is situated. It was extended and added to in 1840 and thus is much different in appearance than it would have been in Beethoven's time. The Vienna Museum, or Wein Museum, oversees numerous composer house museums in the city, including the Eroicahaus.

Beethoven Pasqualatihaus, Vienna

Beethoven worked in Vienna for many years, several of which are presumed to have been on the fourth floor of what is now the Beethoven Pasqualatihaus. The house is on Mölker Bastei 8 in Vienna, and is named after the part owner who let Beethoven stay there in 1804, Baron Johann Baptist von Pasqualati.⁴ It was here that Beethoven did significant work on his opera *Fidelio*. Like the other two Vienna Beethoven houses, there is a possibility that Beethoven did not live in the home but rather, one nearby. This willingness to interpret Beethoven in a house in which he may not have lived is an indication of the esteem with which he is held as a leading cultural figure.

⁴ Sadie and Sadie, *Calling on the Composer*, 106.

Hafnerhaus, Mödling

Beethoven is believed to have stayed in what is now known as the Hafnerhaus, in Mödling, Austria during the summers of 1818 and 1819. The home is named such because it was a pottery workshop before Beethoven lived there (“hafner” is “potter” in German). It is here that he wrote part of his revered Ninth Symphony. Now belonging to the municipality, the house is only open to the public once a week.

Johannes Brahms

Brahmshaus, Baden-Baden

While there is a memorial plaque at the location where Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, the house itself was destroyed by bombs in 1943. Thus, the earliest home in which Brahms lived that remains intact today is the one Brahms moved into in the summer of 1865. Located in Baden-Baden, Germany, the house was close to his friend Clara Schumann. Brahms reportedly returned here every summer until 1873, and had prolific compositional output during his visits here. It was at Brahmshaus that he wrote both of his first two symphonies and the Deutsches Requiem, in addition to numerous ensemble works. The top floors of the house have been open to the public since 1968 and are now run by the Brahmsgesellschaft Baden-Baden.

Brahms Museum, Müzzuschlag

Brahms spent the summers of 1884 and 1885 in the Austrian village of Müzzuschlag. He loved the beauty of the area and lived there for a total of nine months, renting a few rooms for those two summers. He composed the third and fourth movements of his *Symphony no. 4* here, as well as numerous ensemble works. His home

on Wiener Straße 4 is now the Brahms Museum, run by the Austrian Brahms Society. The Brahms Museum now focuses its exhibits on the theme "Johannes Brahms on Summer Holiday," depicting not only Brahms's time in Mürzzuschlag, but also his summer travels. This includes displays on other Austrian cities, as well as Switzerland and Germany. The museum uses different areas and varying styles of interpretation to depict Brahms's summer travels. The sun porch in one room, for example, is arranged to appear similar to that of an Italian Villa.

Visitors today can listen to Brahms's music and browse exhibits with Brahms's personal items and memorabilia. On exhibit are Brahms's diaries, letters, photographs, and information about Brahms's friends, including Clara Schumann. Inside the museum is a 'music room', a performance space that holds Brahms's Streicher-piano and can seat 70. The Brahms museum was given the European Museum prize "Museum of the Year - selected candidate" in 1994.⁵

Brahms Room in Haydnhaus, Vienna

On the first floor of the Haydnhaus museum in Vienna, there is a single room arranged to commemorate Brahms. Though he never lived here, he was given a room in 1980, both because of Brahms's admiration for Haydn, and because Brahms's own Vienna residence was demolished in 1907.⁶ In this room, the museum exhibits an oil painting depicting the composer done by Carl von Jagemann (1833-1897), and numerous other sketches and visual artworks. Besides a few pieces of furniture, the only other

⁵ Brahms Museum, "Brahms Museum guide: Brahms is alive!," Brahms Museum http://www.brahmsmuseum.at/e_2_museum.html Brahms Museum (accessed March 12, 2012).

⁶ Werner Hanak-Lettner and Alexandra Hönigmann-Tempelmayr, *Wein Museum Haydnhaus: Joseph Haydn, 1732-1809 Haydn's Last Years* (Vienna: Wien Museum, 2009), 56.



Figure 2. Italian Villa exhibit at Brahms Museum, Müzzuslag. Photograph by Whitney MacDonald.

object of great significance present in the room is *Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn* for two pianos, Opus 56b, published in Vienna 1873. Displayed in a special table-like case, the work is autographed by Brahms – therefore further connecting the two composers.

Johannes Brahms died of liver cancer on April 3, 1897. He was buried in Zentralfriedhof, Vienna's largest cemetery. Zentralfriedhof holds the remains of many other composers as well, including Johann Strauss II, Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Schubert, and Arnold Schoenberg.

George F. Händel

Händel-Haus, Halle

George Frederic Handel was born in Halle, Germany on February 23, 1685. He lived here at first with both of his parents, and later, after his father's death in 1697, with his mother and siblings. His birth house is now a museum. In 1703, Handel moved out, travelling through a number of countries before settling at a London residence in 1723. There was, at first, some dispute over precisely which building on Grosse Nikolaistraße was Handel's birth house. The confusion was caused primarily by conflicting reports in historical documents and misinformation deliberately propagated by those who claimed they lived in what once was Handel's house. Scholars settled the dispute in 1922, tracing the ownership of the house back to the great composer, and it is now commonly accepted that the Handel family lived in Grosse Nikolaistraße 5.

Several organizations attempted to purchase the Baroque composer's birth house after World War I, but they all found the price too high and their funds too low. The house was finally purchased in 1937 by the City of Halle. Unfortunately, the house received heavy damage in bombing during World War II, and the building had to be essentially rebuilt. The house's restoration work began after World War II and it opened as a museum on June 13, 1948. Starting with the museum's first days, and continuing the practice even today, the museum divides its focus and exhibits between depicting Handel's life and works in Halle and beyond, and illustrating the musical history of Halle through instruments via a vast musical instrument collection (many of which were used in the city and may have even been made there). These instruments are arranged in display cases, with the exception of the pianos and other large instruments.

Each of the two main floors of the building are further divided in two, so that half of each floor is devoted to Handel, and the other half to the musical history of the city. The part of the building that is still standing and was part of the original house is reserved for Handel. In the newer area, the musical history section includes both the musical instrument collection, numbering nearly seven hundred items, and a manuscript collection holding around one thousand documents.

The Handel Exhibition provides information about the circumstances surrounding Handel's early compositions and his life in Halle, as well as a bit about Handel's time in London. The majority of the Handel exhibits are about events or individuals who were influential to Handel, such as his parents, the Thirty Years War, and Halle in the 1600s, and most exhibits are not directly about the composer himself. The rest of Handel Exhibition focuses on the composer himself, portrayed through gallery spaces. The exhibit spans from his birth, his schooling, and his time as a church organist, to his trips to Berlin, the first of which was made when Händel was not yet thirteen.

In addition to Handel's home, the museum also owns and presents exhibits in the neighboring building. The musical instrument collection is exhibited on the first and second floors of the museum. The home does not stop at merely interpreting Halle's musical history, however. Today's scholars and musicians can access information about musical instruments, Germany's musical history, and information about Handel's life and compositions, through exhibits, gallery guides, and other publications. Even today, the museum perpetuates the passion for classical music by Handel and past classical composers, as musical works of the past and present are preserved, edited, and performed



Figure 3. Handel Haus, Halle. Photograph by Whitney MacDonald.

regularly on site. The museum is perhaps best known for its collection of keyboard instruments, through which the visitor can see the development and evolution of the piano. With instruments of differing ages and styles, the institution provides a chronological development of keyboard instruments to the present day. In addition, the musical instrument collection includes instruments from Handel's time – a Baroque Era organ, and numerous wood, brass, and stringed instruments.

The Handel House Museum, London

Handel arrived in London in 1710 and eventually settled in the newly completed building at 25 Brook Street, in an area of London that was then known as Mayfair. Handel rented the house beginning in 1723 and lived here until his death in 1759. Though

he became a naturalized British citizen in 1727 and thus was eligible to buy the house, Handel choose instead to rent it for the whole of his thirty-six years there.

In the 1992, the Handel House Trust was established to turn Handel's London home into a museum. The Trust signed the lease and began reconstruction for the upper floors of the house (the other floors were acquired later) in 2000 and the Handel House Museum was first opened to the public on November 8, 2001. According to the museum's website, the Handel House Museum is the only composer museum in London.

