

# LOVE AND MUSIC IN AUGUSTAN LONDON; OR, THE ‘ENTHUSIASMS’ OF RICHARD ROACH

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## ABSTRACT

*This article explores and contextualizes the thought of the religious author Richard Roach (1662–1730) from a musical perspective. Roach, a member of the Behmenist, millenarian Philadelphian Society in London at the turn of the eighteenth century, published little that relates directly to the subject of music, and has thus gone virtually unrecognized in this context. Nevertheless, in his more substantial religious oeuvre music emerges as a crucial component of his thought. In addition, his manuscript diaries and papers reveal their author’s interaction with some of Augustan London’s leading musical figures, and his participation in a previously unknown weekly musical meeting.*

*After reviewing the overall circumstances of Roach’s life and cultural milieu, the article outlines what can at present be established about his musical activities. As I demonstrate, evidence from the diaries clarifies the provenance of an early hymn collection, while other extant sources reveal an unsuspected connection between religious ‘enthusiasm’ and the reception in London of Italian opera. The integral place of music in Roach’s worldview is then related to aspects of his thought ranging from ‘spiritual gender’, eschatology and the Divine Magia to science and politics. Beyond this timely focus on a neglected individual, however, I draw attention to the continuing tendency to overlook contexts such as this one, in which music is a potentially important but not an obviously paramount ingredient. I suggest that conventional conceptions of an emerging ‘public sphere’ – secular, enlightened, rational – need to be modified to take account of supposedly marginalized, ‘enthusiastic’ religious groups such as the Philadelphians. Finally, the absorption of developing musical genres into the background of an age-old model of universal harmony is taken as an instance of the powerful historical interplay between change and continuity.*

This article explores and contextualizes the writings of Richard Roach (1662–1730), placing particular emphasis on the role of music in his thought. More broadly, it utilizes the case of Roach first to suggest the continuing relevance of venerable concepts such as *musica universalis* and divine *furor* in ‘Enlightenment’ England, and secondly to draw attention to our common tendency to overlook contexts in which music is a potentially important but not an obviously paramount ingredient. I will show that music was in fact an indispensable part of Roach’s worldview and suggest that attempting to understand its significance for him will in turn help us to view some of the salient characteristics of English thought of this period, from the unaccustomed perspective of a critic of the empiricist and mechanist philosophical tendencies of the time. Yet the strand of thought represented here is very far from being straightforwardly conservative or reactionary. Religious toleration, the forward progress of humanity, a sympathetic attitude to the status of

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women and the questioning of belief in eternal punishment are all present in this now largely ignored alternative quest for enlightenment.

Since Roach's name may well be unfamiliar to both musicologists and historians of the period, some introductory detail may be helpful.<sup>1</sup> Educated at St John's College, Oxford, in the 1680s, he was ordained as a priest within the Church of England at the beginning of the following decade, thereafter maintaining his appointment to the rectory of St Augustine, Hackney, throughout his life.<sup>2</sup> Surviving evidence establishes his continuing engagement in musical practice. It is only to be expected that the ostensible focus of his published work should be on religion, and it might be assumed that music provided occasional relaxation from more onerous duties. Yet the conventional picture of Anglican conformist and musical amateur conveyed by the bare facts does not even begin to suggest either the extra-denominational spirituality or the rich musicality of Roach's Christian vision. For one thing, the orthodoxy of Roach's position within a Church of England increasingly characterized as 'rational' sat uncomfortably with his role at the centre of a highly controversial group of religious 'enthusiasts' – the London-based Philadelphian Society – whose purpose was to attest to the final ascendancy of divine love in Christ's imminently anticipated kingdom on earth.<sup>3</sup> For another, his active participation in London musical life, and his innovative engagement with some of its most recent developments, took place against a background steeped in the traditions of universal harmony.

Through an investigation of Roach's relationship with these traditions in the context of his religious inclinations, we can begin to glimpse connections, rarely explored in relation to Augustan England, between religious enthusiasm and the musical enthusiasms (in both the older and more recent senses) accessible to educated and well connected Londoners in the period between the rise of 'public' music and the final eclipse of the 'magical' universe.<sup>4</sup> In England at the turn of the eighteenth century, to categorize Roach as a religious enthusiast – in particular, as someone for whom not only subjective emotional responses but states of inspiration and prophetic trance played a significant part in religious experience – would have been to evoke the threat of religious sectarianism and political anarchy still lingering after the crises of the previous decades. It is possible, however, to place him within an older and less openly controversial context. In Renaissance magical traditions, prophetic and musical states of enthusiasm – or, in Platonic terminology, *furor* – had been closely interconnected since the late fifteenth century, stemming from the Medicean Florentine Marsilio Ficino's influential interpretation of the manifestations of *divino furore*.<sup>5</sup> As we shall see, both musical and prophetic *furor* were important to Roach as direct means of establishing

1 Previously, Roach's work has been examined in a musical context only in a relatively brief passage in D. P. Walker, *The Decline of Hell: Seventeenth-Century Discussions of Eternal Torment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), 245–253.

2 B. J. Gibbons, 'Roach, Richard (1662–1730)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23704>>.

3 For studies of various aspects of the Philadelphian Society see Nils Thune, *The Behmenists and the Philadelphians: A Contribution to the Study of English Mysticism in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1948); Serge Hutin, 'The Behmenists and the Philadelphian Society', *Jacob Boehme Society Quarterly* 1 (1952), 5–11; Désirée Hirst, *Hidden Riches: Traditional Symbolism from the Renaissance to Blake* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964); Hillel Schwartz, *The French Prophets: The History of a Millenarian Group in Eighteenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); B. J. Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought: Behmenism and its Development in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678–1730* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998); Paula McDowell, 'Enlightenment Enthusiasms and the Spectacular Failure of the Philadelphian Society', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35/4 (2002), 515–533.

4 The longevity of any such period is difficult to assess, since on the one hand many would regard a process of Weberian 'disenchantment' as having been substantially completed well before this time, while, on the other, the continuity in England of the ideas presented here, their not inconsiderable interaction with German Pietism and their eventual assimilation to the German and English Romantic movements remain to be explored.

5 For a detailed consideration of Ficino's use of this concept see Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 172–177.



truth on a level perceived as beyond that of rational cognition, leading to what, for Roach as for Ficino before him, was the overriding purpose of achieving such states: direct union with the supreme principle of divine love.<sup>6</sup>

The chief concern of this article is to chart the interplay between these religious and musical impulses and their ultimate convergence in the realm of spirituality. As a preliminary investigation presenting new evidence on a neglected subject, it will begin by outlining the interlocking strands of Roach's life as active musician, writer on music and seeker after spiritual enlightenment. I will then move to a closer analysis of the integral place of music in his worldview. Though Roach wrote only sporadically on this subject as a distinct topic, much can be gleaned from his output as a whole. His published works frame a period of almost three decades, from his contributions to the Philadelphian Society's short-lived *Theosophical Transactions* and their other literature of self-definition in the late 1690s to the two-part exposition of his millenarian vision that appeared in the mid-1720s.<sup>7</sup> This core oeuvre is supplemented by occasional material such as his editorial contributions to the work of other writers, and especially by the surviving collection of his manuscript papers and diaries now housed in the Bodleian Library.<sup>8</sup>

## CONTEMPORARIES AND ANTECEDENTS

On the level of practice, it is possible from the diaries and other sources to begin to form a picture of the interaction between Roach's musical activities and his Philadelphian and other connections. 'Rather than siting communicative action in some ideal, imaginary social space such as the Habermasian coffeehouse', writes Harold Love in a recent article, 'we should be examining the discursive behaviour of individuals as they moved between the engaged spaces of distinct competing publics', a task for which Roach and his milieu prove an eminently suitable subject.<sup>9</sup> An initial glance at some of the Philadelphians who shared his musical interests will make this clear, suggesting the outline of a previously unsuspected network bringing together spiritual enlightenment, musical sociability and a diverse range of other interests and connections. For example, Benjamin Steele and John Kemp were among those who endorsed, and helped put into practice, Roach's theory of 'natural musick' – as we shall see later, a kind of *Sprechgesang* combining up-to-date operatic recitative with the techniques of the orator – while Charles Bridges was assisted by Roach in instituting a weekly musical meeting in 1707.<sup>10</sup> Steele, a watchmaker by trade, who for a time 'devoted himself to the discovery of a perpetual motion machine', provides a link to mathematics and natural philosophy, and in particular to the one-time protégé of Isaac Newton, Nicholas Fatio de Duillier.<sup>11</sup> Kemp ran a museum of ancient coins, medals and other antiquities, maintaining connections with the antiquarian and bibliophile circle centred on the socially prominent Harley family and including the librarian Humfrey Wanley, the musically inclined academic John Covel and the London-based Italian opera composer and numismatist

6 As late as the mid-1720s, Roach was working on what seems to have been the translation of a 'Platonic Love Dialogue': see Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D1154, diary of Richard Roach, entries for 22–26 September 1726.

