



Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre (Convergences: Inventories of the Present)

By Jeffrey Kallberg

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The complex status of Chopin in our culture--he was a native Pole and adopted Frenchman, and a male composer writing in "feminine" genres--is the subject of Jeffrey Kallberg's absorbing book. Combining social history, literary theory, musicology, and feminist thought, *Chopin at the Boundaries* is the first book to situate Chopin's music within the construct of his somewhat marginal sexual identity and to explore how this should figure in our understanding of his compositional methods. Through this novel approach, Kallberg reveals a new Chopin, one situated precisely where questions of gender open up into the very important question of genre.

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Editorial Review

Review

Chopin at the Boundaries aim[s] 'to expose and partially recover aspects of Chopin's style perceived in his day to be marginal or foreign, but which today's listeners have transformed or repressed.' In this respect and in others, [it] succeed[s] brilliantly; Kallberg's scholarship is consistently of the highest caliber, his research meticulous and exhaustive, his arguments engaging. (John Rink *Times Literary Supplement*)

Kallberg is internationally accepted as one of the most knowledgeable writers on Chopin today. This book shows that he is also the most original. It is an extremely successful attempt to open out the study of Chopin into both social criticism and the history of reception...It is certainly the most stimulating book of Chopin criticism I have ever read. (Charles Rosen)

Mr. Kallberg...[explores] connections between 'gender and genre' by way of showing Frederic Chopin's small forms and surface beauties congruent with 19th-century concepts of feminine expression. Most of the pages [of his book] are given over to fine analysis of Chopin's work. There is in particular an excellent examination of that strange end piece to Chopin's career, the F-minor Mazurka. (Kenneth LaFave *Washington Times*)

[Kallberg's] meticulous scholarship is presented lucidly, and his acquaintance with pertinent literature of the past century and a half is impressive. (*Choice*)

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About the Author

Jeffrey Kallberg is William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of Music at the University of Pennsylvania.

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