The Handel House Museum has four period rooms and two gallery rooms. The period rooms are laid out as they would have been in Handel's day. The two gallery, or exhibit, rooms, are located in the building next door to what was Handel's apartment. The home's layout was typical of a middle class town house in Handel's time, spanning four floors: a basement, a ground floor, a second floor, and garrets at the top. The four period rooms are the London Room, Handel's Bedroom, Handel's Rehearsal and Performance Room, and Handel's Composition Room. An inspiring feature of the museum is that Handel's music and genius live on, as there is even now a "composer in residence" writing new music at the home.

Handel was a great lover of fine art, even acquiring two Rembrandts, which he bequeathed to his friend Bernard Granville.⁷ The period rooms are arranged with Georgian era furniture (known as Baroque or Rococo Era in American decorative arts). Few items from the original interior have survived, but the home still boasts the original staircase, the railing of which holds beautiful tread ends. In addition, the original paint color, a lead grey, has been discovered and imitated on the walls of the period rooms and

⁷ Jacqueline Riding, Donald Burrows, and Anthony Hicks, *Handel House Museum Companion* (London, The Handel House Trust Ltd., 2001), 24.

every effort has been made to match the furniture based on the description given in an inventory taken after Handel's death. The composer wrote many of his greatest works here, including *Messiah*, and *Music for the Royal Fireworks*. Handel's music is still alive in the home, as there are still frequent rehearsals and concerts held within.

Many composer house museums are often owned and run by governmental entities. However, this is not always the case. The prime example of a non-governmentally run composer house museum is London's Handel House Museum. Martin Wyatt, Deputy Director of the Handel House Museum, was kind enough to take the time to tell me a bit about the House and answer my questions during my visit. When asked how much governmental funding the museum receives, Wyatt replied "Zero. We are entirely independent, no government funding at all. Not unusual in the UK. Our funding comes about from twenty to thirty percent from ticket sales and the gift shop, and the rest comes from trusts, foundations, and individuals."⁸

This museum is one of the most recent composer houses to be opened as a museum; in fact, efforts to memorialize the structure only began in the late 1990s. Julie Anne and Stanley Sadie, the founders of the museum, began the process of preserving the composer's home as a museum in the 1990s, but the idea had been in their minds for a while. In the preface of the museum's 2001 gallery guide, Mr. Sadie notes that the idea had been percolating in their heads since 1959.⁹

Julie Anne and Stanley Sadie are authors of one of my most useful sources: *Calling on the Composer A guide to European Composer House Museums*. At the time the book was written, they had both left the Handel House Trust, but had spent several

⁸ Interview with Martin Wyatt, March 2012

⁹ Jacqueline Riding, Donald Burrows, and Anthony Hicks, *Handel House Museum Companion* (London, The Handel House Trust Ltd., 2001), Preface.

years working there – Stanley Sadie as Chairman and President and Julie Anne Sadie as Director of the Museum. In addition, Julie Anne Sadie wrote a thesis in 1993 on her specific plans to turn the building into a Handel House Museum. I will explore this work in depth in Chapter Four.

Joseph Haydn

Haydn-Geburtshaus, Salzburg

Franz Joseph Haydn was born in 1732 the family's house on Obere Hauptstraße 25, in Rohrau, Austria. At the time Rohrau was outside of Salzburg, but has now been swallowed up by the larger city. Like Mozart a musical prodigy, Haydn left home at age six to pursue musical training in the nearby town of Hainburg, Austria. The house was made into a memorial in 1877; twenty years later a fire damaged the building and the house had to be restored. The Lower Austrian authorities acquired the house in 1958, renovating the interior and opening it to the public in 1959. The house opened as a museum on March 31, 1982, on the 250th Anniversary Haydn's birth.

Joseph Haydn-Museum, Eisenstaedt

In 1761, Haydn moved to the city of Eisenstaedt, Austria and began working for Esterházy family as music director. After working for the royal family for five years, Haydn rose to the position of music director, or Ober-Capel-Meister, working for the Hungarian Prince, Nikolaus Esterházy. In May 1766, Haydn bought a house at Kloostergasse 82 (now Haydngasse 21), near the palace where the Esterházy family lived. In addition to the house, Haydn reportedly owned some vineyards and fields. During Haydn's time at the house, two fires, one in 1768 and another in 1776, caused substantial

damage to his home.¹⁰ Though the Prince paid for the house's repairs after both fires, Haydn decided to move out in 1778. The house became a Haydn museum in 1935, with three rooms open to the public. The museum was expanded by the International Joseph Haydn Privatstiftung Eisenstaedt and reopened in 1998. The street the house is on was renamed in the composer's honor, and thus the museum's current address is Haydngasse 19-21.

Haydn's love of this home was demonstrated during a long trip away from it. Musicians such as Haydn often had to travel with their patrons, leaving their homes and families behind. Haydn and his fellow musicians wanted to return to their homes in Eisenstaedt after a trip to the Prince's hunting lodge in Hungary lasted too long. So, they approached Haydn, and he decided to give the Prince a strong hint to return home, in the form of a new symphony. In the *Farewell Symphony* (Symphony No. 45), the musicians left the stage one by one – leaving an empty stage at the end of the symphony! The Prince got the hint and the entourage returned to Eisenstaedt the next day.¹¹

Haydnhaus, Vienna

In 1797, Haydn bought a house in what was then Gumpendorf, a village located in Haydn's time just outside Vienna. He died at this house on May 31, 1809, after living there for two years.

As an honorary citizen of Vienna and beloved composer, Haydn was revered even by the invading Napoleon. When Napoleon took Vienna in May 1809, he ordered a guard

¹⁰ Gerard Gefen, *Composer's Houses* (UK: The Vendome Press, 1998), 10.

¹¹ David Nelson, "Haydn, Symphony No. 45, 'Farewell'," In *Mozart's Footsteps*, <http://inmozartsfootsteps.com/513/haydn-symphony-no-45-farewell/> (accessed July 30, 2013).

of honor to stand outside the dying composer's home for protection. The Haydn museum was opened here in 1899, and in 1904 was bought by the City of Vienna. It remains the oldest composer house owned by the Wien Museum. As mentioned earlier, because of Johannes Brahms's efforts to commemorate Haydn, there is a room dedicated to him in the museum. Like the street on which he lived on in Eisenstaedt, this street was renamed Haydngasse 16 in 1862.

The Haydn Museum was first opened to the public in May 1899 under the direction of the Haydn Orchestra Club.¹² With the support of the Haydn House Society, a part of the building was opened to visitors, and a collection of Haydn-related objects and memorabilia was started. The building changed hands in 1904, when the City of Vienna acquired it. For a brief period, between 1905 and 1919, the house also was home to another museum, the "Austrian School Museum," which was also dedicated to commemorating Haydn and his works. In 1939, the home was closed to the public, the interior was re-arranged to more closely resemble its state during Haydn's time, and the home was reopened in 1941. The home was forced to close again during World War II, but reopened in May 1949.

Unlike other composer house museums, Haydnhaus does not attempt to arrange any room of the museum as a period room, with the furniture and exhibits mimicking its appearance at the time the composer lived there. Instead, the rooms are mostly gallery, or exhibit, spaces, that are arranged by theme. On the ground floor, there are seven themed exhibits. These include an exhibit on Haydn's travels, "From London to Gupendorf," "Events to Date," "Who's Who in Haydnhaus?," and "Vienna around 1800." The first

¹² Werner Hanak-Lettner and Alexandra Hönigmann-Tempelmayr, *Wein Museum Haydnhaus: Joseph Haydn, 1732-1809 Haydn's Last Years* (Vienna: Wien Museum, 2009), 14.

floor is where the composer lived, and there are now twelve themed exhibits arranged in the five rooms, including one room dedicated to Brahms, as mentioned in my previous section on Brahms. The Haydn themes on this floor include "Home Office," *The Creation*, *The Seasons*, "Haydn Dies," and "Haydn-mania." One exhibit details the disposal of his estate, mentioning what was one of Haydn's prized possessions, a grey parrot. Haydn bought the parrot nineteen years before his death and trained it himself.

Even though there are no rooms arranged to appear as they would have in the composer's life, this does not mean that there have been no attempts to bring the home's old appearance back. In the 1950s, the Vienna City Council began to renovate the home. They were fortunate enough to discover the original paint color, and were able to model their own designs after it, as was also done in London's Handel House Museum. The building reopened in 1978, and, in the past few years, Haydn's gardens were opened for public viewing, as well.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart Geburtshaus

The genius that was Mozart entered the world on January 27, 1756, born in the family's third floor apartment in Salzburg. The composer was only four when he finished his first concerto, and continued to astound musicians and audiences alike until his untimely death on December 5, 1791, at age thirty-five. Mozart was born into a very musical family, and musical instruments were said to be everywhere in the cluttered Getreidegasse 9 apartment. The International Foundation of the Mozarteum opened the



Figure 4. Gardens at Haydnhaus, Vienna. Photograph by Whitney MacDonald.

third floor residence to the public in 1880, as the first museum to ever be established in a composer's former residence.¹³ Thus, the concept of the composer house museum was born. The remainder of the building was acquired in 1917.