7 *Theosophical Transactions by the Philadelphian Society, Consisting of Memoirs, Conferences, Letters, Dissertations, Inquiries, &c. For the Advancement of Piety, and Divine Philosophy* 1–5 (London, 1697); Richard Roach, *The Great Crisis: Or, The Mystery of the Times and Seasons Unfolded* (London, 1725); Richard Roach, *The Imperial Standard of Messiah Triumphant* (London [1727]).

8 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS, D832–833 (hereinafter 'Roach Papers') and D1152–1157 ('Roach Diaries').

9 Harold Love, 'How Music Created a Public', *Criticism* 46/2 (2004), 268.

10 Roach Papers, D832, item 75 (copy of undated letter from Roach to anonymous recipient); Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 26r. Whilst none of these identifications is entirely explicit – Roach gives only surnames – the strong probability of their accuracy can be established from the range of sources given below.

11 Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 197, 239; Scott Mandelbrote, 'Fatio, Nicolas, of Duillier (1664–1753)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9056>>.



Nicola Francesco Haym.<sup>12</sup> Bridges was an educator, a key figure in the Charity School movement of the time, and acted as agent for the recently formed SPCK (Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge); he later emigrated to Virginia, where he became a society portrait painter.<sup>13</sup> His painterly persona, established while still in England, would have brought him within the ambit of the artist and musician John Wollaston – who treated Roach to ‘the best Consort ever heard’ at the Earl of Sunderland’s – and the SPCK luminary Robert Nelson, a keen art collector.<sup>14</sup>

We need to step back for a moment from our focus on music and the arts in order to consider the implications of Roach’s religious affiliations. It is already clear that the individuals who together made up the supposedly marginal Philadelphian Society were very far from being social outcasts. Nevertheless, the marginalization of publicly expressed subjective religious response as ‘enthusiasm’, with the onset of the ‘Age of Reason’, is a historical commonplace, and the Philadelphians as a group were indeed subjected to a range of criticism whose own rational basis has an elusive quality. ‘Men and Women [who] Preach indifferently, and rave extravagantly, being very ignorant, and accordingly uttering whatsoever occurs next to their Enthusiastick Imaginations’ is one of a range of surviving examples.<sup>15</sup> They were indiscriminately, and without evidence, identified with almost the whole gamut of Nonconformist sectarianism – including Quakers, Fifth Monarchists, Ranters and Muggletonians – as well as with the still more widely reviled Family of Love.<sup>16</sup> Though their public utterances of the late 1690s earned them a modicum of support as well as attracting trenchant opposition, their cause was not helped by their subsequent endorsement of the controversial claims to divine inspiration of the French Prophets – initially a group of Huguenot refugees from the Cévennes area of southern France, whose membership soon extended to English men and women, including many of the Philadelphians themselves.<sup>17</sup> Individuals sympathetic to both groups, including Roach, met during the first decade of the eighteenth century at Rebecca Critchlow’s house in the affluent London suburb of Baldwin’s Gardens.<sup>18</sup>

The Philadelphian Society’s name was taken from ‘Philadelphia’ as applied to one of the seven churches of Asia (*Revelation*, 1. 11), with the underlying sense of ‘brotherly love’ derived from the meaning of the word in Greek, emphasizing the group’s conciliatory approach to religious diversity as well as their belief in the approaching culmination of providential history, heralded by the institution of God’s kingdom on earth. Like later Methodists and Evangelicals, they arose from within the Church of England, strenuously

12 Roach Diaries, D1154 (27 April 1725); Robert Ainsworth, *Monumenta Vetustatis Kempiana* (London, 1720); Ralph Thoresby, *Diary, Volume II*, ed. Joseph Hunter (London, 1830), 31, 98, 154, 220; Humfrey Wanley, *Letters*, ed. P. L. Heyworth (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 288; Lowell Lindgren, ‘Introduction’ to *Nicola Francesco Haym: Complete Sonatas, Part 1*, ed. Lowell Lindgren, *Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era* 116 (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2002); Lowell Lindgren, ‘The Accomplishments of the Learned and Ingenious Nicola Francesco Haym (1678–1729)’, *Studi Musicali* 16 (1987), 314ff. Both Robert Harley, the first Earl of Oxford (1661–1724), and his son, Edward (1689–1741), eventually the second Earl, were prominent collectors of books and antiquities. Kemp’s will (National Archives, PROB 11/559) confirms his connections with both the Harley circle and the Philadelphians and French Prophets. For more detail on the possible connection between Roach and Haym see below, note 73.

13 Graham Hood, ‘A New Look at Charles Bridges, Colonial Virginia Painter, 1735–45’, *The American Art Journal* 9/2 (1977), 57–59; W. K. Lowther Clarke, *A History of the S. P. C. K.* (London: S. P. C. K., 1959), 24.

14 Roach Diaries, D1153, f. 200v; Sir John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, revised edition (New York: Dover, 1963), 791; Wayne Craven, ‘John Wollaston: His Career in England and New York City’, *The American Art Journal* 7/2 (1975), 19–20; the will of Robert Nelson, prefixed to *Mr Nelson’s Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England* (London, 1715).

15 Anon., *Dissenters and Schismatics Expos’d* (London, 1715), 94.

16 Charles Leslie, *A Reply to a Book Entitul’d, Anguis Flagellatus* (London, 1702), ‘Advertisement’; Richard Burrigge, *The History of the Rise and Growth of Schism in Europe* (London, 1714), 85; Joseph Jacob, *The Fewness of the Faithful* (London, 1703), 19; Thomas Dutton, in Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 143.

17 For the various affiliations of the followers of this movement see Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, Appendix I.

18 Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 87, note 41, 222. For the Critchlow family see Samuel Keimer, *Brand Pluck’d from the Burning* (London, 1718), 61–64.



denying that they constituted a sect or a new denomination.<sup>19</sup> From a historical perspective that has tended to read enlightened secularism back into this period at every opportunity, we need to remember that the Philadelphians' difficulties stemmed not from religious issues per se – their anticipation of an imminent second coming and their propensity to apply biblical prophecy typologically to recent history and current events were common to many people of their time, not excluding representatives of the Anglican hierarchy and the major natural philosophers – but from their readiness to propagate ideas widely seen as conducive to social disorder: their acceptance of the continuing validity of prophetic inspiration in their own day and, in some cases (including Roach's), their espousal of doctrines denying eternal punishment.

Roach remained within the established church throughout his life, though it was an institution he thought 'so Cold, so languid, so unadorn'd' in comparison with the Philadelphia Church to come.<sup>20</sup> This millennial succession would embrace all true Christians, overriding present differences. The strong conviction of the imminence of this event led him to found the new group in 1697 with his Oxford friend Francis Lee, in support of the inspired revelations of Jane Lead (1624–1704). The elderly Lead passed on to Roach the imprint of the theosophy – that is, the aspiration to a direct spiritual knowledge of God – of the Silesian mystic Jacob Boehme (1575–1624), which she herself had absorbed during her earlier membership of the Behmenist spiritual community run by Mary and John Pordage.<sup>21</sup> Within – and to some extent beyond – the limited context of modern 'Philadelphia' studies, Lead's status as a prolific female author has attracted a certain amount of interest in recent years.<sup>22</sup> From our present perspective, however, neither Lead nor Lee are of direct interest, since – despite the promising influence of Boehme, in whose work images of universal harmony figured prominently – in neither case is any significant level of reference to music to be found in their published work. Rather, it seems to have been Roach who encouraged a specific role for music on both practical and spiritual levels, gaining support from the more sympathetic of the Philadelphians.

No less important an influence on the ecumenical nature of Roach's thought was exerted by the Dissenting preacher and former Cromwellian domestic chaplain Jeremiah White (1629–1707), and it is here that we can begin to identify a more direct precedent for Roach's musical enthusiasm. Roach edited White's two main works for posthumous publication as well as contributing an elegy to the *Monthly Miscellany*; the diaries attest to their close personal relationship.<sup>23</sup> They had in common an irenic disposition, a belief in an Origenist doctrine of universal salvation and in the transcendence of divine love, and a tendency to the sustained use of musical discourse in religious contexts – all characteristics in turn inherited, as White himself readily acknowledged, from his own mentor and fellow Cromwellian preacher, the one-time Cambridge Platonist Peter Sterry (1613–1672).<sup>24</sup> In Sterry's published works (some of them edited posthumously by White), as well as in extant manuscript treatises and family letters, musical discourse played a central role; through language consistently evoking practical musical performance no less

19 Anon., *Propositions Extracted from the Reasons for the Foundation and Promotion of a Philadelphia Society* (London, 1697), 8.

20 Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 138.

