

Slide 1:

Slide 2: In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre analyzed how events change the meaning of a particular place by incorporating both traces of the past and associations of the present.¹ For Lefebvre, Roland Barthes, and Michel de Certeau, and others, spaces are not “a thing” but a *process* of continual, ever-changing relations.² The meaning of spaces is thus fluid, not fixed—Martina Löw has described this as “the possibility of plurality...[spaces] are always open and indefinite with respect to future formations.”³ Finally, Lefebvre explains that spaces are “controlled by structures of power and reimagined by” *people* in such spaces.”⁴

As public opera houses emerged as monumental structures in urban landscapes—largely after the early 19th century—they took on these powerful, fluid layers of meaning.⁵ If we consider opera houses through this lens—as not only musical venues, but also continually evolving places of performance—how do these meanings impact individuals inside, outside, and around the house? And in the case of my focus today, how have artists, activists, politicians, and others seized the meaning of these places as potent sites for protest?

click

While musicological attention to place was once quite rare, music scholars across sub-disciplines have recently drawn on philosophy, sociology, and cultural geographies to forge a new attentiveness to the phenomenology of music as experienced in social space. Robert Fink described this as a paradigm shift from an “imagined historical time”—the “when” of music—to a paradigm attuned to the “where” of music.⁶ Georgina Born has likewise called attention to the “relative *underdevelopment* of analytical approaches to the *social* dimensions of the interweaving of music, sound, and space.”⁷ Considering the spatial helps us continue to jettison disciplinary constraints focused on texts or composers, recentering instead on a complex network of space, institution, genre, performance, experience, and interpretation. In this paper, I analyze

the spatial semiotics of protest in, at, and around opera houses, spaces saturated with symbolic capital. Through case studies, I argue that place *matters*, that opera houses are particularly significant as dynamic participants connecting music, politics, and space in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.

click

Theater historian Marvin Carlson has analyzed how *every* element of a theatrical space communicates meaning, from lobbies visited during intermission to decorative interior details to elements on a façade.⁸ How, for example, does the internal organization delineate social stratification? What does the proportion of public or social spaces to backstage areas demonstrate economic priorities? How does classicizing external decoration express cultural respectability?⁹

Beyond such considerations of the performance space itself, the location within a cityspace lends additional semiotic layers.¹⁰ For centuries, the *location* of an opera house has been the object of intense legislative attention and urban planning, whether that venue is part of a specific entertainment district or serves as the focal point of a grand avenue. Theatrical institutions incorporate ghosted memories not just of earlier buildings that were torn down to create a newer structures, they also pull in memories of what previously occupied the space at the new location. One obvious example is here in Paris, as the Bastille Opera engages in complex dialogue with not only the other, older Opéra—and indeed all the incarnations of opera houses in Paris which preceded it—but also with the many, many ghosts of the site at the Bastille.¹¹ In his work, Richard Schechner argued that scholars have paid too little attention “to how the audiences get to, and into the performance place, and how they go from that space.”¹² The routes to a particular performance location are powerfully meaningful. Urban planner Kevin Lynch has analyzed how individuals continuously construct mental maps of urban surroundings through

click

“paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks,” engaging with both routes intended by engineers and city planners, and routes marked by personal and political dimensions.¹³

Slide 3: Jacques Rancière’s writings imply an explicitly geographical dimension to the political; Rancière notes “everything in politics turns on the distribution of spaces. . . political action *always* acts upon the social as the litigious distribution of places and roles.”¹⁴ As places that have always had a contentious relationship with inclusion, perceptions of elitism, etc—what does it mean to protest in proximity to an opera house?¹⁵ I argued the spaces of opera houses are not only politicized, they are also spaces where it is uniquely interesting to attune to the the *sonic* and the embodied/choreographic elements of protests.¹⁶

Slide 4: In analyzing protest, I follow Benjamin Tausig in not attending directly to protest songs or songwriters but to *sound* more broadly.¹⁷ Shayna Silverstein notes protest spaces actually “*emerge* through the tactical bodies that gesture, chant, march, and occupy historically and political contingent spaces. Several scholars have analyzed the “specifically **audible** ways in which sound-based participation”—whether that participation is cooperative, confrontational, or pragmatic—bring about the act of protest.¹⁸ In her study of anti-nuclear street protests in Japan, Noriko Manabe notes that music and sound “are some of the *primary* tactics through which protestors attempt to appropriate urban space.”¹⁹ Maria Sonevytsky defines *sonic occupation* as “forms of expressive conduct that state a determination to remain and dwell in the public space for as long as the sound is perceptible.”²⁰ In addition, Silverstein asserts that we must not just study the *making* of sound, but also how sounds are *received* through listening, as both tactics “(re) distribute **auditory power** in political spaces.”²¹ More materially, sound echoes in particular ways in urban spaces, affected by factors such as building shape, material, height, or

gaps between structures. Sound, for example, moves in markedly different ways in a 19th century square such as Paris's Place de l'Opéra than in a street lined with glass high-rises.²² Manabe also notes how sound can call attention to things that cannot be seen—how sound can signal protests which may be many streets away, invisible according to the city planner's vista, but which repurposes space in subversive ways.²³

Slide 5:

Scholars from many disciplines are currently questioning how bodies have “perceptible impacts on power through embodied tactics.”²⁴ Expanding her work on performativity, Judith Butler has recently discussed assembled bodies as meaningful in a way **prior to and apart** from verbal discourse or demands; moreover, these assembled bodies reconfigure the meaning of space.²⁵ Susan Leigh Foster has defined “choreographies of protest” as “intelligent bodies engaging in collective action together..bodies in public space operating according to barely visible choreographic lines.” André Lepecki has likewise considered the kinetic's connection to politics. Drawing on Rancière, Lepecki analyzes how²⁶ the mere act of gathering together in public might be seen as “choreopolitics”—particularly in heavily policed spaces—but there is much diversity in the ways in which occupation of space might signal disruption versus cooperation.²⁷ In addition, as Joshua Chambers-Letson has demonstrated in his analyses of protests in Ferguson, MO, not only are protests “**constituted** by embodied participation,” it very much “matters *whose* bodies performatively realize those claims.”²⁸ Kelina Gottman points out there is currently intense attention to “the political potential of bodies moving together against structures of disempowerment,” for thinking about how bodily action and its (dis) organization produces meaningful forms of social life.”²⁹

Slide 6:

Turning to ways in which specific protests happened in, around, and because of opera houses, there are *many* 19th century examples, just at the moment when the bourgeois public opera house was solidifying its own semiotic structure within the urban cityscape.³⁰ Protests could be linked to a building's physical structure or more metaphorical meanings—the erection of a new cultural institution like an opera house could spawn mass political demonstrations related to class tensions or national identity (as was the case in Prague in 1868).³¹ Likewise, a (perceived) political connection with an operatic *work* could certainly spark unrest—just to name one well-known case, we might recall *La Muette* and the 1830 Belgian revolution.³² Benjamin Walton and Roger Parker have critiqued and revised several of these stories of 19th century opera *directly* fomenting revolution, yet Walton also concludes (in the case of *Guillaume Tell*) that it was essentially impossible to separate the work “from the political situation...or indeed from the weather outside the opera house.”³³ While an analysis of the sounds and embodied connections between space, protest, and the opera house in the 19th century is essential to this narrative, I would like to detail three cases of the semiotic entanglement of opera houses and protest in the 21st century as a window into the continued relevancy and complexity of the opera house as a meaningful space.³⁴ My three case studies—the Hungarian State Opera House (2012), New York's Metropolitan Opera House (2013), and the Sydney Opera House (2018)—each illuminate different concerns, from the opera house as protest route focal point, to protests linked to works within the opera house, to protests over a house's meaning vis-à-vis a commercial, civic, or national status.³⁵

Slide 7:

Part of a complex intersection of imperial and national politics, prestige, class, and artistic concerns, the construction of Hungary's Royal Opera house coincided with a refashioning

of Budapest. As Markian Prokopovych has analyzed, a “beautification” initiative in the late 19th century hoped to turn the city into a modern metropolis.³⁶ The opera house’s location was crucial; after much debate, bureaucrats, politicians, and city planners erected a magnificent neo-Renaissance theatre on Budapest’s new Parisian-style boulevard (today’s Andrásy Ave),³⁷ creating a landmark on a main artery of the city. Despite major changes to Budapest throughout the 20th century, from WWII’s aerial bombings to the 1956 revolution to restructuring post-1990, the opera house continues to occupy a significant place within the urban plan.

Slide 8: In January 2012, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán³⁸ held a gala inside the opera house following the adoption of a new constitution—the state fête included music by Hungarian composers and was broadcast via state television. Outside the opera house, up to 100,000 Hungarians gathered in the square to protest anti-democratic principles of the new “fundamental law.” Since 2012, the Opera House has been a linchpin in regular street protests against Orbán’s administration, including multiple protests in late 2014/early 2015 and throughout 2018. While event trajectories vary, protesters *often* begin in front of the Opera House before taking routes to

Slide 9: other significant sites such as Parliament, the National Museum, or the former headquarters of Hungarian public radio. Protests feature up-to-date chants focused on specific demands, but also frequently include singing the Hungarian national song.³⁹ Penned by Ferenc Erkel in 1844—the first director of the Hungarian Opera, whose statue stares out from a niche on the building’s facade—singing this hymn outside the Opera adds an additional layer of meaning as sounds from these moving, singing, chanting bodies echo off Budapest’s buildings.⁴⁰ Moreover, given the institution’s role as a state opera house, the site takes on new—and ever-shifting significance—as a place of protest. As Orban’s Fidesz party has recently expanded investment in the opera house

and control over cultural appointments AND major Hungarian musicians have protested such

Slide 10:

moves, the Opera House has, more than ever, become a fraught site. ⁴¹ There are many other rich examples of opera houses which serve as nodes or landmarks on “protest routes,” including the Garnier here in Paris.⁴²

Slide 11:

A second example concerns a more recently constructed opera house, New York City’s Metropolitan Opera. The Met, which opened in 1966, is ghosted by the memories of earlier New York opera houses, namely the old Met at 39th & Broadway (demolished 1967). The Metropolitan Opera House is an intensely politicized site itself, haunted by the legacies of Lincoln Center’s construction through Robert Moses’s “urban renewal” plan which evicted up to 40,000 mostly black and Latino working class families.⁴³ Heading to this Upper West Side bastion conjures omnipresent questions of public space’s connections with class, race, and art.