The Mozart Geburtshaus (Mozart's Birthplace) in Salzburg contains three floors of exhibits. Visitors begin their tour on the third floor, where the exhibits and text introduce various members of Mozart's family; it also contains the room in which Mozart was born on January 27, 1756. The second floor focuses on Mozart's operatic works. There are several miniature opera stage dioramas that present interpretations of Mozart's operas and their reception. These stages are a modern and inventive use for an age-old

¹³ Sadie and Sadie, *Calling on the Composer*, 260.

exhibit technique, the diorama. The most widely recognized use for dioramas is in natural history museums, where an exhibit will display stuffed, preserved, animal skins surrounded by the environment in which the animal would have lived. By using this old exhibit technique in such an imaginative way, the audience is able to obtain a much clearer visual perception of how the first opera performances of Mozart's would have appeared. In addition, there are numerous opera costumes displayed, as well as manuscripts with excerpts from his most famous operas.

The first floor focuses on the composer's travels and daily home life. Objects on display here include trophies his father Leopold brought home from Mozart's successful out-of-country performances, as well as everyday household items. While the majority of these rooms are gallery spaces, there are a few rooms that attempt to display the home as it would have been in Mozart's time. Included on the first floor are documents and paintings that show the Mozart family's Salzburg life. The museum's collection includes several first editions and autographs, early prints, a portrait of the composer done by his brother-in-law, Joseph Lange, and the violin he used as a child. Mozart reportedly named this instrument "butter-fiddle" due to its soft and full tone.¹⁴ The typical visitor experience is self-guided, as the museum does not offer audio guides, but does offer tours to school groups.

Mozart Wohnhaus, Salzburg

After the family moved out of Mozart's birth house, they moved into a larger Salzburg residence, on Makartplatz 8. Mozart lived here with his family only briefly, as his father, Leopold, frequently took him on performance tours in Austria and beyond. It

¹⁴ Peggy Woodford, *Mozart* (Omnibus Press: London, 1990), 17.

was in this house that Mozart's father would die, in 1787. The house today is governed by the non-profit Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation. This foundation manages both Mozart's Makartplatz 8 residence and his birth house. Due to the extensive damage to the building that occurred by World War II, the residence needed to undergo extensive renovation and reconstruction. The Mozart-Wohnhaus was opened to the public, as the Foundation's second Mozart museum, in 1996.

Mozartwohnung, Vienna

Following the birth of Mozart's son Karl-Thomas in 1784, the young family moved into the first floor of a building at Damgasse 5 in Vienna. The apartment is generally agreed to have been the largest and most elegant residence that Mozart ever lived in. Mozart soon found the apartment too expensive, however, and moved out in 1787. It is now his only Vienna home that has survived. The first floor apartment was opened as a museum in 1941. It expanded to include the entire building in 1976, under the management of the Wien (Vienna) Museum, with the first-floor containing the only period rooms.

The first floor, which contains the rooms in which the Mozart family lived, is presented as period rooms, while the two floors about it are devoted to galleries and exhibit spaces. In a layout similar to that of the Mozart Geburtshaus in Salzburg, a visitor's tour begins on the third floor and ends on the first, in the apartment that was once owned by the Mozart family. The museum presently focuses its interpretation on Mozart's time in Vienna. The third floor showcases Mozart's private and social life, historic events that occurred in Mozart's life, and Mozart's connection with the Freemasons. Shortly after arriving in Vienna, Mozart encountered the Freemason circles.

Having similar goals and ideals, and anticipating the social and professional use the organization would have for his work, Mozart joined in December 1784.¹⁵ Mozart even managed to intertwine his interest in the society into the music he wrote; his opera *The Magic Flute*, contained a great deal of Masonic symbolism. There is also a multimedia installation on the third floor that depicts the other homes Mozart lived in while in Vienna, and a room dedicated to those who were especially influential in Mozart's Vienna life. Most of the rooms on this floor are sparsely furnished; the rooms display many exhibits along the walls but make little attempt to restore the rooms to their 1780s appearance – as it was only on the first floor that the Mozart family lived.

The second floor brings the visitor closer to Mozart's music. The rooms on this floor could themselves be considered historical objects, as the original stucco ceilings and historical murals have been exposed and retouched. There are several rooms here that each depict one of Mozart's most well known works, including *Don Giovanni*, *The Magic Flute*, and the *Requiem*. *The Marriage of Figaro* was composed in this home (the museum is thus commonly known as Figaro House), and the museum now displays several three-dimensional scenes from the world renowned operas. These scenes are depicted in miniature dioramas and they display a few operatic scenes on stages, including people in costume and the stage's scenic background.

¹⁵ Sabine Greger-Amanshauser, Christoph Grobpietsh, Gabriele Ramsauer, *Next to Mozart: Answers to the 111 Most Common Questions* (Salzburg: Verlag Anton Pustet, 2011), 87.



Figure 5. Diorama of Mozart's Opera "The Magic Flute", Mozartwohnung, Vienna. Photograph by Whitney MacDonald.

The first floor is where the Mozart family actually lived; during their time the apartment included four large rooms, two small rooms, and a kitchen. As stated earlier, this was, by far, the largest and most lavish home in which Mozart ever lived. The museum presents these rooms as period rooms, with decorations and furniture arranged as they may have been in Mozart's time here. And although there is little information about exactly how the apartment was laid out in the composer's time, and little of the original furniture survived, the museum has furnished the rooms on this floor in such a way that the visitor could believe they were standing in a perfectly preserved 1780s apartment. They achieve this by using period-style furniture and arranging the apartment based on descriptions given by visitors of the Mozart family. One of the most magnificent objects on display on this floor is a musical clock, that plays a variation of

the "Andante for a cylinder in a small organ" (KV 616), a work that Mozart may have written to be played on that very clock.¹⁶

Composer house museums, like any institution, are occasionally established for political reasons and not simply to honor a composer. Baldur Benedikt von Schirach, the Nazi youth leader, organized "Mozart Week" in 1941, in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the composer's death. In his Welcoming Address for the Inaugural Concert of Mozart Week, Schirach proclaimed "Vienna's irresistible artistic resurgence finds its expression in Mozart Week. And it is not local patriotism, but something done for the glory of the Reich, if such performances lend new luster to the city which the Fuhrer has called a pearl in his eyes. What would German music be without Vienna, or Vienna without music?".¹⁷ The Mozart "Figarohaus" museum was opened in Vienna during Mozart Week, with exhibits arranged to honor the Reich first and the composer second. In 1951, the museum re-installed the exhibits with the Nazi and German themes removed.

After the Mozart family left their Vienna home on Domgasse 5, the home went through a succession of occupants and owners for many years. The home was finally purchased in 1941, the 150th Anniversary of Mozart's death, by the City of Vienna. The home was opened to the public on November 28, 1941, with only three rooms available for visitors to see. The Museums of the City of Vienna were able to acquire the rest of the rooms the Mozarts originally lived in, and restored them to their original layout in 1976. In the late 1990s, the leases for the two floors above the Mozart's apartment were obtained, and these floors are now incorporated into the museum as exhibit spaces. The

¹⁶ Wien Museum, "Mozartwohnung," Wien Museum, <http://www.wienmuseum.at/en/locations/location-detail/mozartwohnung.html> (accessed May 23, 2012).

¹⁷ Erik Levi, *Mozart and the Nazis: How the Third Reich Abused a Cultural Icon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), Appendix 1.

home is under the governance of several organizations. As put in the home's gallery guide, *Mozarthauss Vienna*, "On behalf of the City of Vienna, Wien Holding, in conjunction with Raiffeisen Holding Wien-Niederoster-reich and Wien Museum (in whose responsibility the Mozarthauss Vienna lied) founded the Mozarthauss Vienna Errichtungs- und Betriebs GmbH that establishes and operated the new Mozart Center in line with private sector practices." The Vienna Museum operates eight composer house museums in Vienna, including Mozartwohnung and Haydnhaus.¹⁸

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his music have been and still remain a large part of Austrian culture. The Nazis, after invading Austria in 1938, quickly adopted Mozart as a national German figure. They, of course, only promoted an image of Mozart was compatible with their ideals, and completely ignored the fact that Mozart that would have likely been strongly opposed to the movement, considering his Freemason membership. Nevertheless, being such a well renowned musical figure, Mozart was ideal for Nazi musical propaganda.