21 McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, 168ff. Notwithstanding any superficial similarity of aims, it is unhelpful to confuse Behmenist theosophy as understood at this time with its later manifestation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

22 See, for example, McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*; Julie Hirst, 'Mysticism, Millenarianism and the Visions of Sophia in the Works of Jane Lead (1624–1704)' (PhD dissertation, University of York, 2002).

23 Jeremiah White, *A Perswasive to Moderation and Forbearance in Love among the Divided Forms of Christians* (London, 1708); Jeremiah White, *The Restoration of All Things: Or, A Vindication of the Goodness and Grace of God* (London, 1712); (Richard Roach,) 'An Elegy upon the Death of Mr White', *Monthly Miscellany* 1 (1707), 118–120. Roach's authorship of the elegy can be established from his diaries.

24 White, *The Restoration of All Things*, 148, 201. White's use of music as a frame of reference is considerably more limited than that of either Sterry or Roach, but is nevertheless present, as exemplified by the passage quoted below on music as experienced from the perspective of the eternal. The early Christian author Origen has generally been treated with suspicion as a result of certain controversial doctrines, not least that concerning the eventual salvation of all.



than abstract universal harmony, he expressed a worldview strongly influenced by ancient and Renaissance Neoplatonism.<sup>25</sup> At a more personal level, this musical language was closely adapted to the special circumstances of the turbulent times through which he lived, and especially to his post-Restoration quest for spiritual healing through a ‘millenarianism of the spirit’ that contrasted markedly with the physical violence of millenarian activists such as the ‘Fifth Monarchists’.<sup>26</sup> Roach was scarcely old enough to have known Sterry in person, but he was undoubtedly familiar with the older man’s work – presumably through White – and made explicit reference to his continuing reputation as ‘*Angelical Preacher*’.<sup>27</sup>

If, through lack of surviving evidence, Sterry’s direct involvement in the musical life of his time remains conjectural, we are more fortunate in the case of Roach. As well as the specific meetings he organized with Bridges, music found a place in the Philadelphian-French Prophet assemblies at Baldwin’s Gardens.<sup>28</sup> Nor was Roach’s musical life restricted to these immediate circles. In the period covered by his earlier extant diaries (from 1706) he regularly attended the Clerkenwell music meetings of Thomas Britton, the celebrated ‘musical small-coals man’, whose surviving library catalogues reveal a strong interest in the arcane and the esoteric.<sup>29</sup> In Hawkins’s well known description, Britton’s gatherings were ‘the weekly resort of the old, the young, the gay and the fair of all ranks, including the highest order of nobility’; in their way, they must have mirrored something of Roach’s own inclusiveness.<sup>30</sup> He might well have become acquainted there with influential musical figures such as Johann Christoph Pepusch, the German composer and theorist who had settled in England some years earlier, and with whom he was still socializing in the early 1720s.<sup>31</sup> John Shore, ‘Sergeant-Trumpeter’ in Queen Anne’s household and a lutenist of some repute, and John Pigott, organist at the Temple Church, were other long-term associates of Roach whose acquaintance might have been begun, or at least cemented, at Britton’s.<sup>32</sup> Roach’s own habit of attending regularly organized gatherings of

25 The significance of music in Sterry’s work is established in my PhD dissertation, ‘“Spiritual Musick”: The Model of Divine Harmony in the Work of Peter Sterry (1613–1672)’ (University of Manchester, 2005).

26 N. I. Matar, ‘Peter Sterry, the Millennium and Oliver Cromwell’, *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society* 2 (1982), 342; N. H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), 198ff.

27 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 106.

28 For example, Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 30r.

29 Roach Diaries, D1152 (for example, f. 33r). For Britton’s musical meetings see Hawkins, *A General History*, 700, 788ff; Thoresby, *Diary, Volume II*, 111; Curtis Price, ‘The Small-Coal Cult’, *The Musical Times* 119 (December 1978), 1032–1034. For his library catalogues and his esotericism see Jamie Croy Kassler, ‘Thomas Britton: Musician and Magician?’, *Musicology* 7 (1982), 67–72. The tendency has been noted for members of Britton’s circle to set up their own musical meetings after his death in 1714: Elizabeth Chevill, ‘Clergy, Music Societies and the Development of a Musical Tradition: A Study of Music Societies in Hereford, 1690–1760’, in *Concert Life in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Susan Wollenberg and Simon McVeigh (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 36. Roach was apparently in advance of this trend; his enterprise with Bridges was initiated in 1707, while he continued to attend Britton’s meetings.

30 Hawkins, *A General History*, 700.

31 As well as dining with Pepusch, Roach recorded an occasion when the German musician invited him to the performance of his masque *The Union of the Three Sister Arts* for St Cecilia’s Day, 1723: Roach Diaries, D1154 (21 November 1723; 1 April 1724). For the provenance of this masque see D. F. Cook, ‘The Life and Works of Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667–1752), with Special Reference to his Dramatic Works and Cantatas’, (PhD dissertation, King’s College, London, 1982), volume 1, 281–283, volume 2, 142–145. For Pepusch at Britton’s meetings, Hawkins, *A General History*, 790. For Pepusch more generally, Charles W. Hughes, ‘John Christopher Pepusch’, *The Musical Quarterly* 31/1 (1945), 54–70; Robert Elkin, *The Old Concert Rooms of London* (London: Arnold, 1955), 23; Malcolm Boyd and Graydon Beeks (with D. F. Cook), ‘Pepusch, Johann Christoph’, *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

32 For Shore see Roach Diaries, D1154 (1 June 1725); Roach Papers, D832, item 182: ‘To Mr Sergeant Shore: On his New-Invented Lute’; Andrew Ashbee and David Lasocki, *A Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians, 1485–1714* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998) [hereinafter *BDECM*], volume 2, 1003–1005. Shore’s position as musician to Prince George of Denmark suggests one mutual point of contact, since Roach’s friend Anthony William Boehm was





competent musicians can be traced back to his university days, since his name appears on a membership list (c1690) of the regular 'Musick Meeting' held at Anthony Hall's Mermaid Tavern in Oxford.<sup>33</sup> A 1707 diary entry from a period of heightened musical activity – 'Dr Aldrichs Spirit came full this day' – suggests a nostalgic recollection of those earlier times.<sup>34</sup> Whether for music-making or coffee-house discussion, Roach maintained a diverse network of London friends, encompassing the high-church Anglican clergyman and SPCK supporter Dr Thomas Manningham, the missionary French Prophet John Giles, the German Pietist bookseller Johann Christian Jacobi and the Newtonian and mystical physician George Cheyne.<sup>35</sup> Overall, one gets an impression of someone well informed about the music and musical issues of his day. He was familiar with Italian recitative before the advent of all-sung Italian opera in London in the first decade of the eighteenth century; he owned and used an edition of John Blow's *Psalms* (1703), and wrestled with the technical challenges of the same composer's instrumental chamber music; he knew Gottfried Keller's thoroughbass manual and played arrangements of Corelli on the harpsichord; and he joined in the general acclamation of the music of the recently deceased Henry Purcell.<sup>36</sup>

There is one area in which Roach can now be shown to have helped make a more specific contribution to the music of his time. The publication of hymns for congregational as well as private singing was in its infancy when, in 1708, the collection entitled *Lyra Davidica* appeared.<sup>37</sup> Whilst it has been recognized that the work had connections with Anglo-German Pietism, information has been lacking as regards the circumstances under which it was compiled, or indeed about those responsible for its composition or compilation.<sup>38</sup>

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Prince George's chaplain. For Pigott see Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 113r, 201v; Donovan Dawe, *Organists of the City of London, 1666–1850: A Record of One Thousand Organists with an Annotated Index* (Padstow: author, 1983), 133. Pigott's father, Francis, had been organist at St John's, Oxford, in the 1680s.

33 Margaret Crum, 'An Oxford Music Club, 1690–1719', *The Bodleian Library Record* 9/2 (1974), 89.

34 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 37r. Dr Henry Aldrich, successively Canon and Dean of Christ Church, was the doyen of Oxford musicians during Roach's time there.

35 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 40v, 93r, 98v, 111r; D1153, f. 200v. For Roach frequenting coffee-houses see D1152, ff. 9r, 26v; D1153, f. 200v. Pietism was a German movement for spiritual regeneration arising out of the Lutheran Church; despite differences, the Pietists shared some common ground with the Philadelphians. The movement had a particularly strong base in Halle, and a number of Pietists educated at that city's university settled in London in the first decade of the eighteenth century: Daniel L. Brunner, *Halle Pietists in England: Anthony William Boehm and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

36 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 47v, 56r; D1154 ('Easter Day' 1726); D1155 (29 August 1726). For Roach and recitative see below. The collection entitled *The Psalms Set Full for the Organ or Harpsichord, by Dr. Blow* was published in 1703; see W. C. Smith, *A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by John Walsh during the Years 1695–1720* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1948), items 130, 176. Part of the advice given to the visiting composer Johann Sigismund Cousser, to help him become assimilated to London musical taste, was to 'Praise the deceased Purcell to the skies and say there has never been the like of him': Harold E. Samuel, 'A German Musician Comes to London in 1704', *The Musical Times* 122 (September 1981), 591. It is not possible to say whether Roach was personally acquainted with Purcell, but the name of the composer's younger brother, Daniel, appears along with Roach's on the extant membership list of the 'Musick Meeting' at the Mermaid Tavern, Oxford: see note 33.