Slide 12:

The Metropolitan Opera scheduled Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin* for its season-opening gala in September 2013, featuring star soprano Anna Netrebko with Valery Gergiev at the podium. LGBTQ activist organizations, including Queer Nation New York, decried this highlighting of Russian works and artists; three months earlier, Russia had “banned propaganda on nontraditional sexual relationships.”⁴⁴ The composer Andrew Rudin circulated an online petition asking the Met to dedicate the 2013 gala to Russian LGBT citizens, connecting his plea to Tchaikovsky’s sexuality.⁴⁵ Though the petition gained around 10,000 signatures, Met general manager Peter Gelb refused to dedicate the performance. In an editorial printed in *Bloomberg* and included as an insert in the Met’s programs, Gelb gave a strongly worded response about the alleged “autonomy and apolitical nature of arts institutions.”

Slide 13: The debate incorporated several issues, connecting opera not just to state politics and incorporating references to a composer's biography, but also interrogating the relationships of Anna Netrebko and Valery Gergiev to the Russian state.⁴⁶ On the opening night performance of *Eugene Onegin*, Queer Nation and other activists staged a protest. Because it was the Met gala, an even more affluent audience than usual was in attendance—journalist David Patrick Stearns commented that that “glitz was in unusually high gear”.... the clothes of the audience...”had trains, feathers, and fabric you didn’t know had been invented.”⁴⁷

Slide 14: This was a complex protest in terms of sound and space. Inside the house, after the playing of the “Star-Spangled Banner,” protesters in the uppermost balcony unfurled a rainbow flag and chanted “Putin, end your war on Russian gays.” They were booed by some audience members, and escorted out after delaying the performance for roughly ten minutes.⁴⁸ Outside, protesters used site-specific chants, drawing a direct analogy to the movement of protest from within the house to the “streets” outside, chanting: “out of the opera, into the streets.”⁴⁹ Because this was the opening gala, the performance was transmitted live to multiple screens in Times

Slide 15: Square and Lincoln Center’s Josie Robertson Plaza.⁵⁰ According to some accounts, the protesters were drowned out by opera transformed into a sonic weapon, as the strains of *Eugene Onegin* piped into the plaza obliterated their chants.

My final example turns to a famous modernist opera building, the Sydney Opera House.

Slide 16: Situated at Bennelong Point, a significant site for both aboriginal Gadigal peoples and settlers, the environment itself inspired elements of architect Jørn Utzon’s design.⁵¹ Indeed, Utzon fought to keep Bennelong Point “pristine” and free of “intrusive elements.”⁵² In addition, Utzon’s “experiential” architecture devoted significant attention to the approach to the opera house,

connecting visual and aural stimuli from the external architectural elements and sounds of the site to the internal performances. All of the house's public spaces of were "carefully designed to provide a sense of anticipation and joy," developing a quasi-ceremonial ascent culminating in the eventual performance.⁵³ Utzon described the house as enacting its own drama on the harbor—a concept subsequently mirrored in *The Eighth Wonder*, an opera composed ABOUT the Sydney Opera House which used the building's exterior as a set.⁵⁴

Slide 17:

Ultimately, Utzon's creation created a renowned architectural landmark with a complex semiotic intersection as modernist architecture masterpiece, "iconic building of a city," signifier of a nation, and major tourist attraction.⁵⁵ Inscribed by UNESCO as a world heritage site in 2007, the summary of significance noted the Opera House is **not** a museum—its role as architectural treasure must be balanced with a continued role as working performing arts center.⁵⁶ Yet to a greater degree than other sites, the Sydney Opera House organization attempts to balance the institution's manifold roles through a detailed conservation document—currently 300+ page

Slide 19:

—which ranges from forbidding harbor development which would interrupt views of the house to how to make the roof tiles appear as white as possible. Amongst many regulations, the document establishes that external illuminations of the shells should be **non-commercial** in nature.

Slide 20:

The Sydney Opera House has a history of protest—protests took place on the site even before the building was completed.⁵⁷ Subsequent protests often explicitly used the iconic house exterior as a messaging venue; in 2009, for example, Greenpeace campaigners hung a banner on the sails, though they noted that they took great care not to damage the building which "means a lot to us as well as the rest of Australia."⁵⁸

Slide 21:

One particularly intriguing example was a conflict which centered not on using the sails to protest, but on protesting the use of the sails. In 2018, the Racing NSW company asked to use the sails to project ads for the Everest horse race (and associated profits from gambling).⁵⁹ Citing house policies, Opera House manager Louise Herron refused, then was aggressively criticized by conservative radio host Alan Jones.⁶⁰ About 300,000 people signed the petition to “Defend Our Opera House” protesting both the use of the house and Jones’s treatment of Herron. Ultimately, the NSW premier overrode these objections, allowing the Racing NSW ad to move forward.⁶¹ Complaints on various sides erupted, from anti-capitalism⁶² to classism (horse-racing versus opera), to⁶³ questions of how art should interact with public space. On October 9, furious Australians gathered outside the house hoping to disrupt the projections by shining cell phone lights on the sails. Protesters formed a unique sonic background through chants of “not for sale” and “**our house.**”

Slide 22:

When covering opera house protests, journalists regularly liken the conflict of protests to the dramas of operatic repertoire. I would push this brief comparison further, stating that operas and protests indeed share certain characteristics; both are events in which we should similarly analyze how bodies move in/politicize/change space and how voices engage in sonic occupation. We can construct a long lineage of protest at such places, a ringing, resounding, noisy and kinetic history, and this history is not relegated to the past. As places saturated by meaning—even in the case of newer houses such as the Metropolitan Opera or the Sydney Opera House—opera houses & their associated protests provide us with a clear example of not just how such venues have continued relevance in the 21st century but also why “analytical approaches to the *social* dimensions of the interweaving of music, sound, and space” are **essential**.⁶⁴

click

¹ Lefebvre wrote of an “etymology of locations.”

