

# Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphonic Enterprise

*Douglas Shadle*

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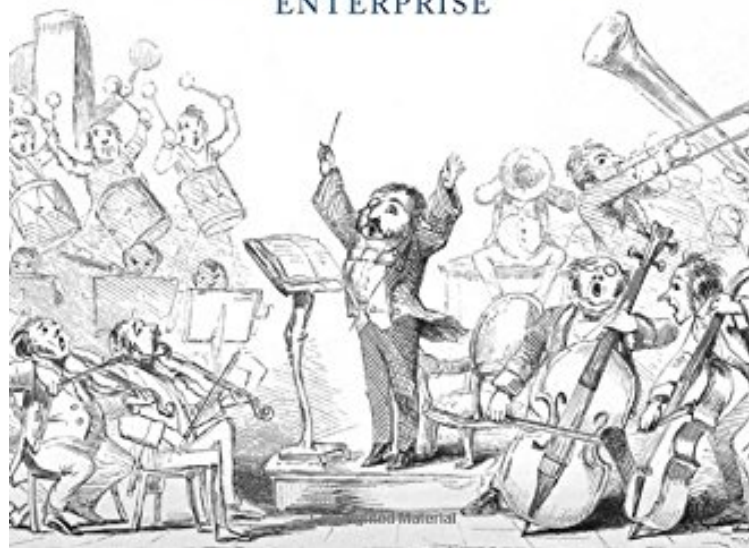
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## ORCHESTRATING THE NATION

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THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
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**Douglas Shadle : Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphonic Enterprise** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphonic Enterprise:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Important Neglected EducationBy JoshuaRaffaelThere has been

very little written about American serious music and this book is all the more valuable for this topic. I recommend it for anyone remotely interested in this quite forgotten important subject. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding to the history of American music! By Myron M. Miller Outstanding book, dealing with the great strengths of American musicians in the 19th Century.

During the nineteenth century, nearly one hundred symphonies were written by over fifty composers living in the United States. With few exceptions, this repertoire is virtually forgotten today. In *Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphonic Enterprise*, author Douglas W. Shadle explores the stunning stylistic diversity of this substantial repertoire and uncovers why it failed to enter the musical mainstream. Throughout the century, Americans longed for a distinct national musical identity. As the most prestigious of all instrumental genres, the symphony proved to be a potent vehicle in this project as composers found inspiration for their works in a dazzling array of subjects, including Niagara Falls, Hiawatha, and Western pioneers. With a wealth of musical sources at his disposal, including never-before-examined manuscripts, Shadle reveals how each component of the symphonic enterprise—from its composition, to its performance, to its immediate and continued reception by listeners and critics—contributed to competing visions of American identity. Employing an innovative transnational historical framework, Shadle's narrative covers three continents and shows how the music of major European figures such as Beethoven, Schumann, Wagner, Liszt, Brahms, and Dvorak exerted significant influence over dialogues about the future of American musical culture. Shadle demonstrates that the perceived authority of these figures allowed snobby conductors, capricious critics, and even orchestral musicians themselves to thwart the efforts of American symphonists despite widespread public support of their music. Consequently, these works never entered the performing canons of American orchestras. An engagingly written account of a largely unknown repertoire, *Orchestrating the Nation* shows how artistic and ideological debates from the nineteenth century continue to shape the culture of American orchestral music today.

"Shadle's *Orchestrating the Nation* offers a remarkable account of North American symphonic composers in the nineteenth century. [...] Just as Richard Taruskin has challenged the hegemony of the German canon by foregrounding Eastern European artists, so Shadle sheds light on repertoires composed in the United States before 1900, as well as on the struggles of native-born musicians to emulate and resist the overwhelming influence of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. A tour de force of scholarship and cultural analysis." -- Susan McClary, Professor of Music, Case Western Reserve University "Douglas W. Shadle's book is a thorough and convincing survey of a completely neglected aspect of Americanist musicology: the composition of symphonies by nineteenth-century American composers. This is an invaluable and masterful piece of scholarship--a major contribution to our understanding of nineteenth-century music history." -- Katherine K. Preston, David and Margaret Bottoms Professor of Music, The College of William and Mary About the Author Douglas W. Shadle is currently Assistant Professor of Musicology at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music. He holds a Ph.D. in musicology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is the winner of an ASCAP Deems Taylor/Virgil Thomson Award.