



Standing apart from these more earnest efforts is the wonderfully witty contribution of Wye Allanbrook: ‘Mozart’s K331, First Movement: Once More, with Feeling’. The opening of this well-known Sonata in A major, a staple of the tyro pianist, has been subjected to analysis by more authors than perhaps any other, and in almost every case the analyses have viewed the piece out of time and place – as a ‘structure’. Allanbrook successfully argues that time and place matter, that the subtle rhythm and metre that have perplexed the analysts simply represent a garden-variety siciliano, and that extramusical associations are not at all external to a work. If one is looking for a short, well-written article by which to introduce bright students to the potentials and pitfalls of music analysis, this is it.

While it would have been a delight to attend the original conference, interspersing lectures with sessions at the mineral baths, we who were not there can console ourselves by reading this lovingly prepared volume of essays. The two editors have done a fine job of showcasing some of the most interesting voices in music scholarship today. Over the years, the sprightly, optimistic music of the late eighteenth century has fallen victim to some very dull analysis. Here, by contrast, lively ideas meet lively music, with a satisfying result.

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MICHAEL O’LOGHLIN

FREDERICK THE GREAT AND HIS MUSICIANS: THE VIOLA DA GAMBA MUSIC OF THE BERLIN SCHOOL

Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008

pp. xviii + 253, ISBN 978 0 7546 5885 6

Michael O’Loughlin has produced a significant study of the hitherto under-researched school of virtuoso viol playing at Frederick the Great’s court in Berlin. Like many monographs, this book is a revised and updated version of the author’s doctoral dissertation, but O’Loughlin makes rather heavy weather of setting out his intentions in the first introductory chapter, as if he were still trying to satisfy his examiners. The title is somewhat misleading: it looks on first reading as if it is part of a projected series (the subtitles of imaginary future volumes could perhaps be along the lines of ‘The Flute Music of the Berlin School’). Nor is it clear on a casual glance that the book is solely about the viola da gamba at the court of Frederick the Great, rather than a general account of Frederick’s musicians. ‘Frederick the Great and His Musicians’ appears on the spine without the vital qualifying statement and is the running head at the top of each left-hand page; even on the front cover the highly important subtitle ‘The Viola da Gamba Music of the Berlin School’ is in a much smaller font. All this said, the book is easy to navigate and O’Loughlin’s written style is straightforward, if a little dry.

The central figure of this study is the phenomenal viol virtuoso Ludwig Christian Hesse (1716–1772), who took up employment at Frederick’s court in 1741 and inspired ‘the last major corpus of music for the viola da gamba’ (1) at a time when the viol was generally in decline. O’Loughlin is correct in stating that in France the bass viol was rapidly losing ground to the violin and cello – writing in 1747, Jean-Baptiste Forqueray described the viol as ‘a forgotten species’ – but he might have given more credit to the tenacious circle of amateur viol players in London around the virtuoso Carl Friedrich Abel (1723–1787) in the 1760s and 1770s, for whom Abel wrote a substantial body of viol works. A chapter is devoted to Hesse, of whom Johann Adam Hiller remarked in 1766 that the ‘skill, attractiveness and fire in performance which our Mr Hesse possesses to such a high degree make him, in our time, incontestably the greatest gambist in Europe’ (122). (Burney would probably have given this accolade to Abel.)



O'Loughlin draws together extensive material relating to Hesse, making this book the best source of information on the player. He traces Hesse's origins to Darmstadt, where his 'equally famous' father, Ernst Christian Hesse (1676–1762), had worked. (Another famous viol player previously active in this city was August Kühnel (1645–c1700).) Hesse *père* had studied in Paris with Marin Marais (1656–1728) and Antoine Forqueray (1672–1745) simultaneously (a ruse that was finally discovered by his two teachers) and brought a French approach to his playing, which he passed on to his son. O'Loughlin notes that Hesse *fils* played a seven-string viol (the French liked to add a low A¹ to the standard six-string model) and in his manuscripts used Marais's notation system for fingering and ornaments (which had become standard in France). It remains an enigma why there appear to be no extant viol compositions by Hesse himself, though he transcribed numerous operas by Johann Gottlieb Graun and French composers to play with crown prince Friedrich Wilhelm. The latter was a keen viol player, and O'Loughlin reveals his voracious appetite for Hesse's idiomatic and imaginative operatic transcriptions (seventy-two operas were transcribed, most of them complete). Interestingly, the author provides evidence that Friedrich Wilhelm played both the viol and the cello from a young age, but that while Hesse was living in Berlin he seems to have preferred the viol. Hesse's departure in 1771 or 1772 and Jean-Pierre Duport's arrival in 1773 led to the prince transferring his attention to the cello, which later provided the inspiration for the inclusion of demanding cello parts in Mozart's 'Prussian' Quartets, K575, 589 and 590, and led to the prince becoming the dedicatee of Beethoven's Cello Sonatas Op. 5. Hesse favoured sequences of parallel thirds in his opera transcriptions, and O'Loughlin speculates that Hesse may have imported this 'Berlin' characteristic from French opera. Indeed, French trio sonatas also favour parallel motion between the two upper parts, in contrast to the Italian use of strict contrapuntal principles. Music examples are generously supplied throughout the book, and this is particularly helpful to the reader, given the general inaccessibility of this music. The chapter on Hesse is no exception and includes a facsimile of his arrangement of Rameau's *Les Sybarites*.