² Barthes describes the city as a type of discourse that we “speak” by living in it, wandering through it, looking at it. See “Semiology and the Urban,” lecture given on May 16, 1967, at the Institut Français. Lefebvre notes that social spaces are “not things, but interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another” (*The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991], 86–87). See also Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, selected, trans., and introduced by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); and Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Manabe summarizes it thus: “A particularly attractive framework is Henri Lefebvre’s (1991) conceptualization of space as the product of a physical, mental, and social space. For Lefebvre, space is a product of hegemonic control and the acted-out responses of the people in that space. He considers urban space to be socially produced by the interaction of the *perceived* space (the physical environment) with *conceived* space (or representations of space) and *lived-in* spaces (spaces of representation). Representations of space are “tied to the relations of production and to the ‘order’ which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to ‘frontal relations’” (1991; 33). This conceived space is planned, ordered, and regulated by hegemonic forces—architects, developers, urban planners, and social engineers—who map out flows of people, separate areas by function, and segregate classes. By controlling how space is organized and used, they subsume ideology within these representations of space (Merrifield 1993: 523). In contrast, spaces of representation are the spaces of everyday life, where people imagine new uses and meanings for space in contrast to the conceived space regulated by hegemonic forces. Lefebvre describes this space as a system of nonverbal symbols, signs, images, and associations that inhabitants make of objects in physical space in the course of daily life; these signs include not only visual stimuli like graffiti but also sounds and music. Through imagination, the inhabitants seek to appropriate the space that otherwise dominates them (Lefebvre 1991: 39).

³ See Martina Löw, “The Constitution of Space: The Structuration of Spaces through the Simultaneity of Effect and Perception,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 11, no. 1 (2008): 26. I wish to thank Fanny Gribenski for bringing Löw’s work to my attention.

⁴ This is Manabe’s wording, p. 15—may want to revise this.

⁵ I primarily consider this through the early 19th century and beyond, since the earlier private and royal opera houses were often described with very different publics and traffic routes and resonances in mind.

⁶ Fink differentiates between place as the physical environment through which we move and space as the practice and lived experience of place. Robert Fink, “File under: American Spaces,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 708. Walter Benjamin likewise called attention to the importance of place for a performance, stating that “even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.” “The Work of Art in the Age of mechanical reproduction,” in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 220.

In the development of performance studies, Richard Schechner called attention to the relationship between the production and the “space(s) where it takes place.” Richard Schechner, *Environmental Theater* (New York: Applause, 1994); and Schechner, *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1988). See also David Wiles’s introduction—particularly his discussion of Mike Pearson’s 1988 manifesto—in *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2–3.

In a particularly American context, Mark Clague has argued that institutions “develop and propel a particular use of culture for a particular purpose in a specific place.”

Mark Clague, “The Industrial Evolution of the Arts: Chicago’s Auditorium Building (1889-) as Cultural Machine,” *Opera Quarterly* 22, nos. 3–4 (2006): 480–81. For more detail on what Clague describes as “the institutional muse” and an in-depth analysis of the intersection of space, institution, and Chicago’s urban environment, see Clague, “Chicago Counterpoint: The Auditorium Theater Building and the Civic Imagination” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2002), 54–57.

⁷ Born, Georgina, ed. *Music, Sound, and Space: Transformations of Public and Private Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁸ Drawing in part on Barthes's *Elements of Sociology*, Marvin Carlson notes that "a semiotic approach to theatre architecture should encourage us to look not only at the traditional elements of stage and auditorium but at every distinct element of the theatre complex for what it may reveal about the meanings of this building for its society" (*Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989, 9.) We should also analyze the semiotics of cafés, offices, and retail spaces included in theatrical building complexes—Clague discusses the Auditorium Building's multiuse spaces in "Industrial Evolution of the Arts: Chicago's Auditorium Building (1889-) as Cultural Machine," *Opera Quarterly* 22, nos. 3-4 (2006): 481, 487-492.

⁹ How, even, does the particular soundscape of a theater impact audiences?

While soundscapes inside historical musical venues are difficult to analyze, see Tamara Levitz for a fascinating rereading of the apocryphal "riot" at the Rite of Spring premiere. Analyzing sources of noise within the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on May 29, 1913, Levitz uses this spatial analysis to resituate the "riot" as xenophobic backlash rather than protests over new musical language. "Racism at *The Rite*," in *The Rite of Spring at 100*, edited by Severine Neff, Maureen Carr, and Gretchen Horlacher with John Reef (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 146–78. Current scholarship is also greatly expanding information on historic urban soundscapes, particularly through the use of digital humanities projects and mapping. See, for example, historical soundscapes of New York City at <http://vectorsdev.usc.edu/NYCsound/777b.html>; or Mylène Pardoën's bretez project representing the Grand Châtelet district of eighteenth-century Paris, <https://lejournal.cnrs.fr/articles/ecoutez-le-paris-du-xviiiie-siecle>

¹⁰ For theaters, location is often particularly meaningful vis-à-vis the relationship to a theater district. Carlson provides a capsule European history of theories on theatrical location, from Voltaire's 1748 call for monuments facing major public squares to the monumental opera houses of the nineteenth century. See *Places of Performance*, 88.