37 Anon., *Lyra Davidica: Or, A Collection of Divine Songs and Hymns, Partly New Composed, Partly Translated from the High-German, and Latin Hymns: and Set to Easy and Pleasant Tunes, for More General Use* (London, 1708); Smith, *Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by John Walsh*, item 287. For the emergence of congregational hymn singing in the context of changing attitudes to psalmody see Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn: Its Development and Use in Worship* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1915), 45ff.

38 According to John Julian, 'Of the history of this collection nothing is known, but the character of its contents may perhaps lead to the supposition that it was compiled by some Anglo-German of the Pietist school of thought': *A Dictionary of Hymnology*, 2 volumes, second revised edition (New York: Dover, 1957), volume 1, 596. See also Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, 2 volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), volume 1, 172; Garold N. Davis, *German Thought and Culture in England, 1700–1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 15; Benson, *The English Hymn*, 346.



The title is not specifically mentioned in Roach's manuscripts (although he does refer on several occasions to 'David's Song' or something similar), but, taken together, a number of clues from the diaries very strongly suggest his involvement in the preparation of this collection. The subject of hymn publication was first mentioned when, early in 1707, Bridges proposed to Roach that they might edit (or set) 'some Hymns out of Masons &c. book'.<sup>39</sup> They had further discussions over the next couple of weeks, and by 13 February Roach was 'writing [the] title page of Choice Manual of Hymns'. It is not clear what happened to this venture, which may have been abortive: I have found no references to contemporaneous publications with a title similar to *A Choice Manual of Hymns*, and the editions of John Mason's *Spiritual Songs* (1683) published at this time do not betray any connection with either Bridges or Roach. On 16 June 1707, however, Roach agreed with Bridges and Francis Hoffman (a Philadelphian, who was to be the engraver of both *Lyra Davidica* and the diagram of millennial-musical progress in Roach's *The Great Crisis*) on what seems to have been a second project.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, Roach was in contact with Anthony William Boehm (Anton Wilhelm Böhme), the Pietist court chaplain to Prince George of Denmark (Queen Anne's consort) at the German Lutheran chapel at St James's, discussing *inter alia* Boehm's proposed use of German and English hymns on alternate days at the chapel.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, Boehm, together with their mutual friend Jacobi, met Roach later that year for the express purpose of singing hymns.<sup>42</sup> By March of 1708 a new harpsichord had been installed at Bridges' house 'to try Hymns on', and '30 Hymns' (the precise number in *Lyra Davidica*, excluding the final seven-part canon puzzle) were changing hands between Boehm and Roach – presumably for final checking, since by the end of that month they were ready for printing.<sup>43</sup> They received their final run-through at a meeting with John Walsh and Peter Randall (*Lyra Davidica*'s publishers).<sup>44</sup> On top of all this, several of the titles of hymns or sacred songs occasionally mentioned in the pages of Roach's diary match the contents of *Lyra Davidica*, and even those that do not can be explained by the prefatory statement that 'the Editor has more of this kind by him, which if Providence so appoint may follow'.<sup>45</sup> The name of the collection's dedicatee, William Patersen (or Paterson), corresponds to that of the financier brother-in-law of John Kemp, who, as we have seen, was part of Roach's Philadelphian musical circle.<sup>46</sup>

If we accept, then, that Roach contributed significantly to the production of *Lyra Davidica*, a question still remains as to the precise role he played. Many of the hymns were translations of German originals, a task quite possibly undertaken by Boehm and/or Jacobi.<sup>47</sup> It seems more likely that Roach was involved with the musical settings; whether as arranger, editor, or even in some cases as composer is more difficult to say. Diary entries certainly refer to musical tasks ('began Hymn to prick for Hoffman'; 'went on with Musick: Bass to Sing to the Lord'; 'had before corrected at Harps[ichord] the Glo. Patri and carried to [Hoffman] to alter').<sup>48</sup> It is also probable, if the evidence I have presented for Roach's involvement is accepted, that he was the author of the work's anonymous preface. Charles Bridges would be another possibility, especially given the preface's initial stress on the role of hymns in the education of children. On the other hand, an entry in Roach's diary for January 1708 refers to work in progress on an 'Introductory Discourse to Hymns'.<sup>49</sup> Further, a number of phrases in the preface echo the tone and substance of Roach's work: the recent 'great Revival of the Genius of Musick', for example, or his recommendation of a style that offers 'a little freer Air

39 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 18r. See also Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 45, note 24.

40 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 59r.

41 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 66r.

42 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 93r.

43 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 114v, 120r, 121r, 122v.

44 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 122r.

45 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 80v, 94r, 107r, 117v; D1153, f. 231v; *Lyra Davidica*, Preface.

46 Will of John Kemp; David Armitage, 'Paterson, William (1658–1719)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21538>>.

47 Davis, *German Thought and Culture*, 15.

48 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 59r, 80v, 117v.

49 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 105r.





than the grave Movement of Psalm Tunes' (in the diaries, he is always happier with his own performance when he sings or plays 'free').<sup>50</sup> The trans-disciplinary aspiration that 'the Design . . . be carried on to something Higher, for the use of the greater Proficients both in Musick, and Religion' also seems characteristic of Roach.<sup>51</sup>

## MUSIC, SPIRITUALITY AND THE FEMININE

It is now time to turn to a detailed consideration of Roach's theoretical engagement with music and his own interpretation of his musical activities. Since he himself was rarely willing to isolate music from his wider aims, these issues are best treated in relation to some of the other main strands of his thought. The meeting of religious and musical impulses in the aspiration to a transcendent spiritual truth shaped Roach's conception of music theory, a conception that, given our propensity to see approaches to compositional technique and the empirical quantification of sound as the defining characteristics of the theory of the time, can only seem idiosyncratic. Yet, though a seasoned practical musician, Roach consistently subordinated such considerations to the prior imperative of spiritual meaning. His diaries, while replete with references to singing and playing, are always inclined to link these pursuits to the ethos of prophetic vision shared with his Philadelphian colleagues – there are even occasions when it is not immediately clear whether entries refer to the previous evening's concert or to one of his frequent musical dreams. The significance of his theory of 'natural' music – advocating the creation of a recitative-based idiom, in which music was intended to enhance oratory by means of a seamless, glissando-like movement between notes – resided not simply in its imitation of the pitch patterns of speech, but in the deeper truth that the natural represented something beyond itself, 'as the whole *Natural* World bears a *Conformity* to, and *Shadows* out the *Spiritual*'.<sup>52</sup> Beyond the rational apprehension of music, the relation between the fixed 'Key Note' and the infinite liquidity of this continuously sliding pitch variation was deemed 'perceptible by the Intellect', the immediate, supra-rational level of understanding: 'Thus is the True outward Harmony of Nature, an Image or Manifestation of the *Angelical*, and *Divine* Harmony.'<sup>53</sup> In other words, the myriad pitch changes of natural music mirrored the experience of music from the perspective of Eternity. While music in its human manifestations occupied (or measured) time, the true divine music should be conceived in relation to a continuous present; or, as White expressed it, as

*Distinct Sounds* . . . yet all so excellent and *skilfully subdued to Harmony*, that the greatest and most Ravishing Sweetness, is the *Result and effect* of all those Notes both *open* and *stopt*, both *Sharps* and *Flats*, both *Concords* and *Discords*, both *Trebles*, *Bases* and *Means*, or whatsoever else Varieties or Contrarieties might be Instanced.<sup>54</sup>

For Roach, the natural properties of 'Wisdoms Musick' encompassed the 'Magical' – that is, partaking of the divine *Magia*, or 'the operation of God himself by the agency of his Holy Spirit'<sup>55</sup> – and the 'Prophetical, or Ecstasical. The Musick I mean which was us'd in the Colleges of the Prophets, to draw down the *Afflatus Propheticus*, the Musick which was *Miriam* the Prophetess so excell'd [excellent] in', suggesting a continuing application for the richness of Ficinian *furor*.<sup>56</sup>

Above all, music was for Roach the defining attribute of spiritual love – the quality that separated his Philadelphian vision of God's final redemptive purpose from the harshness of the French Prophets'

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 53r.

<sup>51</sup> *Lyra Davidica*, Preface.

<sup>52</sup> Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 20.

