

of Girelli's book lies in its ability to explain trite images of Italian otherness in reference to the history of Italian immigration to Britain, and of the ideas and patterns it has produced, in time, in the British collective imagination. The study calls for more up-dated work on the subject, for the extension of this exploration to the most recent decades of British cinema, and to the contemporary production of both cinematic and television texts.

Michelle Fillion, 2010.
Difficult Rhythm: Music and the Word in E. M. Forster
(Urbana, Chicago and Springfield:
University of Illinois Press)

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In the seven years since *Difficult Rhythm's* publication, initially reviewed by music and literary scholars alike, the work has become a model for interdisciplinary scholarship. Michelle Fillion's writing balances literary and musical language, combined with clear explanations, so that readers lacking in knowledge of musical or literary criticism will find her writing enlightening and enjoyable. Earlier scholarship had, of course, mentioned E. M. Forster's frequent inclusion of musical works, but failed to address the musical references as more than passing notes or demonstrations of Forster's musical knowledge. However, Fillion regards the prominence of music throughout Forster's life as a companion and integral part of research into Forster's literary world.

Fillion begins by outlining Forster's intimate knowledge of music as a performer, listener, and critic, which positioned him to examine music in his own way as an expression of modernism. Among these experiences, Fillion recounts Forster's early exposure to music: childhood music lessons, ensembles and prominent composers at Cambridge, and an humorous account of a performance he organized in Alexandria during WWI, reminding the audience not to "clap

between the sections” of a Handel violin sonata (12). Within the context of musical tastes of the time, “Forster’s musical experiences in Alexandria were those of a European imperialist; he never developed a taste for the indigenous music, which he considered ‘debased’” (11). Fillion’s research also reveals details such as the piano repertoire Forster learned, noting an impressive and even virtuosic range of pieces, further elucidating our knowledge of Forster as a musician.

In addition to his personal playing, Forster regularly attended performances as illustrated in the informative appendices of Forster’s attendance of *Ballet Russes*, opera, and musical theatre performances. Particularly noteworthy for Forster scholars interested in the avant-garde will be his attendance at Stravinsky’s *The Firebird* (1912), *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913), and *Petrouchka* (1919) among other modern or atonal compositions. Also, rather incongruent with Forster’s preferences for Western classical music, his attendance of more popular music performances reveals a new perspective to Forster’s soundscape. A chronological list of Forster’s other concert attendances would be most welcome; however, Fillion weaves details of some performances into other sections of the book.

In *Difficult Rhythm*’s second chapter, Fillion notes the gap in musical scholarship on *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. She writes, “For the major Forster critics of the mid-twentieth century, who had received their literary training during the fallow years of bel canto opera, the *Lucia* [*di Lammermoor*] scene must have appeared a quaint relic of a bygone era” (26). Turning her attention to the ways Forster and the novel’s character Caroline view Lucia from Gaetano Donizetti’s opera, Fillion also analyses the embodiments of the composer’s Lucia, the critic’s Lucia, and the famed Italian soprano—who performed the role in the performance Forster attended—Luisa Tetrazzini’s Lucia. The only analysis absent in this chapter is Sir Walter Scott’s Lucy as presented in the originating 1817 *The Bride of Lammermoor*—a comparison that would be of interest to both musicologists and literary scholars.

Fillion sets herself apart from many contemporary scholars by emphasising *The Longest Journey* as an example of Forster’s lifelong interest in Wagner rather than examining the novel as an individual study on one aspect of Wagner’s influence. Forster continually reworked his usage of Wagner and Wagnerism by experimenting with combined applications of the mythological, setting-based, character-based, nationalist, and structural aspects of Wagnerism woven into “every narrative level” (40). The chapter also addresses an important distinction between literary and musical leitmotifs, a necessary discussion

in interdisciplinary studies. On the influence of Wagner's work in relation to *The Longest Journey*, Fillion argues that it "is ultimately a musician's book, behind which hovers Richard Wagner, a goading spirit of 'anti-literature' who served Forster as willful accomplice in its creation" (55).

The compelling chapter on *A Room with a View*'s Lucy Honeychurch and Beethoven originates from Fillion's 2002 article "Edwardian Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Music in E. M. Forster's *A Room with a View*" published in *19th-Century Music*. Here, Fillion addresses the connections between Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor* and Forster's musical references (not to Donizetti's opera but to a piece by Sir Henry Bishop), when Lucy plays and sings seemingly genteel and appropriate music for a lady brought up according to Victorian conventions – much more suitable than the virtuosic, emotionally complex, and physically assertive Beethoven sonata. Whilst the chapter is more tightly constructed and more balanced as an interdisciplinary essay, I would encourage readers also to consult Fillion's earlier article for additional analysis.