¹¹ Also, as I'll discuss later, the Metropolitan Opera, which contends with institutional memories of the old Met at 39th and Broadway and demolished in 1967, as well as with rancorous memories of the clearance of low-income housing and contentious urban renewal policies which haunt the site of the Lincoln Center complex

¹² Schechner. Quoted in Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001): 156.

¹³ Lynch considers how people construct mental maps of their urban surroundings, theorizing his five elements as (1) channels along which the observer moves; (2) organizational elements that are not traversable; (3) districts with common identifying characters; (4) points through which an observer can enter a city; and (5) external, singled-out point references. Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT press, 1960), 46–48. Manabe cites a different scholar (Quentin Stevens and *The Ludic City*) who identifies five types of settings in which playful activities, such as street performances, tend to occur: paths, on which people travel; boundaries, or the edges of urban spaces; intersections; thresholds, or entry/exit points from one space to another; and props, such as statues of fountains.

¹⁴ Jacques Rancière, "Politics and Aesthetics: an interview," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 8, no. 2 (2003): 201, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725032000162657>. Cited in Mark Davidson and Kurt Iveson, "Occupations, Mediations, Subjectifications: Fabricating Politics." *Space & Polity* 18, no. 2 (August 2014): 137-152.

Likewise, as Luuk noted at the UCC conference, looking at conflict in a spatial lens, "conflict is about the struggle over the meaning of (urban) space and the sorting of populations and objects. "How is space demarcated, claimed, and transformed into particular 'places' various actors? And how are these practices adopted, contested, or resisted?"

¹⁵ Maybe at some point add something in about democracy & John Parkinson and the need for physical space.

¹⁶ What about the choreographies of bodies in space and the sounds of voices lifted in protest MIGHT be particularly meaningful in such spaces?

¹⁷ Benjamin Tausig notes that all of these are more traditional topics for studies of musical protest. "Introduction: At Risk of Repetition," *Music & Politics* 13, no. 1 (Winter 2019).

¹⁸ Shayna Silverstein's analysis focuses on the Women's March in DC. She notes that the women's listening and chanting bodies at the march expanded the march beyond the permitted spaces (below ground, above ground, etc). Her main argument is that there are similarities between choreo-sono-political grammars of protests, but also significant differences that will only be illuminated through ethnographic work.

Silverstein cites Noriko Manabe's *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Protest Music after Fukushima* (2015), Benjamin Tausig, *Bangkok is Ringing: Sound, Protest, and Constraint* (Oxford 2018), Laura Kunreuther, "Sounding Democracy: Performance, Protest, and Political Subjectivity." (Talk at SEM, 2016), David Novak, "Podcast on Japan's Antinuclear Movement," *Post* (2013). For Silverstein, see "On Sirens and Lamp Posts: Sound, Space, and Affective Politics," *Music & Politics* 13, no. 1 (Winter 2019).

Thomas Turino and other scholars have noted the varying modes of music or sonic activities, from participatory to confrontational, deliberative, or pragmatic. Cited in Manabe, p. 13. See Turino (2008) as well as Mattern (1998).

¹⁹ Building off of Lefebvre, Manabe reminds us that "street protests challenge the social order by attempting to appropriate urban space for users that neither planners nor authorities originally intended."

Manabe, *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Protest Music after Fukushima* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 153.

²⁰ Maria Sonevsky, "Listening for Dissensus," *Music & Politics* 13, no. 1 (Winter 2019).

²¹ Silverstein, "On Sirens and Lamp Posts," 4. She notes this is not always about "freedom" or dissent by turning to her work in Syria, and how sound in protest can also serve as a form of authoritarianism, writing that "where vocalic bodies make audible dissent, they also bellow the power of authoritarianism"...how bodies respond to participatory chants at protests and marches is contingent on the political conditions of consensus and dissensus." (6) Sonic phenomena as politicized.

²² For much more on urban acoustics, see Jian Kang's work cited by Manabe, pp. 243-244. Manabe talks about this in both her book and her article in the *Music & Politics* colloquy. Sound is exaggerated in an urban setting, in which tall, contiguous glass buildings form a sound canyon, allowing the sound to propagate farther and resonate longer than in a less densely built environment.

From Sonevsky, "Listening for Dissensus," *Music & Politics* 13, no. 1 (Winter 2019). This episode represented one of the more uncomfortable moments that I experienced throughout the course of the day, when the chorus of impatient voices began chanting "March!" while speakers on stage continued to speak. Their chant was mounting in volume, resounding off of the monumental façade of the nearby Department of Agriculture and reflecting back by the other massive federal buildings that line Independence Avenue. On stage, the voice of a trans activist—whose voice was amplified by the demonstration's infrastructure—became temporarily backgrounded in the sonic environment. I stood in the middle of a dense crowd on Independence Avenue, unable to see either the large monitor of the speaker on stage nor those yelling "March!" Without visual orientation to the sources of these competing sounds, I was nonetheless struck by their impact: the sounds were "big" and "heavy" (felt as vibration in the body), to use Daughtry's terms.