Jean Sibelius

Birthplace of Sibelius, Hämeenlinna

Jean Sibelius was born on December 8, 1865, in a house the Sibelius family rented in Hämeenlinna, Finland. He moved out with his widowed mother and older sister after his father's death in 1868. This home is the only one from Sibelius's childhood to survive. It was restored and opened to the public in 1965 by the Hämeenlinna Sibelius Society. Sibelius's birthday is still celebrated at the home every year.

¹⁸ Wien Museum, "Mozartwohnung," Wien Museum, <http://www.wienmuseum.at/en/locations/location-detail/mozartwohnung.html> (accessed June 14, 2012).

Ainola, Järvenpää

The home most people think of when mentioning Sibelius's residences is Ainola. Named after his wife, Aino, Sibelius lived here for a total of fifty-three years. The home rests on what was in Sibelius's time a rural area in Järvenpää, Finland, near Helsinki. Sibelius completed many of his better known works here, including his Violin Concerto, and the Third and Seventh Symphonies. Though he travelled often, Sibelius enjoyed returning to his peaceful home. While composing, Sibelius had strict rules of silence in the house; running water was not even installed in the house until 1960 for this reason.

Jean Sibelius, like many other composers, enjoyed the peace and beauty of the great outdoors. He had Ainola built on the shores of Lake Tuusula in Järvenpää, thirty miles away from the Finnish capital Helsinki. The home and garden have been preserved and are now open to the public as a museum. Visitors begin their tour on the first floor, which includes the kitchen, saloon, dining room, library (originally a bedroom), and the bedroom / study of Jean Sibelius. When Sibelius hired the Finnish architect Lars Sonck to design the house, he specified that his study must look out onto Lake Tuusula and that the dining room must have a green fireplace; that fireplace can be seen even today when visitors enter the dining room.

Every room open for public viewing at Ainola is arranged to closely resemble its appearance in the 1900s. In the saloon, one can see the grand piano that was given to Sibelius on his 50th birthday (in 1915). It is said that Sibelius did not often use the piano when he worked, however, preferring to compose in silence. Upstairs, one can see the bedroom of Sibelius's wife, Aino, (when he was 75, Sibelius moved downstairs to what is now displayed as his bedroom, due to his growing difficulty using the stairs), a study,

and a guest room. The interior's furniture and decorations reflect on Sibelius's long life here, as the furnishings are all from the various decorative arts styles that spanned the composer's sixty years in Järvenpää. The architecture of the building is an early modern design, that blends elements of the Art Nouveau and Romantic styles.

Sibelius died at Ainola on September 20, 1957, and was buried in the garden. The home was sold to the Finnish state by Sibelius's five daughters in 1967 and is now administered by the Ainola Foundation, which opens the house to the public during the summer months. This is an example of a European museum that is a cooperative venture of the national government and a private foundation.

Ainola is also an example of how nationalistic pride through a country's musical past is something that can be easily shared by an entire nation. Often, then, one can see an entire nation united through their love of one composer; Jean Sibelius was one such composer. Sibelius allied himself with the Finnish Nationalists and was considered a national hero, especially due to his composition *Finlandia*. *Finlandia, Op. 26* was a symphonic poem that Sibelius composed in 1899, in subtle defiance to the Russian Empire's grip on the country.¹⁹ The work depicts Finnish history and concludes with the *Finlandia Hymn*. The *Hymn*, as a standalone piece, became one of the most prominent national songs of Finland. Finnish regard for Sibelius has lasted long after his death in 1957, and he is still considered by most to have been the country's greatest composer. It is no wonder, then, that they have memorialized the home of their national hero.

¹⁹ The iSchool at Drexel, "Music History 102: a Guide to Western Composers and their Music from the Middle Ages to Present," The Regents of the University of Michigan, <http://www.ipl.org/div/mushist/> (accessed September 5, 2012)

Richard Wagner

Richard-Wagner-Museum, Graupa

Many of Richard Wagner's early homes, such as the home where he was born on May 22, 1813, were not preserved. Like Beethoven, he moved frequently. The first home that Wagner lived in that has been made into a composer house museum is the Richard Wagner Museum in Graupa, Germany. Wagner was in his early thirties when he and his first wife, Minna, moved in, in May 1846. The residence of Wagner and his wife in this first floor apartment was very brief; they moved out after only two months. The building was renovated and the exhibits updated in 1982. The focus of the museum is the interpretation of Wagner's life in Dresden, the nearby city where Wagner served as Kapellmeister to the Dresden court. Wagner has numerous streets named in his honor spanning from Germany to Switzerland. His Graupa, Germany home, now the Richard-Wagner-Museum, is situated on Richard-Wagner-Straße 6.

Richard-Wagner-Museum (Haus Tribschen), Lucerne

Wagner traveled extensively in the 1850s and 60s, visiting Weimar, Zurich, Paris, Venice, Vienna, Munich, and finally, Lucerne. In 1866 Wagner first saw a beautiful home overlooking the lake in Lucerne, Switzerland, a city he had visited several times. He purchased the house, named "Tribschen," that same year, and lived there until 1872. Liszt's daughter, Cosima, sometimes stayed with him there, and he and Cosima married months after they moved out of the home. The home was acquired by the Lucerne municipality in 1931, and was opened as a Wagner museum 1933. Wagner's Luzern,

Switzerland's home is now addressed as Richard-Wagner-Weg 27 in honor of the great composer.

Richard-Wagner-Museum (Haus Wahnfried), Bayreuth

The most well known home of Richard Wagner is the one he himself had built in Bayreuth, Germany. Architect Carl Wolfel created a large Roman house for Wagner, his wife, Cosima, and their three children. The construction was paid for by Ludwig II of Bavaria, Wagner's employer. Wagner moved in to what is now the Haus Wahnfried (meaning "Peace from Illusion") in 1874 and it remained his primary home until his death in 1883. The house was brought under the control of the city of Bayreuth in 1973, and was restored that same year.²⁰ At the end of World War II a bomb had severely damaged the house and it required considerable reconstruction. The home was opened as a museum in 1976, for the anniversary of the premiere of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and the home now rests on a street named in his honor, Richard-Wagner-Straße 48.

The composer history associated with the Nazis the most is Richard Wagner. Wagner was a radical anti-Semitic, who wrote many essays disparaging music written by Jews. Obviously, the composer's anti-Semite views were later shared and admired by Adolf Hitler. Though Wagner died in 1883, his music and his prejudiced views lived on, and aided the Nazis greatly in their musical propaganda. Hitler actually visited Wahnfried many times to see Wagner's daughter-in-law.

Sala Richard Wagner

The final home that Richard Wagner lived in was in Venice, Italy. It was here that Wagner wrote the final parts of *Tristan und Isolde* in 1858-59, and he leased the home

²⁰ Sadie and Sadie, *Calling on the Composer*, 396.

again from 1882-83. The apartment Wagner leased was part of the Ca' Vendramin Calergi, a Renaissance palace located on the Grand Canal. Wagner lived here with his family until his death on February 13, 1883. In 1949, the entire home was acquired by the city of Venice in 1949, and the Sala Wagner, the room of his death, was put under the control of the Associazione Richard Wagner di Venezia in 1995.

These composers do not gain fame and recognition solely through their own actions; it is the general public that either does or does not recognize their genius. Their genius is either recognized or not by their peers, critics, and by the general public. Often, the country and some part of its people have been tempted to distort the composer's image and ideals for their own agenda. This has created a lot of uncertainty and confusion as to actual historical facts, and it is crucial that museum staff sift through all incorrect information and present only the composer as he truly was.

Composer house museums are as varied in their historical context and current operations as the composers that once lived in them. Even at their very foundation as museums, each home has its own unique story. While homes such as the Mozartwohnung in Vienna were established for political reasons, others such as the Handel House in London were saved and opened to simply the public to honor the composer that lived there. Although museums such as Handel-Haus in Halle use government funds in their operations, other institutions such as the Handel House in London do not accept any governmental support.

These homes offer a wide variety of means of interpretation. Exhibits, programs, and other methods are utilized to bring the visitor closer to the composer. Most museums utilize both period rooms and exhibits, and some including unique exhibits such as a

diorama of an opera (Mozartwohnung), the Villa exhibit in Brahms Museum (in Müzzzuschlag), and interactive listening stations (Beethoven Wohnung Heiligenstadt). True artifacts, or even decent imitations, are hard to find, and most museums focus on erecting exhibits of the composer's life, rather than trying to resurrect a period room in its former state. Videos, guided tours, gallery guides, programs, classrooms, and live concerts are also provided in some of these homes.