Fillion continues the conversation on Beethoven and Forster with one chapter on the iconic discussion of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in *Howards End*, expanding upon the previously established connections between Forster and German Romantic composers, and another chapter on her new research on Forster's Beethoven sonata notebook. In the *Howards End* chapter, Fillion describes the musical complexities of Forster's Beethoven (and other German composers), illuminating Forster's "penchant for mixing metaphors from painting, literature, and music reveal[ing] their kinship in matters of aesthetics" (83). This position challenges the argument of one-for-one correlation between musical intertexts and symbolic meaning within literature in favor of demonstrating the cultural tapestry of Forster's approach to aesthetics. Some of the material presented in these two chapters originates in Fillion's 2002 *Beethoven Forum* article "E. M. Forster's Beethoven," which is a valuable companion to her chapter on Forster's uncompleted 1939–1940 analysis project of the thirty-two Beethoven piano sonatas.

Forster's interest in Beethoven combined with his ability to play through complex repertoire such as the Beethoven piano sonatas results in a rare glimpse into the writer's intimate approach to music—a revealing act and deeply personal exploration of music's effect upon Forster. Forster's annotations for nine sonatas (a tenth, for the "Hammerklavier" sonata, does not contain any annotations) are short and varied in structure, comic in sometimes peculiar word choices, and rich in imagination and imagery.

On the verso of the page for the Sonata in B flat, Op. 22 – “After op. 31.1, the sonata I enjoy least” – Forster drafts a reflection:

France has collapsed (to use a word of little meaning) and I write to the noise of tanks or other vehicles in the valley. [...] Music like [Beethoven’s] can never be stopped. It moves through tanks and guns to its own close. Yet men continue to fight and lecture although there is such music. (120–121)

The Beethoven notebook as reproduced in *Difficult Rhythm* is a welcome addition to Forster’s published writings and hopefully will inspire additional scholarship on the material.

Concluding the discussion of music in Forster’s novels, Fillion examines the presence of Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 6 in *Maurice*, Forster’s post-humously published and overtly homosexual novel. Exploring the topic of homoeroticism in the novel alongside Tchaikovsky’s music, letters, and biography, Fillion convincingly knits the allusions within *Maurice* together with the post-Wilde-trials homophobic environment in Britain. Fillion explains the ways Forster’s writing changed from the manuscript’s inception around 1913, continually evolving into the 1950s, and how certain phrases, particularly, “England belonged to them. That, besides companionship, was their reward” become less sentimental and more ironic “in the shadows of two world wars, creeping urbanization, and forty years of continued legal repression of homosexuality” (107).

On Forster’s partnership with British composer Benjamin Britten and co-librettist Eric Crozier for the opera adaptation of Herman Melville’s *Billy Budd* (1948–1950), Fillion writes less on the thematic and symbolic analysis of the text in favor of focusing upon the collaborative process. Once again, Fillion’s close reading of music, manuscript drafts, correspondence, diary entries, and other supporting documents is apparent as she recounts ensuing battles between collaborators over changes to the libretto and music. Although the intriguing material of the entire chapter can in no way be summed up in one sentence, Fillion concludes, “Claggart’s monologue acquired its dark luster only when composer and librettist intruded on the other’s territory,” which adequately describes what undoubtedly was a tense but fruitful meeting of creative minds. The frequent music examples depict the evolution of the monologue, aiding

the reader's visualisation of Fillion's argument; additionally, the music examples throughout the entire monograph are equally beneficial.

Difficult Rhythm encompasses a wide range of Forster's output, but it does not examine his short stories or work for pageants. Yet, in light of Fillion's accomplishment, scholars would do well to see these gaps as opportunities for additional interdisciplinary criticism. Subsequent work in the study of Forster and music includes the theses and published essays of Tsung-Han Tsai and Mi Zhou along with the recent works of Josh Epstein and David Deutsch, who both position Forster's musical writing within modernist scholarship. Elsa Cavalié and Laurent Mellet's *Only Connect: E. M. Forster's Legacies in British Fiction* (reviewed in this volume by Krzysztof Fordoński) includes essays by Jeremy Tambling, Susan Reid, and Julie Chevaux, who also all cite Fillion's work and further promote the interdisciplinary aspects of Forster's inherently musical language. These works continue testifying to the quality of Fillion's contribution to Forster scholarship and interdisciplinary research.

Silvia Ross, 2010.

***Tuscan Spaces: Literary Constructions of Space*
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press)**

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Silvia Ross's study explores a cluster of modern and contemporary texts by Italian and Anglophone authors set, entirely or partly, in Tuscany. The focus of Ross's analysis is the multiple ways such narratives construe, construct, and represent "the spatiality of Tuscany" (8), and the ways the notion of "Tuscan space" intersects with the authors' encounters with otherness. Spanning a range of different genres, from the filmic to the narrative, from the novel to the memoir, the travelogue, and the short story, Ross explores the diverse