²³ Manabe, *Music & Politics*. She cites Jian Kang, *Urban Sound Environment* (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2006). "Sounds can be effective in calling attention to the invisible. While a person can only see what is in front of them, they can hear in other directions."

²⁴ Silverstein, "On Sirens and Lamp Posts," 4.

²⁵ Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2015).

Borrowing from the formulation of what the conference participant at UCC mentioned about Brazil, we might think of three performative dimensions "occupation as a discourse that produces effects. 1) The protest itself as the expression of the movement's demands. 2) The shaping of both collective and individual subjectivities; 3) The transformation of the material spirituality where protest takes places.

²⁶ Again, the reference is from Silverstein. Lepecki is "Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: Or, the Task of the Dancer," *TDR: The Drama Review* 57, no. 4 (2013): 13-27.

Rancière's note is that the police are merely a spectacle, an appearance of the political, therefore forms of political action are "pre-choreographed patterns of circulation, corporeality, and belonging." Lepecki thinks movement can offer political transformation. For Lepecki, choreopolitics invites "a redistribution and reinvention of bodies, affects, and senses through which one may learn how to move politically, how to invent, activate, seek, or experiment with a movement whose only sense (meaning and direction) is the experimental exercise of freedom."

²⁷ Silverstein, “On Sirens and Lamp Posts,” 7. She also notes Meghan Quinlan and Natalie Zervou, “Moving in Solidarity: Thinking through the Physicality of Recent Protests,” *The Dancer Citizen*, no. 4 (2017). In her work on choreomania, Kelina Gottman notes that Lepecki is also in dialogue with Hannah Arendt, in the sense that we have “not yet learned how to move politically.” (16).

²⁸ Cited in Silverstein. Joshua Chambers-Letson, “Twelve Notes on Ferguson: Black Performance and Police Power,” in *Law and Performance*, ed. Austin Sarat, Lawrence Douglas, and Martha Merrill Umphrey (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2018).

Eric Drott (ms) has also pointed out that “much of scholarship on music in social movements has tended to fall along functionalist, structuralist, or rational-choice frameworks.” see Manabe, p. 12.

²⁹ Kéline Gotman, *Choreomania: Dance and Disorder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018): 16. Page 17 of Gotman’s work gives a particularly good précis of the interdisciplinary nature of these investigations at the moment. Might also take into account Andrew Hewitt’s *Social Choreography: Ideology as Performance in Dance and Everyday Movement* (2005) and Martin, *Critical Moves: Dance Studies in Theory and Politics* (1998). Also Carrie Noland and Sally Ann Ness’s *Migrations of Gesture* (2008).

³⁰ We might think of riots in Moscow in 1863 after a performance of Mikhail BGlina’s *A Life for the Tsar*, or Erkel’s Hungarian opera *Hunyadi László*, or audiences in Poland with Stanislaw Moniuszko’s opera *The Haunted Manor*. Also, of course, the complicated scase of Verdi choruses.

See Krisztina Lajosi, *Staging the Nationa: Opera and Nationalism in 19th Century Hungary* (Boston: Brill) 23.

³¹ See Krisztina Lajosi, *Staging the Nationa: Opera and Nationalism in 19th Century Hungary*, 23.

³² Sarah Hibberd’s work has argued for a search for the ambiguity and complexity of political meanings in French grand opera. Hibberd, *French Grand Opera and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

³³ See Benjamin Walton, “Looking for the Revolution in Rossini’s *Guillaume Tell*,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 15, no. 2 (2003): 127-153. See also Roger Parker, “Va pensiero and the Insidious Mastery of Song,” in *Leonora’s Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse* (Princeton, 1997): 20-41 and “Arpa d’or dei fatidici vati: The Verdian Patriotic Chorus in the 1840s (Parma, 1997).

Walton—there was no reality for Guillaume Tell aside...

³⁴ (even as opera itself has shifted massively in the ensuing 200+ years)

³⁵ When thinking of routes, think of Kevin Lynch’s paths/edges/nodes (focal points and intersections)/landmarks/districts.)

³⁶ The initiative was through the Municipal Council for Public Works, these included large-scale urban projects.

³⁷ This was originally called Sugárút.

³⁸ Viktor Orbán is a Hungarian politician serving as Prime Minister of Hungary since 2010. He also served as Prime Minister from 1998 to 2002. He is the present leader of the national conservative Fidesz party, a post he has held since 2003 and, previously, from 1993 to 2000.

³⁹ or the recurrent description of Orbán as “Viktátor.

⁴⁰ Note: I have some maps/routes that show the role the Opera House plays on Andrassy Ave (these are maps for Pride 2017 and some marches in 2017—not the 2012 stuff). Routes released by Overseas Security Advisory Council.

⁴¹ Orban has described Hungary’s theaters, opera houses and concert hall as “temples of national culture.” In Hungary, Mr. Orban’s Fidesz party has moved to exert more control over cultural appointments in recent years, naming scores of theater directors across the country. First major investment since Cold War, Orban sees culture as important component of national identity. Major tour of US in 2018 while Opera House is renovated. Many leading classical musicians have criticized Orban government (Andras Schiff, Adam Fischer).

⁴² Also Paris Climate protest of 16 March 2019. I have a great graphic of this, tweeted by CDealandeRastoin (Celia Rastoin). Didn't have time to get into it, but Tahrir Square is really interesting: Route from the opera house remnants in Cairo to Tahrir Square.