Composer house museums memorialize the normal, unremarkable, and easily forgotten aspects of a composer's life by reminding of how he lived and what he did with himself during the day. As with other institutions, composer house museums utilize a variety of governance procedures, interpretation methods, programs, floor plans, and times of a composer's life as a focus. Though they differ in many ways, composer house museums are united in their preservation of a very special part of our musical heritage.

CHAPTER FOUR

Julie Anne Sadie's "Blueprint" for Creating a Composer House Museum

Julie Anne Sadie and her husband Stanley Sadie both hold an important place in the study of composer house museums. They were both instrumental in the establishment of the Handel House Museum in London, and oversaw the project for many years. The two musicologists wrote numerous of books and articles on music and composers. Two of these works, *Calling on the Composer* and "Blueprint for a Composer Museum," make up the principal scholarly basis of my literary review. In addition to exploring her published scholarship on the subject, this chapter will also include information from Julie Anne Sadie herself, as she was kind enough to respond to my queries in July 2013.

Calling on the Composer – A Guide to European Composer Houses and Museums, has already been mentioned numerous times in this thesis.¹ Julie Anne Sadie's thesis, "Blueprint for a Composer Museum," was completed in 1993 and provides a persuasive argument for making the composer's former residence on 25 Brook Street into a Handel House Museum.² As such, it is a notable example of an academic thesis leading to very tangible results in the museum profession.

The thesis, stretching almost 190 pages in length, follows the standard format for an academic thesis, with an abstract, notes, bibliography, and so on, but the key sections of the thesis are an examination of European precedents, a review of the historical

¹ Sadie and Sadie, *Calling on the Composer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

² Sadie, *Blueprint for a Composer Museum: The London House of George Frideric Handel at 25 Brook Street, Mayfair* (London: City University, 1993).

documents, artworks, material culture, and music related to Handel, and the promised blueprint itself.

Part I of Sadie's thesis provides the most extensive discussion of existing composer museums to date. As she points out, "Museums dedicated to individual composers are...largely a European phenomenon."³ Few composer homes exist in America, and even fewer are dedicated to classical composers.

Sadie notes that museums are often established in the homes of those persons who have had a great impact on the community. Unfortunately, by the time most of these houses have been made into a museum, most memorabilia and furnishings have been lost to history. Institutions such as university libraries may hold many of the documents relating to composers, yet there are many ways a library is not as appropriate a destination for such items as a house museum. Researchers can access the documents of composers at these institutions, but only on a limited basis and in limited numbers. In libraries, the objects are displayed with little context provided. Sadie claims that galleries, "uniting works by artist and theme," present a better overview of these composers and their memorabilia.⁴ However, nothing can better contextualize the man and his works as the original dwelling in which he composed them. Only when the work of a man is seen in situ can the visitor truly comprehend all aspects of the composer.

The buildings these composers lived in become artifacts in and of themselves, sometimes these artifacts are recognized as such, other times they are not. Whether or not a composers home is preserved is in direct correlation with his / her reputation in life and death. The number of museums, movies, statues, and music festivals in honor of

³ Sadie and Sadie, *Calling on the Composer*, 2.

⁴ Ibid., 4.

composers such as Mozart and Bach give testament to the public's continuing admiration. Unfortunately, many of these historic buildings, even those recognized and preserved by the community, have not survived the ages. War, natural disaster, neglect, and time have removed many an irreplaceable historic object. Sadie observes "The key thing I learned from visiting over 300 museums and memorial places in Europe was the importance of maintaining the 'artifact' premises."⁵

Sadie suggests that the European economy and cultural history are closely linked. The musical heritage of Europe has grown to become an industry of its own.⁶ Tourists, local musicians, and scholars all patronize musical landmarks. Vienna has far more musical landmarks than other European cities.⁷ Sadie mentions a few of the many books available about Viennese musical landmarks. Conversely, England and the United States have very few composer house museums, as is demonstrated in the limited available literature.⁸ She hypothesizes that perhaps that is because "neither nation saw itself as a significant originator of 'classical music' until the 20th century."⁹

Despite such perceptions, Handel stands as a remarkable exception to the rule. Though born in Saxony, he lived most of his adult life in England; he is therefore, an integral part of the cultural history of both England and Europe. His well known works, such as *Messiah* and *Water Music*, put London on the musical map of his time. His works

⁵ Julie Anne Sadie e-mail message to the author, July 3, 2013.

⁶ Julie Anne Sadie, *Blueprint for a Composer Museum*, 5.

⁷ Ibid., 7.

⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁹ Ibid., 8.

might even be considered the “soundtrack” of much of Britain’s political history, as Handel’s *Zadok the Priest* has been played at every coronation since the composer’s time.

Period performance of classical music, much like the creation of historic house museums, attempts to place music in its original context. Instruments such as the piano and violin have evolved greatly since Handel's time, as have performance techniques. Thus, to truly hear it as Handel intended, these compositions must be played on period appropriate instruments and in the style of the period. As Sadie puts it, “I am delighted by the ways in which the Museum works with performing artists. The instruments we commissioned were always intended to be played and heard.”¹⁰

Sadie mentions that the majority of literary material available relating to composer house museums is popular literature, such as regional and city guidebooks.¹¹ Even musical scholars tend to ignore the houses in which a composer lived, preferring to focus on the composer and his music. As I have reviewed the literature twenty years later, I have found that her characterization still holds true. Sadie stands out as an advocate of musical pilgrimages and of following the lives of one or more composers by studying their houses, material culture, and other memorials.

In her thesis, she briefly reviews a few landmarks in the early history of composer memorialization, discussing the concept of “composer-as-genius.”¹² For example, she notes that the first musician to have his portrait painted and engraved was Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1637). Monuments to composers came later, the first being a Handel statue that was temporarily installed at the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens in London (erected in

¹⁰ Julie Anne Sadie e-mail message to the author, July 3, 2013.

¹¹ Sadie, *Blueprint for a Composer Museum*, 10.

¹² *Ibid.*, 12.

1758).¹³ Sadie mentions that composer's revivals are often set into motion by their anniversaries, such as birth and death dates. One example of that was discussed earlier, in the case of Mozart's Vienna home.

Sadie reviews the creation of many musical monuments, including composer house museums, and the societies associated with them. The first composer house museum was opened at Mozart's birth house in Salzburg in 1880, by the International Stiftung Museum. In addition, she lists houses associated with other "famous nineteenth century tenants which have in due course become museums."¹⁴ Sadie concludes this section by explaining how she plans to expand on the information laid out so far, so as to aid in the case for establishing a museum in Handel's London house.

Sadie divides her discussion of the resources for a Handel house museum into four separate sections: the house itself, Handel as a dweller in the house, available Handelian, and the public. She begins by explaining how Handel came to live at 25 Brook Street. Handel was appointed to the position of music director at the first Royal Academy of Music in July 1719.¹⁵ A year later, he acquired a royal warrant granting him the sole right to control the publication of his own music. Then, in 1723, he was granted an annual pension, serving as the "Composer of Musicke" at the Chapel Royal.¹⁶ That same year, Handel moved into 25 Brook Street.

¹³ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴ Ibid., 17.

¹⁵ Ibid., 22.

¹⁶ Ibid., 23.

The home passed to a number of owners after Handel. After his death in 1759, one of his servants, John Du Burk, assumed the lease.¹⁷ The next person to acquire the lease, Sir James Wright, made numerous structural changes to the house, and a succession of owners followed. More than a century later, the home was finally recognized for its historical significance, when in 1870 a memorial plaque was erected on the building. Despite that recognition, the building continued to be used and abused. C.J. Charles, who turned the home into an antique shop, made numerous changes to the architecture and floor plan of the building. While suggestions to turn the house into a museum were made as early as 1937, numerous attempts to do so were not successful.¹⁸

Next Sadie describes Handel's life in the house. The home was strategically situated close to Handel's patrons and to a number of other influential and respected people as well.¹⁹ The floor plan of the home reflects the desires and needs of the time. Sadie mentions the various ways Handel used the rooms, from rehearsals, to performing, to entertaining. Handel had an impressive art collection, including many works of Lois Francois Roubiliac. She also describes many of the composer's talents, including his gift with languages.²⁰ All too soon, in 1737, Handel's health began to decline. He had numerous strokes, and his sight began to fail him in 1751.²¹ By 1753, seven years before

¹⁷ Ibid., 24.

¹⁸ Ibid., 27.