<sup>53</sup> (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 63–64.

<sup>54</sup> White, *The Restoration of All Things*, 103.

<sup>55</sup> Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 301.

<sup>56</sup> (Richard Roach,) 'A Second Letter of Aletheus to Crito', *Theosophical Transactions* 3 (May and June 1697), 173.



preparatory emphasis on judgment. Again, this returns us to aspects of his intellectual inheritance mentioned earlier. In particular, it is arguable that the recognition of universal love as the transcendent divine attribute, and of Christ at its centre, had been encouraging a sympathetic approach to the feminine among some spiritually (and musically) inclined writers at least since the midpoint of the seventeenth century. Peter Sterry's prose combined a musically saturated universe with a positive response to the feminine nature of musicality rare in his time. This is capable of exemplification at many levels: the female aspect of the celestial nature, whose 'spiritual senses . . . take in with unexpressible delight the ravishing melody' of Christ; the depth of a mother's grief for her dead son, resolved by the mingling of their souls into 'the sweet sound of two lutes . . . tuned to one leason'; the musical (as well as religious, philosophical and literary) education available to both sexes within Sterry's informal early-Restoration Nonconformist community.<sup>57</sup> Roach's output undoubtedly expanded the intersections of music, femininity and divine love in Sterry's work, even if, as previous commentators have pointed out, his exaltation of female spirituality was not necessarily shared by all the Philadelphians.<sup>58</sup> More broadly, his approach undoubtedly went against the grain of the time; for example, Isaac Newton's universe (and it has been suggested that this was representative of 'the major seventeenth-century scientists') de-emphasized divine love in favour of God's more overtly masculine function as all-powerful ruler: again, the God of Judgment.<sup>59</sup>

In the social context of the time, women, despite increased opportunities to participate in some parts of the public arena, were entering into a period of political and cultural marginalization.<sup>60</sup> Areas traditionally linked with femininity – emotion, imagination, inspiration – edged ever closer to the dangerously subversive categories of enthusiasm and irrationality, a factor encouraging their trivialization within a narrow view of 'masculine' rationality. Roach's concern, it has to be said, was not so much the effect of the changing emphases on women's roles in society as the stifling of the human spiritual or imaginative faculties through this imposition of rational control. If reason was increasingly identified as male, the acknowledgment of a supra-rational (intuitive, or angelic) level of apprehension demanded recognition for a more even balance of spiritual gender attributes. Christ, in restoring human nature to its pre-lapsarian perfection, 'must be suppos'd to have in Himself the *whole* Humane Nature restor'd, viz. in the *Female* Property as well as the Male' – a controversial view, for which Roach felt obliged to apologize in case of 'Offence to some less acquainted with the Progressive and Perfective Part of Religion'.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, not confining himself merely to gender equality, he acknowledged the special importance of the 'female embassy' of women spiritual writers over the previous decades, and predicted that 'the Female Sex' would 'act the *Reverse* to their Former Temptation, and now Tempt and draw the Male *Upwards*, in Order to the *Recovery of Paradise* again, even on Earth'.<sup>62</sup>

Meanwhile, attitudes toward music's function within society were adapting in line with changes in the wider arena, even if in both cases the changes were to some extent solidifications of positions that had existed for some considerable time. Tropes concerning the social threat of the essential femininity – or effeminacy – of music had been present at least since the late Elizabethan period.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, by the turn of the

57 Peter Sterry, *The Rise, Race, and Royalty of the Kingdom of God in the Soul of Man* (London, 1683), 190; Cambridge, Emmanuel College Library, ms 292, f. 137. For further discussion see Dixon, 'Spiritual Musick', 143–145 and 151–156.

58 McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, 201, note 34; Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought*, 143, 163, 173. McDowell points to the limited extent of Jane Lead's attention to what we would see as gender issues, whereas Gibbons identifies Francis Lee's reaction against any 'feminist' trend inspired by Behmenist thought. However, the significance of music for Roach in this context has been overlooked.

59 Frank Manuel, *The Religion of Isaac Newton* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974), 16, 61.

60 McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, 126.

61 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 92, 172–173.

62 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 97.

63 Richard D. Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology, and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 18; Linda Phyllis Austern, "'Alluring the Auditorie to Effeminacie': Music and the Idea of the Feminine in Early Modern England", *Music and Letters* 74/3 (1993), 343–354.



eighteenth century the concept was linked more directly to the same perceived subversion of rational masculine control that we have already encountered. ‘Though the Entertainments of Musick are very engaging’, wrote Jeremy Collier, ‘Yet to have our Passions lie at the Mercy of a little Minstrelsy; to be fiddled out of our Reason and Sobriety . . . is a sign we are not so great as we might be.’<sup>64</sup> Needless to say, Roach took a radically different view, constantly seeking in musical inspiration a release from everyday states of reason and sobriety. Recording his attendance at the first of Bridges’ musical meetings, he appended the somewhat enigmatic comment: ‘After – God high, Pan’.<sup>65</sup> Playing alone on his harpsichord or bass viol might induce a similar effect of liberation.<sup>66</sup> Musical *furor*, as for earlier Neoplatonists, provided a route to a supra-rational level of spiritual awareness.

Such experiences, though hardly unique, contrasted with an increasingly dominant view in which domestic music was seen as one of the polite womanly accomplishments, to be carried on harmlessly in an environment ultimately subject to masculine supervision.<sup>67</sup> Public music, on the other hand, was conceptualized as a diverting spectacle, the chance (in another gendered image) for a predominantly male paying audience to be entertained or, for some, to be misled and corrupted. In no case were male anxieties about the veiled threat of female music more violently aroused than in reactions to the arrival of Italian opera; they were supplemented, for good measure, by xenophobia and the perceived threat of papist infiltration. The diatribes of John Dennis and others in this context are well enough known. ‘Is not the opera an effeminate trifle? Has it not, wherever it comes, emasculated the minds of men, and corrupted their manners?’<sup>68</sup> The drama, identified with the Elizabethan Settlement and English liberties, was in danger of being swept off the stage by ‘the luxurious Diversions of those very Nations, from whose Attempts and Designs both Liberty and the Reformation are in the utmost Danger’.<sup>69</sup> Song and dance were ‘Arts which Nature has bestow’d upon effeminate Nations, but denied to [the Englishman], as below the Dignity of his Country, and the Majesty of the British Genius’.<sup>70</sup> Most threatening of all, ‘the more the Men are enervated and emasculated by the Softness of the *Italian* Musick, the less will they care for [women], and the more for one another. There are some certain Pleasures which are mortal Enemies to [women’s] pleasures, that past the *Alps* about the same time with the *Opera* . . .’<sup>71</sup> It seems more than coincidence that, at about this time, it was becoming the norm in large cities such as London ‘to think of homosexual behaviour as the forbidden activity of a deviant, effeminate minority of adult males’.<sup>72</sup>

Strikingly, Roach had no compunction about utilizing the arrival of Italian opera in England to further his designs for a new, ‘natural’ music. He did not enter directly into the debates on opera, gender and sexuality, and the closest that he and his colleagues came to being linked with opera by their contemporaries was in a satire bemoaning the departure of inspiration from the modern theatre, and suggesting a novel

64 Jeremy Collier, *Essays upon Several Moral Subjects*, second edition (London, 1703), 24.

65 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 33v.

66 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 9v, 23v, 120r.

67 *The Spectator* 328 (17 March 1712) and 449 (5 August 1712); Leppert, *Music and Image*, 199. Women’s spiritual roles were also becoming domesticated: Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought*, 48–49.

68 John Dennis, *An Essay upon Publick Spirit* (London, 1711), 22.

69 John Dennis, *An Essay on the Opera’s after the Italian Manner* (London, 1706), 11–12. Thomas McGeary notes that early eighteenth-century criticism of Italian opera ‘embodies a decidedly Whiggish ideology’: ‘Music Literature’, in *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain, Volume IV: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. H. Diack Johnstone and Roger Fiske (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 400.