⁴³ Lincoln Center was the crown-jewel project of the Mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance, which was overseen by Robert Moses, the man who reshaped the city in the mid-20th century. The "urban renewal" plan, which leveled 18 city blocks on the Upper West Side, also included educational, commercial and residential facilities. The project displaced more than 7,000 lower-class **families** and 800 businesses from San Juan Hill and Lincoln Square. Few, if any, of the 4,400 new housing units were intended for the area's previous residents, who were almost exclusively black and Hispanic. Even worse, the relocation assistance promised by the committee never materialized.

"Moses was not making even a pretense of creating new homes for the families displaced," Robert A. Caro wrote in "The Power Broker," the Pulitzer-winning biography of the planning czar's life and career. Moses gave each family on average \$400 to relocate (about \$3500 in today's money).

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/21/nyregion/how-lincoln-center-was-built-it-wasnt-pretty.html>

A weird symbolism of uprooting a residential population for a non-residential development that was ostensibly for all, but really the pastimes of the wealthy (Bowery Boys Lincoln Center podcast).

⁴⁴ For more on this legislation, see <https://www.refworld.org/docid/51d557794.html>

⁴⁵ The petition read, in part, "Peter Il'yich Tchaikovsky is the beloved composer most widely known to have been homosexual and to have suffered for it in his lifetime. For America's leading opera house to open its season with one of his works, performed by a conductor and a leading soprano who supports Putin's recent laws against homosexual people and those who support them dishonors the work of a great artists and his legacy as well as the progress made in our own country to secure equality for all citizens." Reported by Chris Geidner, "New York's Metropolitan Opera Season Opens with Gay Protest." 23 September 2013, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/chrisgeidner/new-yorks-metropolitan-opera-season-opens-with-gay-protest>

⁴⁶ Queer Nation was joined by RUSA LGBT, a group for Russian-Speaking American LGBTQ community, among others. See Geidner, *Buzzfeed*.

Netrebko's relationship to Putin is a bit more contested than Gergiev's. Here's the reporting from the *NY Times* on this: Ms. Netrebko said in a statement on Facebook that: "As an artist, it is my great joy to collaborate with all of my wonderful colleagues — regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation. I have never and will never discriminate against anyone."

"Some people said I have to say more, but that is the maximum I can say right now," she later told The Associated Press. "In my next life, when I will be a politician, we talk!"

Mr. Gergiev was honored by Mr. Putin this spring with a revived Soviet-era title, Hero of Labor, around the time he opened a new \$700 million theater, the Mariinsky II. He has declined to comment."

Tommasini noted "As the general director of the storied Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, Mr. Gergiev has received crucial support from Mr. Putin and the government. He and Ms. Netrebko, longtime colleagues, were open advocates for Mr. Putin's election last year."

⁴⁷ For the thirteenth year in a row, the event was sponsored by Deutsche Bank.

David Patrick Stearns, "Amid Protests and Gowns: Met Opens Season with Eugene Onegin." *Wxqr* 24 September 2013. Anthony Tommasini also quotes in his review that 'by tradition the gala opening of a Metropolitan Opera season is a fashionable and pricey affair."

⁴⁸ Tommasini, "A Fight for Love, in the Met and out." 24 September 2013 *NY Times*. Tommasini notes the balcony detail and the chants. David Patrick Stearns notes that the protesters were in the Family Circle and continues "During Monday's performance bits of booing and applause were heard inside the Met when the protesters were escorted out." *WQXR*.

Supposedly the chants also included explicit references to Anna Netrebko and Valery Gergiev, chanting "your silence is killing Russian gays!" "Down with Putin," "Free Russian gays!"

The Met disputed this: A rep for the Met said there were fewer protesters inside the opera. "There were only four protesters located in the Family Circle," she said. "The disruption occurred before the performance began and lasted less than five minutes. They were escorted out peacefully. Anna herself did a live 'plazacast' interview, which was seen in Times Square and the plaza [outside Lincoln Center] and she was not upset at all.

⁴⁹ This comes from a Twitter account, so might or might not be verifiable. James Wagner was the Twitter account. He lives in New York and is the editor of the arts calendar. ArtCat.

⁵⁰ And also of course broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SIRIUS XM and eventually shown via the Met Broadcasts. Tommasini confirms this. *The Wall Street Journal* reported 2,000 seats set up at Lincoln Center for the showing, and 1,500 at Times Square. 24 September 2013. <https://blogs.wsj.com/metropolis/2013/09/24/scenes-from-the-open-air-opera-at-lincoln-center/>

⁵¹ The house was officially completed in 1973 (Utzon's involvement was quite mixed, he was both revered and fired at one point). Utzon was very interested in incorporating natural elements from the surrounding into the house: At a macro level, the 'headland' form of the granite-clad podium projecting into the harbour, with its vertical cliff faces and grand stair approach from the city, surmounted by the white 'sail' or 'cloud' form roofs, protecting the auditoria platforms, is an inspired response to the natural landforms surrounding the harbour. At a more subtle level, the influence of nature is seen in Utzon's frequently cited analogies to natural forms such as the 'palm leaf' structure of the vaulted shells and the idea of the 'walnut kernel' for the performance spaces within the shells. (Conservation Plan)

⁵² One of the most important points on any agenda concerning the Opera House, is to keep the whole area in pristine order, and as free of intrusive elements as possible." (Conservation Plan, p. 71)

⁵³ For example, the sequence of public spaces, from the approach and ascent to the place of arrival, both externally and internally, were all carefully articulated and designed to provide a sense of anticipation and joy, culminating in the performance itself (Figure 2.2). Utzon intended that all materials, finishes, colour and lighting be chosen to support and enhance this experience. This was linked to the concept of containing all the activities for the preparation of the performance within the Podium, separated from and out of sight of theatre patrons.¹¹ In Utzon's words: The idea has been to let the platform cut through like a knife, and separate primary and secondary function completely. On top of the platform the spectators receive the completed work of art and beneath the platform every preparation for it takes place.