¹⁹ Ibid., 24.

²⁰ Ibid., 43.

²¹ Ibid., 51.

his death, Handel was all but completely blind.²² He passed away on April 19, 1759 in his own bed.

When Sadie completed her thesis in 1993, Handel memorabilia was spread out through numerous institutions in England and beyond. Sadie provides an overview of several of the collections, the objects in them, and how the collection is or is not used. Among the numerous institutions she discusses are the National Portrait Gallery, the Rowe Music Library, and the University of Birmingham.²³ These institutions often do not attempt to display their collections or make them readily available to the public. Thus, Sadie highlights the need for a Handel House Museum, to do just that. One collection Sadie mentions became very significant in the history of the Handel House Museum. This collection is the Gerald Coke Handel Collection at Jenkyn Place, Bentley. In his will, Gerald Coke stated that the entire Handelian collection should go to the Handel Institute (United Kingdom).

Handel is one of the small number of composers who was respected both during and after their life. He lives on in numerous ways, as Sadie demonstrates in the first section of Part II. His music, especially *Messiah* and *Water Music*, remains an integral part of England's musical heritage. Choirs have formed over the years expressly designed to perform Handel's music. In addition, there are innumerable musical events, such as music festivals, that have served to both keep Handel's music alive, and to celebrate a country's cultural history. The formation of the Handel Opera Society in 1955 served to re-kindle interest in the composer's operas. Thus, Sadie concludes, the people of London already have a deep appreciation for Handel's music, and would therefore welcome a

²² Ibid., 52.

²³ Ibid., 54.

Handel house museum. Even in other countries, Handel's reputation thrives, thus foreign visitors would likewise enjoy visiting such a museum. Sadie outlines some basic marketing options, and insists that the home be available to disabled visitors, such as Handel himself was.²⁴

The final part of Sadie's thesis is "The Blueprint," in which she lays out her plans for turning 25 Brook Street into a Handel House Museum. First, she states that the house can never again be exactly as it was in Handel's time. The irreplaceable loss of most of his furniture and personal items, along with modern standards of health and safety, prevent the museum from being anything but a fair approximation of its appearance in Handel's time. Sadie also acknowledges the challenge of not having enough space, suggesting that one solution would be to extend the future museum to include the house next door. Likewise, while ownership and legal issues with various parties make the task difficult, she cites the need to use the entire premises, instead of just the top three floors.²⁵

Sadie next discusses the possible floor plans for the museum. As she is a musicologist rather than an architect, she asked architect Stephen J. Fuller to create a rough set of plans utilizing the first through third floors. These plans, however, would only allow limited attendance. Another plan, the five-floor plan, would allow more room, greater attendance, and additional exhibit and rehearsal space. Sadie emphasized that whether the three- floor or the five-floor plan was chosen, the museum should be "more

²⁴ Ibid., 74.

²⁵ Ibid., 78.

than a gallery."²⁶ She insists that every aspect of the premises, from the entrance to the library, must draw people in. Clearly Sadie saw negative connotations to the word “gallery,” though it is unclear whether this is because she saw them as unwelcoming and elitist, or for some other reason. But it is also clear that she thought that a Handel House Museum would have to be proactive in welcoming the general public.

Sadie completes the first section of the Part III by describing her five-floor plan in detail, including a series of rough sketches. It should be noted that Europeans and Americans number their floors differently: thus, Sadie’s five-floor plan includes plans for a lower ground floor, ground floor (street level), first floor, second floor, and third floor. She recommends that the ground floor have a research center, storage, the security station, administrative offices, public toilets, and the heating and cooling plant. The ground floor is designed to hold the recital room, storage, the reception, and shop and admissions. The first floor holds the catering, public seating for small receptions, display cases, and the rehearsal room seating for small receptions. The second floor is arranged to hold office space, Handel's bedroom, janitor's storage, and additional public seating and display cases. Finally, Sadie suggests the third floor have the staff kitchen, toilet, lounge, cloakroom and lockers, an emergency exit, a project room, storage, and offices for marketing and public relations.

Section two of this chapter, "Reinstating Handel," states the importance of "preserving the house as a principal artifact."²⁷ A house museum can provide an atmosphere for the collection that no other institution can, with the objects and building

²⁶ Ibid., 80.

²⁷ Ibid., 88.

truly put at best advantage when viewed together. One manner of "reinstating Handel" would be to replicate his activities.²⁸ Performing, rehearsing, and even musicological research can offer the visitor a glimpse at what type of work Handel did every day. While most of the original furnishings of the home are lost, the house can at least be arranged in a period appropriate manner.

There are many potential exhibits of Handel memorabilia, using objects ranging from his clothes to period instruments. Temporary exhibits, Sadie claims, would perpetually create fresh interest in the home. Interactive exhibits could include recorded music and interactive screens. Concert halls, audio tours, and videos could also allow the visitor to connect with Handel in a whole new way.²⁹ One possible exhibit Sadie mentions is "Handel in London." In this exhibit, there might be a mention of the various sites related to Handel in the city (of which Sadie includes a list).³⁰ Another possible exhibit is a "Chronology of Handel's Life," using wall panels running up the stairwell. Sadie also lists possible future exhibits, such as "Handel and his contemporaries" and "Handel the Man," and suggests that temporary exhibits be rotated out every six months.

The third section of Part III is "Developing a Collection." Sadie points out the lack of available Handelian and calls on museums and other institutions to come together to depict this amazing man's life.³¹ Overtures to acquiring the Coke collection had already been made by Stanley Sadie when Julie Anne Sadie wrote her thesis. She mentions the necessity of using facsimiles and non-original musical instruments. Sadie

²⁸ Ibid., 94.

²⁹ Ibid., 91.

³⁰ Ibid., 93.

³¹ Ibid., 54.

goes on to list possible permanent displays, such as “Handel's Art Collection” and “Handel's Patrons, Friends, and Musical Colleagues.”³² The opening of the museum could be celebrated with the exhibit “Making a Museum in Handel's House,” describing the process and trials leading to the successful opening of 25 Brook Street as a museum.³³ A library would need to develop its own collections guidelines, and may even necessitate the creation of a Handel House Archive.

The final section of Part III discusses ways of “Securing the Future,” which is essentially her feasibility study. Sadie begins this part by stating the difficulty and importance of high quality work. She re-states the need for a Handel House Museum, and uses this final part to compare the five-floor and three-four floor plans. The two plans are analyzed in terms of projected attendance figures, the potential earned income, and the salaries and operating expenses of the museum.³⁴

While she shows how the museum could make do with the three-floor plan, Sadie clearly prefers the five-floor plan. With the latter, the museum is predicted to support higher attendance figures, as she proves by using the numbers of comparable historic houses. Likewise, the five-floor plan allows for greater hiring potential, by which she means there will be room for additional staff members and greater space for a Library or Research Center.³⁵ A Recital Room could be used during school tours and for lectures in either plan, but would be supported by a reception area in the five-floor plan. While the five-floor plan would have a greater cost, the reward would be greater as well. Not only

³² Ibid., 102.

³³ Ibid., 104.

³⁴ Ibid., 112.

³⁵ Ibid., 117.

would the museum's earned income be higher, but the museum would have an invaluable impact on a vast amount of visitors. In considering staff numbers and positions, the museum would be able to do far more with the larger staff necessitated by the five-floor plan. All-in-all, the five-floor plan is obviously Sadie's choice and the choice that would allow for better plans for the museum. She argues that it would allow for greater growth, more programs, and many more visitors.

Sadie made a clear case for the creation of a Handel House museum in her thesis. The value of such an institution has been proven again and again, supported by strong research. Sadie also put forth many plans that might be used for the museum, and is clearly very interested in personally assisting in the creation of the museum. With such a strong force behind it, is it any wonder that the Handel House Museum exists today?

From Blueprint to Reality: How it Turned Out (After 1993)

Per Handel's wishes, the house passed to his servant, John Du Burk after the composer's death in 1759. As mentioned earlier, after Du Burk, the home passed through a succession of owners and renters, including many tradesmen families such as dentists and a textile firm. The home did not remain unchanged through these owners, the first major changes being made in 1905, when parts of the house were converted into a shop.