70 Dennis, *An Essay on the Opera’s*, 13.

71 Dennis, *An Essay upon Publick Spirit*, 25.

72 Randolph Trumbach, ‘The Birth of the Queen: Sodomy and the Emergence of Gender Equality in Modern Culture, 1660–1750’, in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin B. Duberman and others (London: Penguin, 1991), 129. For further discussion of some of the issues raised here see the introductory section of L. J. Jordanova, ‘Natural Facts: A Historical Perspective on Science and Sexuality’, in *Nature, Culture and Gender*, ed. Carol P. McCormack and Marilyn Strathern (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 42–45.



solution: ‘Our Opera-Nymphs shall quit their Songs Prophane, /And tune their Notes to Philadelphian strain’.<sup>73</sup> He did, however, use the discourse and practice of music to represent something very different from the intentions of the opera critics, in taking recitative as the starting-point for the practical application of his natural music theory. It is difficult to be precise about how this process evolved. The surviving copy of an undated explanatory letter, written by Roach presumably in the latter half of the first decade of the eighteenth century, claims natural music as ‘an Improv[emen]t of the two Arts of Oratory and Musick as combining into one; & which I hope to be the . . . Crown of the Natural Recitative which has been so far cultivated by the Italians, & lately Introduc’d upon the English Stage’.<sup>74</sup> Yet to a large extent the letter is a restatement of what had already appeared, a decade earlier, in the *Theosophical Transactions*. Since a number of contemporaries (and most historians) remark on the fact that English audiences were unaccustomed to Italian recitativo secco in 1705, it seems possible that Roach had become acquainted with it at first hand, perhaps on some unrecorded European travels.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, recitative music – in the broader sense of declamatory style – had been known in England (despite its having been far less prevalent than in Italy or France) since the first half of the seventeenth century, so that his ideas may have been based initially on earlier forms.<sup>76</sup>

In common with other supporters of recitative, Roach started from the premise that its primary function was to enhance ‘natural’ speech patterns. Congreve claimed that it was ‘only a more tuneable Speaking . . . a kind of Prose in Music; its Beauty consists in coming near Nature, and in improving the natural Accents of

73 Charles Goring, *Irene; or the Fair Greek, a Tragedy* (London, 1708), ‘Prologue’. It does seem, however, that there was at least an indirect connection between Roach and the prominent London-based Italian opera composer and arranger Nicola Francesco Haym (see note 12), who had a particular interest in recitative. Haym’s earliest extant letter reveals that in 1705 he was living or staying at the house of ‘Mr. Steffkins’. This presumably refers to Christian Leopold Steffkins, one of the two sons of the virtuoso instrumentalist Dietrich Steffkins, since there is a known connection between Christian and Haym: Christian’s daughter was married to Gasparo Visconti, a close colleague of Haym. Christian Steffkins, like Haym himself an accomplished string player, was also a member of the French Prophets, and Roach’s satirical poem on the group refers to the virtuosity of ‘Nicolino’ (a frequently used variant of Haym’s first name) on the viol, while Samuel Keimer’s annotation to the verse at that point makes reference to Steffkins: (Richard) Roach, ‘An Hymn set to Musick upon the Occasion of John Lacy’s leaving his Lawful Wife by the Command of the Spirit, and taking Elizabeth Gray, a Prophetess’, printed in Keimer, *Brand Pluck’d from the Burning*, 66. For further detail on Christian Steffkins see *BDECM*, 1048–1049. The overlapping interests of Haym and Kemp provide another possible point of contact between Roach and the Italian musician: Nicola Francesco Haym, *Del Tesoro Britannico* (London, 1719), 43 and *passim*; Lindgren, ‘The Accomplishments of Nicola Francesco Haym’, 254, 258, note 54, 259, 315; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, Appendix I.

74 Roach Papers, D832, item 75. The vogue for Italian opera in London began in 1705: Lowell Lindgren, ‘Critiques of Opera in London, 1705–1719’, in *Il melodrama italiano in Italia e in Germania nell’età barocca*, ed. Alberto Colzani and others (Como: A. M. I. S., 1995), 145 and Appendix.

75 See, for example, Thomas Clayton: ‘The Musick, being Recitative, may not, at first, meet with that general Acceptation as is to be hop’d for from the Audience’s being better acquainted with it’: *Arsinoe* (London, 1705), Preface; Addison: ‘There is nothing that [has] more startled our English Audience, than the Italian Recitative at its first entrance upon the Stage’: *The Spectator* 29 (3 April 1711); Roger Fiske, *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 46; Curtis Price, *Music in the Restoration Theatre* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1979), 112. Roger North writes of ‘the numerous traine of yong travellers. . . that about this time went over into Italy and resided at Rome and Venice, where they heard the best musick and learnt of the best masters; and. . . they came home confirmed in the love of the Itallian manner’: in *Roger North on Music: Being a Selection from his Essays written during the Years c.1695–1728*, ed. John Wilson (London: Novello, 1959), 310. Roach’s close friend Francis Lee practised physic at Venice in the early 1690s: B. J. Gibbons, ‘Lee, Francis (1661–1719)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16281>>.

76 Christopher Simpson, writing in the second half of the seventeenth century, commented that recitative was ‘something a stranger to us here in England’: quoted in Rebecca Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 210.



Words by more Pathetic or Emphatical Tones'.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, Roach thought that the more elocution '[is] understood and attended to by the Composer, the more Natural his Musick will be'.<sup>78</sup> What makes Roach's ideas distinctive is that he at once aimed to pursue further this emphasis on verbal meaning – 'The Italian way did not Justice nor gave full scope to the Oratorical Part of exact & strict Elocution; which This does' – and to give due priority to the musical side of the equation.<sup>79</sup> Instead of a distinct musical scale, he envisaged

a *Circumference* of continued Harmony. Wherein the Modus or way of Procession by Skipping from Note to Note, is chang'd into a new sort of Musick, that takes in every Interval of Sound, and moves after the same manner, as when on a *Lute* or *Viol* we dont Skip upon the String from Fret to Fret; but sliding down with the Finger take in all between the Frets in a continued movement. Which is easily Imitated by the Voice, as for Instance, sliding thus continuously and quick from the 5<sup>th</sup> above to the Key Note. Which way if followed as Nature it self will direct us, in proper Passages or expressions of Passion, would add many Elegant Graces in mixture with our common Musick; and give it a peculiar sweetness, Solemnity, and Majesty.<sup>80</sup>

Experiments in a continuous vocal glissando, as described here, and including 'Leap[s] from one Note to another distant, as from an Eighth or Sixth above or below', seem more reminiscent of the early twentieth century than of the end of the seventeenth.<sup>81</sup> Their effect, when tried out with his Philadelphian friends, must have been very striking.

Natural music, then, can be seen as a response to a broader set of values espoused by the opera critics. Where, for Dennis, Italian opera was the epitome of irrationality, Roach's innovation aimed at 'a manner of singing more Rational & more Harmonious'.<sup>82</sup> Where Dennis decried the feminizing tendency of music, making men fit only for peace instead of war, Roach extolled the capacity of music to bring about the ultimate reconciliation, the salvation of the fallen angels 'under the divine and new angelical harmony wrought out through the discord'.<sup>83</sup> Where others propounded a one-dimensional view of gender qualities in music, he adapted his conception of the complexity of spiritual gender to a specifically musical context: the unfolding of the mystical octave, the first 'struggle in the womb' of the 'Key Note' and supertonic giving birth to further intervals with both masculine and feminine characteristics.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, Roach's idealizations of harmony were of a piece with his practical music-making activities. He and Sarah Wiltshire, the Philadelphian 'prophetess' whose 'revelations' he included in a later publication, sang hymns and visited Britton's musical meetings together.<sup>85</sup> (Musical meetings were among the relatively few organized public venues where intellectual exchange between men and women could take place, although even here such interaction may have been restricted.<sup>86</sup>) For the mature Roach, Wiltshire arguably represented the present-day culmination of the lineage drawn from his reading of earlier female spiritual authors and from the direct

77 William Congreve, 'Argument Introductory to the Opera of *Semele*' (1710), in *Poems upon Several Occasions, to which are Prefix'd The Judgment of Paris, a Masque; and Semele, an Opera* (Dublin, 1752), 12.

78 (Richard Roach,) 'An Instrument of Elocution', *Theosophical Transactions* 3 (May and June 1697), 198.

79 Roach Papers, D832, item 75.

80 (Richard Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', *Theosophical Transactions* 1 (March 1697), 64.

81 Roach Papers, D832, item 75.

82 Dennis, *Essay on the Opera's*, Preface; Roach Papers, D832, item 75.

83 Dennis, *Essay on the Opera's*, 1; Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 190.

84 (Roach,) 'Aletheus to Crito', 176.

85 Roach Diaries, D1152, ff. 1r, 11r. Wiltshire apparently came from a musical family; on one occasion, when Roach had had adjustments made to his harpsichord, her sister came to test it: D1152, f. 36r.