Owing to Frederick's taste for Italian music, the Berlin School produced many compositions for the viol in Italian genres: sonatas, duets, trios, quartets, cantatas and a surprisingly large number of concertos – the last not being a form that usually accommodates the viol's delicate timbre. O'Loughlin has identified fifty-two viol works from Berlin. Three works are unattributed, but the remaining forty-nine are compositions by C. P. E. Bach, Franz Benda, the two brothers Graun, Janitsch, Schaffrath and Abel. Abel was not a member of the Berlin School, but travelled to Berlin in 1782 to visit crown prince Friedrich Wilhelm – who presented him with 'a beautiful box and 100 louis d'or' (198) – and while there he adjusted his accustomed manner of writing to compose two affecting sonatas in the Berlin style. O'Loughlin has found the works in 145 manuscript sources, which he discusses in excellent detail while also giving their historical context. He points out, for instance, that the largest amount of this music is preserved in six volumes collected by Frederick's sister, Princess Anna Amalia (who declared 'music is always my greatest pleasure' (54)). This book gives the first analysis of her extensive holdings of viol music, which – happily – were rediscovered in 1999 in Kiev (amongst the very large collection of the Sing-Akademie zu Berlin). O'Loughlin examines the multiple sources of the corpus as a whole and reveals interesting variants in ornamentation, octave transpositions, revoicing of chords and in two instances the number of movements, as the copyists felt free to make their own contributions. The most extensive collaboration is between Hesse and Johann Gottlieb Graun (1702/1703–1771), who wrote twenty-two large-scale and highly virtuosic works for the viol using the full range of the seven-string instrument, from A¹ to e³. O'Loughlin dedicates seventeen pages to 'Graun's Virtuoso Gamba Style'. Yet for me his plentiful music examples speak louder than his text, which refers frequently to 'virtuosity' without explaining how this lies under the hand, and without truly pinning down its meaning. His information on bowing and on Graun's harmonic language is also light.

In his succinct treatment of the whole Berlin School (the name coined by Burney in 1773), O'Loughlin argues persuasively that the aesthetic environment that prevailed there engendered a specific style. He draws attention to the highly unusual situation surrounding the establishment of the Berlin Hofkapelle in 1740. Because of the philistine nature of Frederick's father, who had disbanded his Hofkapelle in 1713 as one of his first acts on coming to power, Frederick inherited a musical vacuum in Berlin. Thus Frederick started afresh,



with musicians trained outside Berlin, and the Berlin School had a clean sheet on which to reinvent itself quite self-consciously. O'Loghlin makes his case with the aid of plentiful and well-chosen contemporary quotations, which are given in their original German with an English translation. But his welcome desire for clarity can result in his making a point more than once, for example the assertion on page 11 that 'not one of them [Frederick's musicians] was born or educated in Berlin', which is repeated on page 12 ('None of Frederick's musicians at this time was a Berliner').

It was the *adagio* that became the quintessential emblem of the Berlin School, and O'Loghlin effectively brings together quotations to analyse the school's 'stylistic characteristics'. Johann Friedrich Reichardt believed that to reveal their true beauty, 'Berlin pieces must be performed in the Berlin style' (see page 24), while C. P. E. Bach explains that 'in several foreign places the mistake is very often made, that they play the *adagios* too quickly' (35). In short, the view was that while one might be astonished by a musician's virtuosity, this practical ability was meaningless unless the performer captured the listener's heart in the *adagio*. 'One such as Benda draws me even more to him, who has absolutely no wish to arouse my admiration, but simply aims for my heart, and strikes it so surely that I am quite filled with the feeling that he wished to excite' (Reichardt, quoted on page 36). Was it perhaps this environment which helped to inspire two of the greatest eighteenth-century treatises on music, by C. P. E. Bach and Quantz? Was it their authors' pride in what had been achieved collectively in Berlin that provoked them to disseminate it far beyond their city?

O'Loghlin provides a complete thematic catalogue of the Berlin gamba music with sources and modern editions; however, this does not include Hesse's operatic arrangements, about which I would have enjoyed much more detail. An unusual feature of the school, as he points out, is that it is the largest corpus of works for the instrument not written by viol virtuosos. These viol works may be a minor part of the whole Berlin school's corpus, but they are none the less fascinating and important in the development of the viol, a topic to which this book makes a valuable and carefully researched contribution.

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JOHN A. RICE

MOZART ON THE STAGE

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Mozart on the Stage is the first book of a new series published by Cambridge University Press, *Composers on the Stage*, which aims to investigate the cultural world in which operas were created and received. In his first sentence, John Rice asks a pertinent question: 'What possible justification can there be, in the aftermath of Mozart's two-hundred-and-fiftieth birthday in 2006, for adding to the large number of books, many of them first rate, that have been written about his operas?' (xi) The study itself provides an unambiguously positive answer. Organized thematically from the commission of operas through to their premieres and beyond, it presents an elegant and convincing picture of the way Mozart went about composing these works.

A particular strength of this book is its emphasis on the theatrical aspects of opera, such as stage designs, sets and scenery. The text is accompanied by a wide range of contemporary prints illustrating the 'look' of opera, much in the manner of the classic study *Mozart's Operas* by Daniel Hertz, the dedicatee of Rice's book (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990; edited, with contributing essays, by Thomas Bauman). Among these are some compelling images, such as the bare-looking stage in Vienna on which Luigi Marchesi and Caterina Cavalieri enacted the climax of Sarti's *Giulio Sabino*. There is some ingenious