The Sadies and others formed the Handel House Trust in 1992: "We ran the Trust from our home in Hampstead until we were able to move into basement premises at 10 Stratford Place, London W1. That closer proximity to the Brook Street made it much easier for me to give tours of 'the wreck' to potential funders and colleagues."³⁶ The Trust was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, and the lease was purchased from the Co-

³⁶ Julie Anne Sadie e-mail message to the author, July 3, 2013.

operative Insurance Society for the ground floor. The Trust gained control over the entire house in 2000 and construction began to restore the home. They used the MRDA architectural firm, a firm that was established in 1993 and which describes itself as “Architects and Conservation Consultants.”³⁷ While construction was ongoing returning the architecture to its original condition, the Trust also researched appropriate furnishings for the house. Sadly, few of Handel’s possessions had survived, but the staff was able to purchase furniture and decorations that are of a similar style and time to the ones Handel owned. In this effort they were able to use an inventory taken after his death as a reference.

The very first move the future administrators of Handel House made was to acquire the house or some part of it. Sadie and others worked hard to acquire the entire building for use for the museum. She recalled that she “fought hard to acquire the whole house and, along with everyone else, was desperately disappointed when the owners withdrew the agreement we'd reached, especially as we'd secured pledges for all the matching funding originally required.” This was clearly not the hoped-for outcome, yet it turned out that the effort was instrumental to the museum’s success. As Sadie recalls, “had we not tried so hard for the whole, we might never have succeeded as well as we did. It was important to strive for the very best outcome. Handel deserves nothing less.” Through the promise of more, Sadie and others' monumental efforts ensured that the museum, at least, became a reality.

³⁷ MRDA Architects, “Handel House Museum,” MRDA, <http://www.mrda.co.uk/#project/107> (accessed June 16, 2013).

In the end, the three-floor plan was used for the layout of the museum. The public rooms of the museum are on two floors, the third floor used as storage and staff spaces.³⁸ An important consequence of this limitation was that the museum could not use the street entrance, which was reserved for commercial use. The visitor to the museum must follow signs to the back in order to gain entry into the museum. This roundabout route presents particular difficulties for the casual visitor, who will not even realize the museum exists, and, even if they do, may not make the effort to track down the elusive entrance. Even some visitors armed with maps and sheer determination, face challenges in discovering the out-of-the-way entrance.³⁹



Figure 6. Rehearsal and Performance Room, Handel House Museum. Photograph by Stuart Leech.

³⁸ Dr. Martin Wyatt e-mail message to the author, June 10, 2013.

³⁹ Conversation with Dr. Laurel Zeiss, discussing her own visit to the Handel House Museum.

Another ramification of the three–floor plan was that there was no room for the research center and library that Sadie had outlined in her blueprint. However, Sadie observed that when she wrote her thesis “the Coke Collection hadn’t been allocated to the Handel Institute and installed in the Foundling Museum. The existence of that Handel research library, especially given its proximity to the British Library (where all the Handel MSS are held), largely obviates the need for one in the Handel House Museum.”⁴⁰ Since by the time the museum was established the collections intended for the research center and library had found homes elsewhere, it was less imperative that the institution serve as a Handel research center as well as a museum.

The museum may not always be thus limited within their current premises. Sadie shows her optimism for future expansion as she states that “right has prevailed in that the Trust has now acquired the freehold of the entire building and is merely waiting for the shop lease to expire in 2017. The plan is to restore the façade and incorporate the lower floors into a five-story museum.”⁴¹ Doubtless, the museum will make excellent use of the additional space. This expansion, if nothing else, could allow the institution to move the entrance to the building to the front – exactly as it would have been in Handel’s day.

Expanding the institution to a connecting building is a plan that has precedent in several composer house museums. Sadie identifies the Grieg Museum at Trolldhagen and the Beethoven Birthplace at Bonn as two important examples of this trend. This expansion often allows the original structure to house period rooms and related objects, thus allowing the original house itself remains an accurate depiction of its state in the

⁴⁰Julie Anne Sadie e-mail message to the author, July 3, 2013.

⁴¹ Ibid

composer's time. The adjoining property, then, is often used for the purpose of exhibition or gallery spaces, or else is used to house exhibits that focus less on the composer himself (for example, the separate building of the Handel Museum in Halle is used to house the city's musical instrument collection). Sadie is hopeful that "the Trust will include in their forward planning the possibility of acquiring further premises, perhaps some of the upper stories of No. 27, which retains a number of original features once in common with Nos. 23 and 25."⁴² While some expansion has already occurred, Sadie is clearly hopeful that the museum will continue its efforts, acquiring the entirety of number 25 and more.

Although the Handel House Museum did not accomplish the goal of having a formal research center as part of the institution, Sadie aggressively acted to find a collection to support the mission of the institution. Sadie observes "I placed great importance on the acquisition of a collection in my thesis." She further describes this effort: "In addition to our principle efforts to acquire the house and funding to restore it, I worked hard to acquire portraits, manuscripts and first editions as well as commissioning three keyboard instruments (two harpsichords and a chamber organ) for the museum; eventually, a separate Handel House Collections Trust was set up to oversee it."⁴³ Sadie's thesis, by creating a comprehensive catalog of the collection that may be acquired, laid out a collecting blueprint, as well a museum blueprint.

Sadie identifies one critical moment in the development of a collection. She notes that she "was offered the chance to acquire the Byrne Collection (including Handel and Mozart manuscripts, portraits, sculpture and first editions) before it was set to be

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Ibid

auctioned at Sotheby's. After the purchase and before we took possession of the Byrne Collection, we mounted our first exhibition in the sale room at Sotheby's in Bond Street." Several years after acquiring the Byrne collection, they also acquired the Lennox Boyd Collection.⁴⁴ Sadie sees the moment they acquired the Byrne Collection as a fundamentally defining moment for the institution. "That acquisition ensured that if we were ever successful in acquiring the Handel House, it would not merely be a historic house, it could be a museum."⁴⁵ The Sadies were certainly historic preservationists in wanting to restore and create a museum at the house, but they wanted to go beyond that in creating a living educational institution.

One difference that occurred in the transition between blueprint and reality was the necessity for fundraising before gaining a collection. As Sadie explains, "When the opportunity to acquire the first major portrait (that of Handel's singer, Faustina Bordoni), we had no funding in place. Because we were only a group of trustees and volunteers, it was challenging to win funders over, but we did." Sadie identifies three elements that were critical in the fundraising process: "believing in a compelling cause, having a clear vision of what could be achieved and being willing to go the last mile for them..." Sadie also felt that, after a slow beginning, momentum built on the project. "Gradually, more and more people began to share our commitment and the project, in all its aspects, moved forward."⁴⁶ Although initial difficulties made it seem that the blueprint would never

⁴⁴ Dr. Martin Wyatt e-mail message to the author, June 10, 2013.

⁴⁵ Julie Anne Sadie e-mail message to the author, July 3, 2013.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

become a reality, persistence and ingenuity paved the way to success for Sadie and others.

The permanent exhibits at the house are a mix of period rooms and gallery /exhibition spaces. The four historical rooms, restored and decorated to appear as they would have to the composer, are The London Room, Handel's Bedroom, Handel's Rehearsal and Performance Room, and Handel's Composition Room. There are two exhibition spaces that are next door in 23 Brook Street, one each on the first and second floors.

Even the permanent exhibits at the museum have small changes from time to time. For example, in summer 2013, Handel's bust was placed in the composer's bedroom. A magnificent bust of white marble, the work was created in the 1750s by French sculptor Louis-François Roubiliac. Roubiliac also sculpted Handel's memorial in Westminster Abbey, where the composer is buried.⁴⁷ Another tool of interpretation used is the introductory video about Handel and the house that visitors view when they begin their tour.

The museum had two exciting exhibits in summer 2013. One traced the 300 year history of the house, from its construction in the 1720 to present day.⁴⁸ The exhibit, "25 Brook Street," includes the history of every resident of the house. The other is "A Year in

⁴⁷ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., "Handel Bust," The Handel House Trust, Ltd., <http://www.handelhouse.org/whats-on/exhibitions/handel-bust> (June 16, 2013).

⁴⁸ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., "25 Brook Street," The Handel House Trust, Ltd., <http://www.handelhouse.org/Exhibitions/25-brook-street-2> (June 16, 2013).

the Life of Handel: 1713” and details the day-to-day life and important events related to the composer.⁴⁹

The museum regularly holds many exciting concerts and other programs on site. For example, in summer 2013, it had many great lectures, including “Handel and Mrs. Cibber,” “18th Century Crime and Punishment,” “Death Minor – Death and Disease in Handel’s London,” “Heroes and Madmen: the art of castrato,” “Handel and the Foundling Hospital,” and “Handel’s Muses: Cuzzoni.”⁵⁰ They hold Saturday talks such as “Handel and the Foundling Hospital” and “Harpsichord and Baroque Music.” In addition, they have a wide variety of concerts, such as “Bach Partitas” and other period appropriate music including “Italian and English Chamber Music.”⁵¹ Such programs put Handel in the context of the history and people that surrounded him.