86 Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580–1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 3; Love, 'How Music Created a Public', 265. Love points to the dramatist Thomas Southerne as a source of information; one character, commenting on 'these musical entertainments', exclaims: 'I am very musical, and love any call that brings the women together' – Thomas Southerne, *Works*, ed. Robert Jordan and Harold Love (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), volume 2, 279.



influence of Jane Lead. She was probably in his mind when he wrote of the prophetic function of this 'female embassy' in his interpretation of the imminent realization of God's purpose on Earth: the '*Embassadresses of the Resurrection State. . . Returning to the Church again in the Latter Day*', standing in a typological relationship to 'Mary Magdalen, signifying the Resurrection of Christ to the Disciples'.<sup>87</sup> It is entirely characteristic of Roach's mindset that he expressed this process in musical terms: pointing the way to the resolution of providential history was 'a *Feminine*, i. e. more Acute or *Treble Tone*', representing the leading voice of Mary Magdalene/the female prophets, to be answered by the concurring harmony of 'the whole *Scale*' (the full consort; 'the Voice of the Spirit. . .through the full Apostolic Round').<sup>88</sup>

## MUSIC AND THE MILLENNIUM

The millennium ushered in by the female embassy, Roach explained, was already in progress; the 'Philadelphian year' of 1697 marked the intermediate stage heralding the imminent rise of the true Philadelphian Church, to be resolved in its turn into the 'Harmonious *Octave*' of Christ's new kingdom.<sup>89</sup> The approach of this momentous series of events was signalled, *inter alia*, by 'the many wonderful *Genius*'s arising in the Sphere of Arts and Sciences, carrying them up to such a Height, and with so quick a Progress, as no Age, in its Proportion of Advance therein, has ever shewn', and particularly in music, which had 'by some extraordinary *Genius*'s in this last Age been brought to such Perfection, that it may be esteemed one of the Wonders of it'.<sup>90</sup> This was not simply a result of technical improvement but was part of a process of spiritualization through which earthly music was moving ever closer to its 'archetype': the heavenly harmony, or music in the mind of God.<sup>91</sup> Britain in particular had been favoured – Purcell's genius took precedence, not merely at home but even over the achievements of 'those Countries where this Art has been most encouraged'.<sup>92</sup> In his own work, Roach sought both to commemorate and to contribute to this process. The hymn collection was offered as a thanksgiving from 'a Nation that above all others has had the Experience of such surprising Favours and peculiar Blessings'.<sup>93</sup> Natural music, though presented only as a 'rude Draught' to be taken forward by his more expert countrymen, aimed ultimately to 'Improve' British music to 'its full height'.<sup>94</sup> His own musical life was to be interpreted in the context of the nation's destiny; on St George's Day, 1707, he felt that Bridges' express intention to continue the musical meetings contributed significantly to 'one Generall & Nationall Praise'.<sup>95</sup>

Aside from their specific relation to musical theory and practice, there was nothing particularly unusual about these expressions of the national destiny, at a time when history continued to be interpreted in terms of providential design and the British identity was being secured by the Act of Union.<sup>96</sup> To find England/Britain identified as God's chosen nation, and London as the millennial New Jerusalem, one does not have to search the writings of marginalized 'enthusiasts'. The proponents of the Reformation of Manners movement, for example, had no doubt that 'we are a nation of [God's] peculiar love and protection, the vineyard which His own right hand hath planted'.<sup>97</sup> Yet this was also a period of growth in the expression of

87 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 136.

88 Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 45. For the use of typology in a millenarian context see Paul J. Korshin, *Typologies in England, 1650–1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

89 Roach, *The Imperial Standard.*, 66–67.

90 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 8, 183; (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 60.

91 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 198.

92 (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 60.

93 *Lyra Davidica*, Preface.

94 (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 61; Roach Papers, D832, item 75.

95 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 45r.

96 J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1660–1832*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 88.

97 From 'Proposals for a National Reformation of Manners', quoted in Bahlman, *The Moral Revolution of 1688*, 7.





national identity in aggressive, acquisitive and partisan terms, a clutch of sentiments with which Roach had little in common. Instead, the Philadelphian age was to be one of peace and universal love. The turbulent history of recent decades – civil conflict, natural disasters, European wars – belonged to ‘the preparatory vials of desolating judgments’: like the socially disruptive interventions of the French Prophets, they were simply part of God’s plan.<sup>98</sup> And Roach was no xenophobe; he readily acknowledged the supremacy of the German mystical writers, as well as the crucial contributions of both Germans and Italians to the further growth of music after the death of Purcell.<sup>99</sup>

The anticipation of the millennium, in Roach’s musical context, allows us a glimpse into the perennial dispute between ‘ancients’ and ‘moderns’. On the face of it, he seems unequivocally to have set out his stall as a supporter of the superiority of modern music. It had advanced at a greater rate than in any previous age, to the extent that it was now one of the ‘wonders’ of the time.<sup>100</sup> Innovation was to be prized: the ‘natural musick’ was ‘a New Thing’.<sup>101</sup> Notwithstanding the interests and expertise of some of his acquaintances, there is little in his surviving output that refers to either the music of the ancients (except, to some extent, biblical music) or the growing interest in English music of the Tudor and early Stuart periods.<sup>102</sup> On the other hand, his attitude to innovation should not be equated with a modern sense of evolutionary secular progress for its own sake. The perfection of music is seen as a necessary concomitant to the perfection of the millennium; and while he betrays little apparent interest in speculation as to the detailed nature of ancient music, it remains a benchmark, an ideal to which to return. In one passage where the ‘natural musick’ is claimed as ‘the Discovery of a new Manner’, he adds, if only by way of a parenthetical afterthought, ‘(or perhaps rather the Recovery of an Antient one)’.<sup>103</sup> The belief that his method was ‘natural’ was related to the antithesis of ancient perfection to the unnecessary complexity of a sophisticated but corrupt modern society; Shaftesbury was not far removed from Roach’s intentions when he commented that even Italian recitative was ‘not reduced enough to its true ancient simplicity’.<sup>104</sup> Hymn singing was another area which its proponents saw in terms of the recovery of the ethos of an earlier, purer age, in this case that of primitive Christianity.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps the best, if inconclusive way to encapsulate Roach’s implicit response to the ‘ancients vs moderns’ question is by reference to his conception of mystical writing as a recurrent striving for perfection, irrespective of its time, and therefore in a sense outside time.<sup>106</sup> The timelessness of natural music’s ‘eternal’ perspective sought to replicate the supra-rational aspirations of ancient Platonic *furor* through the utilization of the latest trends in musical theatre.

## MUSIC, POLITICS AND THE UNIVERSE

This sense of the timelessness of the universal helped to shape Roach’s broader response to music. The central harmonic force of his cosmos, the divine *Magia*, co-ordinated the ‘*Sympathetic Operation*’ of ‘the

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98 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 11; *The Imperial Standard*, 32.

99 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 183.

100 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 9; ‘A New Theory of Musick’, 60.

101 (Roach,) ‘A New Theory of Musick’, 61.

102 Roach records a discussion on ancient Greek song with his friend Dr Pepusch (who later gave a paper on the subject at the Royal Society), but gives no details of its content: Roach Diaries, D1154 (22 November 1723). Pepusch owned manuscripts of earlier music, such as the collection of Elizabethan and Jacobean keyboard music now known as the ‘Fitzwilliam Virginal Book’, but in Roach’s accounts of his own keyboard playing he refers only to contemporary pieces: Hughes, ‘Pepusch’, 58; Roach Diaries, for example D1154 (‘Easter Day’ 1726). For a detailed account of the dual concepts of ‘ancient music’ at the turn of the eighteenth century see William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), especially chapter 2.

103 (Roach,) ‘An Instrument of Elocution’, 199.

104 Thomas McGeary, ‘Shaftesbury on Opera, Spectacle and Liberty’, *Music and Letters* 74/4 (1993), 541.

105 John Mason, *Spiritual Songs* (London, 1699), Preface.

106 Hutin, ‘The Behmenists and the Philadelphian Society’, 7.



Natural or Intermedial Powers', 'In equal Movement of true *Sympathy*/Like mutual echoing concordant Strings in Nature's *Harmony*'.<sup>107</sup> In line with earlier but still vibrant traditions, these universal harmonic structures were deemed present both in the macrocosm and within the 'Spiritual World' of the individual soul.<sup>108</sup> Contrary to the historiographical convention that, by this time, the perceived reality of universal harmony had receded into poetic metaphor, Roach treated these forces as 'real', just as he used 'the Spirit and Quintessence of Harmony' not as a flowery cliché but as the precise spiritual equivalent of the chemically extracted spirit of a plant, moving the passions in a more vigorous and concentrated manner.<sup>109</sup> Indeed, as he made clear, the transference of analogies from the natural to the spiritual world did not simply create metaphor but imbued the terms concerned with a greater intensity of true meaning than that contained in their common usage.<sup>110</sup> Divine magic was the purest form of the forces that pervaded Roach's world, and music was its 'outward representation'.<sup>111</sup> He recognized magic, too, in its natural and even diabolic forms. On one occasion, after a meeting at Baldwin's Gardens, he noted: 'Dark Magick high. Yet I was assisted to speak & sing'.<sup>112</sup>

