

Ann's Historical Fiction #7

02/28/24

Submitted!

To a contest!

As those of you who have been reading this newsletter know, my goal is to publish one or more of my novels. Several are in various stages of editing and beta reading; I thank all who are participating in these efforts. There are many ways to publish, and one of them is to submit to and win a writing contest.

I submitted one novel to a fairly general contest more than a year ago. I did not win. Historical fiction, which describes, more or less, all of my writing, was one of many categories included. Given how niche my work is—describing the lives of the women who either are or are associated with famous composers—it is no surprise that I did not win. That, and I am sure the winner(s) simply had better novels.

Then a friend from my writing group forwarded a notice of a contest that seemed to be the perfect fit. From their website, the Nicholas Schaffner Award for Music in Literature celebrates the life of the publisher's (Schaffner Press) brother, a musician, music critic, and writer. It seemed like a perfect match.

With a deadline of January 31, 2024, I needed to submit a book that was ready, or nearly so, for publication. The one I thought was most ready was not long enough, so I submitted my book about composers Duchess Sophie Elisabeth and Heinrich Schütz, which takes place during the Thirty Years War (1618-1629).

Wish me luck!

Genre: Historical fiction, with a bit of fantasy thrown in for good measure.



Illustrator found!

Nonprofit work

In my last newsletter, I mentioned that I was looking for an illustrator for my children's book about how scientists work.

Through the Montgomery County, MD Volunteer Center and the Maryland State Student Service Learning requirement, I have found an amazing illustrator.

If you run a nonprofit and need volunteer help, consider the volunteer hours high school students need to graduate as a source of help for your mission!

Anna Magdalena Bach, maybe

It's that time again, when I need to research and determine which amazing woman associated with a famous composer, and/or one in her own right I will write about for NaNo 2024.

I am considering two women at this point in time. One is the second wife of Johann Sebastian Bach (JSB), Anna Magdalena Bach, nee Wilcke. I've hesitated to write about him (although I have written a story about his son, Johann (John) Christian) because there is so much already written about one of the world's most famous composers.

However, I recently learned that Anna Magdalena had a musical career of her own, which she gave up when she married JSB. I am currently researching her life.

There is another woman that intrigues me, though. It is not widely known that [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]

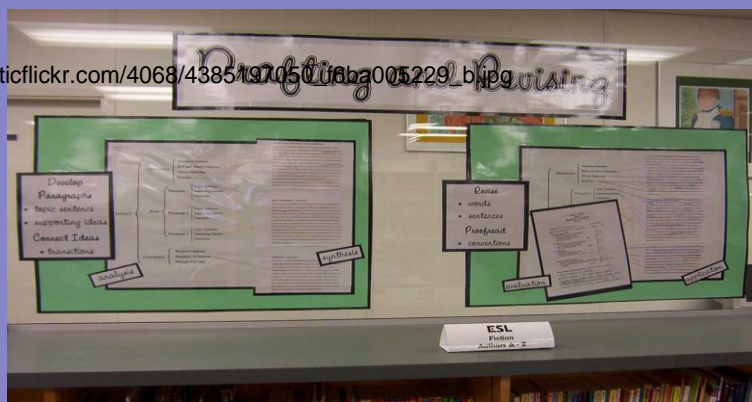
JSB's music was not uniformly adored after his death. At that time, it was considered old-fashioned, and went out of favor. Several people have been responsible for reviving interest in his music. One of them was Sara Levy, the aunt of Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn. Incidentally, the story of Fanny's compositions and life is also interesting, even though she did not enjoy the same fame as her brother.

Click [here](#) for one of my favorite violin concertos, composed by Felix Mendelssohn



Image Credit:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anna-magdalena-bach-noteboo.jpg>

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Kreutzer and sightreading

More upper position work

In my last couple of notes about my own musical journey, I mentioned my difficulties working in the higher positions on the violin.

A few weeks ago, I had an insight into some of what is giving me trouble. I mean, in addition to not practicing enough.

I do not know if this is true for other instruments, but with the violin each time you shift to another position, you need to sight read differently, because you are reading new notes while needing to properly place the same four fingers on your left hand, only in new positions. What I did not realize, because I thought I was not hearing the intervals between notes well enough, was that I also wasn't sight reading well enough. I did not recognize which notes were which for the high notes I was playing.

So, I wrote in the note names on the Romance I am playing, and my intonation got better! I still need to practice more, and still work on hearing the intervals. However, knowing the names of the notes I was trying to play made a huge difference.

As a result, I have now moved on to some of the Kreutzer etudes for violin. Many of these have a considerable amount of playing in the higher positions. It feels good to know that what was seemingly too hard at one point, is not.

Not that it is easy.

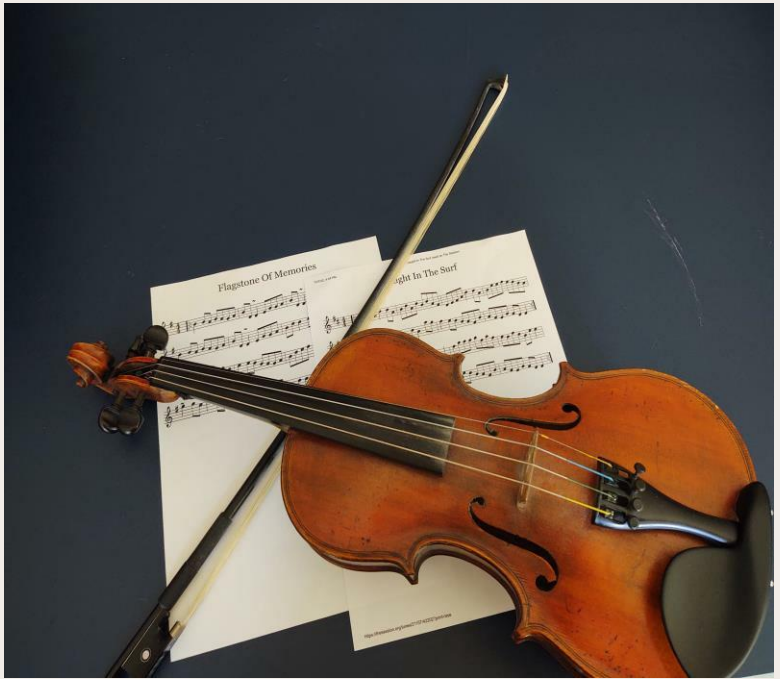


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