This ceremonial ascent of the platform, to arrive at a special place where a performance is offered, physically above and symbolically detached from the mundane world, is the essence of sacred buildings from many of the great cultural traditions. At Sydney Opera House, Utzon synthesised these ancient principles and concepts to celebrate the act of producing and experiencing theatre and performance in a contemporary and masterful way. Here on Bennelong Point, Utzon and his team have configured function, material and form in space and time to create an exceptional twentieth- century building which elevates and celebrates the human spirit." (Conservation Plan, 2017, p. 18-19)

⁵⁴ (The Eighth Wonder, 1995). This was performed again in 2016. See interesting article here: <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/31/the-eighth-wonder-review-sydney-opera-house-hosts-the-worlds-first-silent-opera>

I'm pretty fascinated by this, which used the external opera house as a stage

⁵⁵ See also "'The people of Sydney have made the Opera House a signature for Sydney, which you see everywhere in the world in different editions... ..but nobody is ever in any doubt that this means Sydney and this means Australia.'" *Conservation Plan*, p. 37.

The Opera House is also an internationally renowned performing arts venue and Australia's premier tourism destination, attracting more than 8 million visitors a year and hosting 2000 performances attended by more than 1.5 million people.

⁵⁶ The Sydney Opera House was inscribed on the World Heritage List on 28 June 2007 under Criterion (i) for its Outstanding Universal Value as a masterpiece of human creative genius.

Summary Statement of Outstanding Universal Value: The Sydney Opera House constitutes a masterpiece of 20th century architecture. Its significance is based on its unparalleled design and construction; its exceptional engineering achievements and technological innovation and its position as a world-famous icon of architecture. It is a daring and visionary experiment that has had an enduring influence on the emergent architecture of the late 20th century. Utzon's original design concept and his unique approach to building gave impetus to a collective creativity of architects, engineers and builders. Ove Arup's engineering achievements helped make Utzon's vision a reality. The design represents an extraordinary interpretation and response to the setting in Sydney Harbour. The Sydney Opera House is also of outstanding universal value for its achievements in structural engineering and building technology. The building is a great artistic monument and an icon, accessible to society at large. Criterion (i): A masterpiece of human creative genius Sydney Opera House is a great architectural work of the 20th century. It represents multiple strands of creativity, both in architectural form and structural design, a great urban sculpture carefully set in a remarkable waterscape and a world famous iconic building. All elements necessary to express the values of the Sydney Opera House are included within the boundaries of the nominated area and buffer zone. This ensures the complete representation of its significance as an architectural object of great beauty in its waterscape setting. The Sydney Opera House continues to perform its function as a world-class performing arts centre. The Conservation Plan specifies the need to balance the roles of the building as an architectural monument and as a state of the art performing centre, thus retaining its authenticity of use and function. Attention given to retaining the building's authenticity culminated with the Conservation Plan and the Utzon Design Principles. Refer to Appendix B for the full listing.

UNESCO's 2007 World Heritage assessment of the Opera House's Outstanding Universal Value noted the significant challenges involved in balancing the roles of "the building as an architectural monument and as a state of the art performance centre, thus retaining its authenticity of use and function."

⁵⁷ In this case, these were related Utzon's role at the house and his (perceived) unfair dismissal. In the 1980s there were also singers of Polish songs on the steps of the Opera House in various nations supporting Polish solidarity during the Polish crisis.

⁵⁸ Probably the most famous were the anti-war activists who applied red paint to the sails in 2003 (I believe they were charged with vandalism).

15 December 2009, *Sydney Morning Herald*. Julian Vincent, a climate campaigner for Greenpeace, said the group's action was a "powerful" way to make a statement about global warming. **"What better place to send out a message that means so much to Australians?" He said the climbers had taken special effort to ensure the Opera House sail was not damaged. "This issue was taken very seriously and every precaution was made to ensure not only the people, but also the property...was left in the same condition they found it. The Opera House means a lot to us as well as the rest of Australian and so does this issue of course."**

Other protests include a 2017 use of the sails in relation to refugee rights.

⁵⁹ Technically the the Government of New South Wales, also referred to as the New South Wales Government or NSW Government, is the Australian state democratic administrative authority of New South Wales.

⁶⁰ He bullied her during an on-air interview and called for her to be sacked.

⁶¹ The premier was Gladys Berejiklian.

⁶² <https://junkte.com/waleed-aly-opera-house/177689>

⁶³ <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/blogs/tim-blair/you-paid-for-the-opera-house-they-own-it/news-story/7621855535b271206e0b447a11cc34f5> and <https://www.2gb.com/its-just-snobbery-latham-slams-controversy-surrounding-opera-house-light-show/>

⁶⁴ Borrowing Born's wording here.