One ingenious program that the museum consistently offers is the “Composer-in-Residence.” In this program, which started in 2006, a single Composer-in-Residence curates the performances of local student composers. New works are commissioned by the museum from these composers, which truly keep the music alive in Handel House.

Handel was not the only major cultural figure to live on Brook Street. In 1969, rock musician Jimi Hendrix moved into 23 Brook Street (next door to Handel’s old home). A guitarist credited with pioneering a new style of music that blended many styles, Hendrix and his girlfriend enjoyed the nearness of musical landmarks such as the

⁴⁹ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., “A Year in the Life of Handel: 1713,” The Handel House Trust, Ltd., <http://www.handelhouse.org/Exhibitions/1713> (June 16, 2013).

⁵⁰ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., “What’s On,” The Handel House Trust, Ltd., <http://www.handelhouse.org/whats-on> (June 16, 2013).

⁵¹ Ibid.



Figure 7. Entrance to Handel House Museum. Photograph by Contrapositive.

Marquee.⁵² The Marquee Club, opened in 1958, “witnessed the birth” of many rock and pop musicians, with Jimi Hendrix himself doing four gigs there.⁵³

When the Handel House Museum opened in 2001, Hendrix’s flat was restored to resemble its state when the guitarist lived there. The flat is now the administrative offices of the Handel House Museum. An English Heritage Blue Plaque was erected on the building in his honor in 1997.⁵⁴

Just as Handel himself was blind by the time he died, there are many blind and partially sighted visitors who visit the museum. Since 2003, the museum has been in

⁵² Experience Hendrix, L.L.C., “James Marshall Hendrix,” Sony Music Entertainment, <http://www.jimihendrix.com/us/jimi> (June 16, 2013).

⁵³ The Marquee Club., “The Marquee Club: History of the Marquee Club,” The Marquee Club, <http://www.themarqueeclub.net/history> (October 31, 2013).

⁵⁴ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., “Jimi Hendrix,” The Handel House Trust, Ltd. Website, <http://www.handelhouse.org/whats-on> (June 16, 2013).

partnership with the Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB). Together, they have put together many programs and events every year for blind and partially-sighted visitors.⁵⁵ This includes multi-sensory 60 minute learning workshops. They also relate these visitors to the composer through talks such as “Blindness in the 18th Century.”⁵⁶

Julie Anne Sadie declared that “It was my hope that by publishing *Calling on the Composer*, we might encourage more collaboration between composer museums. In the course of our travels for the book we were constantly surprised to discover how unaware individual curators were of other composer museums.”⁵⁷ I have found this to be true as well. Though knowledge of composer house museums was certainly expanded by Sadie’s thesis, there are still staggeringly few who have even heard of such a museum. Like Sadie, it is my hope that this thesis will provide a basis of knowledge for composer house museums, as well as provide a glimpse at the process of how such a museum can be founded.

Certainly the most intensive study into founding a composer house museum, Sadie’s *Blueprint* thesis provides a very clear view of the path one woman intended to follow to transform a building into a composer house museum. Sadie discussed the resources needed, the collections she wanted to acquire for the house, the best possible floor plans, and many other aspects of her ideal Handel House Museum. There were several changes that occurred from the time that Sadie completed her thesis in 1993 to the museum’s opening in 2001. Though several of her ideas came to fruition, such as having

⁵⁵ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., “Blind and partially sighted visitors,” The Handel House Trust, Ltd., <http://www.handelhouse.org/learning/blind-and-partially-sighted-visitors>

⁵⁶ The Handel House Trust, Ltd., “Saturday Talk: Blindness in the 18th Century,” The Handel House Trust, Ltd., <http://www.handelhouse.org/Concerts-and-events/saturday-talk-blindness-in-the-18th-century> (June 16, 2013).

⁵⁷ Sadie email to author July 3, 2013.

programs for blind visitors (as Handel himself was blind), some did not. The museum was only able to procure part of the building Handel once lived in, and is thus using a smaller floor plan than the one Sadie hoped to use. As a result, they were forced to discard any possibility of a research center or library, and visitors must enter around the back, not the front of the house as Handel did. However, some exciting programs have been created that Sadie did not plan for originally – such as the Composer in Residence Program. All in all, however, the blueprint and the reality are very similar, and it is due to Sadie's original plan and continued dedication that we have the museum today.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Though these museums, through their very nature, focus on the intangible – the music that the composer wrote – they remain very similar to other historic houses. They interpret the composers' life, before and during (and occasionally after) his time at the home, and tell stories about the composer and his family. The techniques used to tell the stories in these homes vary greatly, becoming as disparate and unique as the composers themselves.

Each composer house museum offers a view of its composer in a different manner. Many decide to primarily curate and interpret the time a composer lived in or near the residence, such as the Beethoven Heiligenstadt. Others, such as the Handel House in Halle, decide to put such a time in the context of their whole lives, and the musical history of the decade. The techniques used by these museums to curate the composer differ just as vastly; in many instances there is a mix of audio and visual exhibits in place that presents an entirely different view of the composer than many guests may have previously had. However, there is still more that these museums can do. While each museum has many interesting exhibits, only the larger museums consistently have a variety of educational programs. Guided tours for visitors and school groups, lectures, and other interactive opportunities can be used to great effect in order to pull the guest deeper into the composer's life. In addition, as these composers were crucial to the history of music, and their significance should be prominently depicted, detailing what precise changes their music brought to the world musically, socially, and politically.

Often, these composers were misrepresented postmortem, in political, musical, and other arenas, and it is the responsibility of these museums to put the record straight.

While publications like “Blueprint” and *Calling on the Composer* have been written to address the topic of composer house museums, there are still many unexplored areas in this field. It is my hope that this work has furthered the existing literature by exploring the varying interpretive techniques, histories, and governance of these museums, as well as an in-depth example of the road from original plans to a composer house museum’s founding.

There is still much to be discovered, however. For example, there is little information available about the differences in interpretation and governance to be found in these homes based on which country or city they are in. Likewise, there is almost no information to be found regarding the shift in governance that is occurring in the field, from government-run museums (city or national), to non-governmentally administered. The recent trend among European and North American governments toward austerity might raise concerns about the sustainability of these museums. Research into this area is very important because these composers and the museums that interpret them help preserve and promote a crucial part of musical heritage.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Addresses of All Houses Referenced in Thesis

London, England

The Handel House Museum
25 Brook Street Mayfair London
W1K4HB
Phone: +44(0)20 7495 1685

Vienna, Austria

Mozartwohnung
1010 Vienna, Domgasse 5
Phone: +43-1-512 17 91 (Mozarthaus Vienna)
Phone: +43-1-505 87 47-0 (Wien Museum)

Haydnhaus
1060 Vienna, Haydngasse 19
Phone: +43-1-596 13 07

Beethoven Eroicahaus
1190 Vienna, Döblinger Hauptstraße 92
Phone: +43-1-369 14 24

Kunsthistorisches Museum
Burgring 5, 1010 Wien, Austria
+43 1 525240

Naturhistorisches Museum
Burgring 7, 1010 Wien, Austria
+43 1 521770

Wien Museum Karlsplat
1040 Vienna, Karlsplatz
Phone: +43-1-505 87 47-0

Schubert Geburtshaus
1090 Vienna, Nußdorfer Straße 54
Phone: +43-1-317 36 01

Johann Strauß Wohnung
1020 Vienna, Praterstraße 54
Phone: +43-1-214 01 21

Beethoven Pasqualatihaus
1010 Vienna, Mölker Bastei 8
Phone: +43-1-535 89 05

Schubert Sterbewohnung
A-1040 Vienna, Kettenbrückengasse 6
Phone: +43-1-581 67 30

Beethoven Wohnung Heiligenstadt
1190 Vienna, Probusgasse 6
Phone: +43-1-370 54 08

Salzburg, Austria

Mozart's Birthplace
Getreidegasse 9
A-5020 Salzburg
Tel.: +43-662-84 43 13

Mozart Residence
Makartplatz 8
A-5020 Salzburg
Tel.: +43-662-874227-40

Mürzzuschlag, Austria

Brahms Museum
8680 Mürzzuschlag, Austria
Tel +43 3852 3434

Bonn, Germany

Beethoven-Haus
Bonngasse 18-26
D-53111 Bonn
+49-(0)228-98175-25

Halle, Germany

Stiftung Händel-Haus
Große Nikolaistraße 5
06108 Halle (Saale)
Telefon 0345 / 500 90 221

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