For Roach, music was a key element in his stance in relation to some of the most fundamental issues of his time. While both his characteristic irenicism and the heterogeneity of his social networks make his politics difficult to identify, the wider implications of his opposition to the primarily Whig opera critics have been noted.<sup>113</sup> On the other hand, his adherence to the universal musical model of the Dissenters Sterry and White, together with a 'levelling' tendency reminiscent of Interregnum sectarianism – he observed on at least one occasion that an ideal society, a true 'Love Community', would have no need of individual property – does little to place him in any recognizable alternative contemporary camp. In more abstractly intellectual terms, he resisted what, in common with some of his predecessors and contemporaries, he saw as the increasingly exclusive concentration on purely physical explanations inherent in the 'new philosophy'. This resistance did not take the form of outright opposition. We have not yet reached Blake's post-industrial demonization of Newton, even if Blake's alternative vision was eventually to draw on many of the sources with which Roach was familiar.<sup>114</sup> Roach, as we have seen, was eager to embrace the achievements of the 'arts and sciences' of his time – by this he meant the theory and practice of various branches of knowledge, rather than precisely what might today be understood by 'arts' and 'sciences', but he certainly included knowledge of the natural world. He recognized Newton unambiguously as 'the greatest Genius of the Age for Mathematical Knowledge, and the Glory of this Nation'.<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless, he was convinced that Newtonian natural philosophers and theoreticians of musical sound alike gave insufficient attention to the essential nature and deeper meaning of subjects that needed to be 'duly applied and spiritualised'.<sup>116</sup>

107 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 179; *The Imperial Standard*, 156. Compare Roach's friend Sampson Estwick, also a member of the Oxford 'Musick Meeting': 'By the frame of our Nature we may perceive our selves fitted and prepar'd for the Reception of Harmonious Sounds; as we are fenc'd about with Nerves, we find our selves ready strung, and most of us tun'd for this Heavenly Entertainment: By a kind of Sympathy sometimes we tremble'. *The Usefulness of Church-Musick. A Sermon Preach'd at Christ-Church, Novemb. 27. 1696* (London, 1696), 2.

108 Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 135.

109 Roach Papers, D832, item 75.

110 Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 295–296.

111 (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 61.

112 Roach Diaries, D1152, f. 30r.

113 See above, note 69. On the other hand, Schwartz, while highlighting the difficulties in identifying consistent party divisions in this period, identifies adherence to the French Prophet movement with a Whig political affiliation: *The French Prophets*, 56 and note 55; 232 and note 38.

114 Kathleen Raine, *Blake and Tradition*, 2 volumes (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969); Hirst, *Hidden Riches*.

115 (Roach,) 'Aletheus to Crito', 179–180.

116 (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 64. Roach would have been in a position to judge Newton on his published works alone, and not on the wealth of theological and alchemical manuscripts known today. We may note that the title of the Philadelphian Society's journal, *Theosophical Transactions*, and its exclusive focus on theosophical knowledge were



The universe that Roach set against Newtonian or materialist interpretations was informed by music; consequently, to understand music was to understand the totality of God's creation.<sup>117</sup> He drew an analogy between Newton's identification of Nature's physical laws and the hidden, magical underpinning of the spiritual universe by music, the order and regularity of which was to be revealed through the continued refinement of theosophy.<sup>118</sup> To the extent that Roach can be said to have had a theory of sound – he used his own version of a 'wave' analogy, and the image of sound spreading 'from a point every way' – his arguments were decidedly theosophical rather than mathematical.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, when he implied a relationship between the 'continuity' of pitch changes in the natural music, emerging from the divine centre of the 'Key Note', and the rays of light emanating from their source, it would be disingenuous to suggest that he intended anything more substantial than a nod in the direction of his contemporary natural philosophers or music theorists.<sup>120</sup> His comments on matters of physical theory more closely related to musical practice amounted to only the occasional passing remark, for example in a brief criticism of what he saw as the regrettable trend toward equal temperament.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the fact that someone for whom music was so fundamental a constituent of his worldview had so little to say about the concerns that now exercise historians of the musical science and theory of this period serves to emphasize the extent to which other aspects of musical thought, still current at this time, have been ignored – or airbrushed out of the picture – by subsequent historiography.

Roach's membership of the emerging London musical *beau monde* might be seen as a means of neutralizing ideological and social difference, allowing him to mix freely with those of diverse persuasion and status through the exercise of a harmless common pastime.<sup>122</sup> There was, though, a real sense in which music was held in suspicion for its capacity to subvert the social order and threaten established interests. For one thing, contended John Dennis, in contrast to the elite education required to pass valid judgment on dramatic productions, judging music 'requires only Use and a fine Ear, which the Footman often has a great deal finer than his Master'.<sup>123</sup> Worse still, the growing incidence of informal music meetings might well mask the rise of something more sinister; Horace Walpole later recalled the rumour that Britton's musical gatherings constituted in reality 'seditious meetings' witnessing 'magical pursuits', their host variously suspected of being 'an atheist, a presbyterian, [or] a Jesuit'.<sup>124</sup> I am not aware of any 'outside' comment on the music meetings organized by Roach and Bridges, but one can easily imagine the kinds of accusation or innuendo that the confluence of music and Philadelphian mysticism might have produced. Even so seemingly inoffensive an activity as hymn singing was at this time a recipe for doctrinal dispute and social tension. It was associated in the (Anglican) public mind with Dissenters and enthusiasts, and the composition of 'free' texts, even if inspired by the psalms or other biblical sources, was equated by some with irresponsible claims to inspirational prophecy.<sup>125</sup> When a 1697 critique of the Philadelphians sought to

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conceivably intended as an implicit critique of the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* and its approach to natural knowledge.

117 (Roach,) 'Aletheus to Crito', 178.

118 (Roach,) 'Aletheus to Crito', 179–180.

119 (Roach,) 'A New Theory of Musick', 61–62.

120 (Roach,) 'Aletheus to Crito', 179. For explanations of musical sound current at the time see Penelope Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 207ff, 237ff.

121 (Roach,) 'Aletheus to Crito', 176.

122 William Weber uses the term *beau monde* to indicate the character of London social life that had by around 1700 increasingly assumed the former role of the court: 'Musical Culture and the Capital City: The Epoch of the *beau monde* in London, 1700–1870', in *Concert Life in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, 71.

123 Dennis, *An Essay on the Opera's*, 6.

124 Hawkins, *A General History*, 791.

125 The use of any form of music other than the psalms had been rare in services before 1689, but with the Toleration Act hymn singing became more widespread among Dissenting congregations, where 'if "enthusiasm" was banned from the sermon it was reintroduced in the praise'; in Anglican worship it continued to be frowned upon: Michael R. Watts,



establish its target as dangerously sectarian, it offered as evidence the accusation that they ‘sing Hymns of their own making’.<sup>126</sup> More specifically, the musical content of an individual hymn could arouse suspicion: ‘even adding an alleluia to the end of each verse could be construed as popery’.<sup>127</sup> (The hymn from *Lyra Davidica* that was subsequently to become widely known, ‘Jesus Christ is Risen Today’, has a melismatic alleluia at the end of each line.)

In the face of such criticism, Roach continued to understand music not as the articulation of separation or as a threat to rational Protestant values, but as a central expression of both the continuity and the immediacy of the Christian message. He identified the Philadelphian Society with earlier ‘Witnesses of the Extraordinary Communications of [God’s] Spirit in all Ages of the Christian Church: Who have still been persecuted, and despised as *Dreamers*’.<sup>128</sup> It seems clear, though, that the sustained experience of strident opposition to his values was not without its effect. Whilst continuing privately to record his own dreams and visions (in which music often figured) and the inspired states induced by his musical performance, the public persona he sought to cultivate became more circumspect, less potentially subversive. Without losing any of the millenarian urgency of the 1690s, his later works nevertheless find their university-educated author addressing ‘the Sober and Serious Reader’ and explicitly arguing for an intellectually respectable middle ground, free from the taint of enthusiasm.<sup>129</sup> Roach and his colleagues were not to be considered ‘a set of Obscure Persons, but such chiefly as were of Note and Station in the World; also of Learning, and of known Integrity’.<sup>130</sup> He assigned to many of his acknowledged literary models – Peter Sterry included – an intermediate intellectual territory ‘between the rational and the mystical’.<sup>131</sup> He distanced himself from the French Prophets, seeing them (as D. P. Walker perceptively points out) ‘partly as direct instruments of God’s angry judgment work . . . and partly as false prophets, one of Satan’s Last Shifts, but as such also a sign of the Last Days’.<sup>132</sup> As ‘Instruments of the Anger of God’, the French Prophets had shown a ‘harsh and *Disharmonious*’ tone, but this was now, under a more civilizing influence, ‘Softening into the Call of *Grace*’: the love-music of Philadelphia.<sup>133</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In music history it has been all too easy to ignore those who evade the categories of professional musician, celebrated composer or performer, musical patron, author of instruction manuals or treatises on sound, and the like. On the other side of the disciplinary fence, historians of non-musical aspects of the period have felt little incentive to engage with an area of study protected by specialist knowledge, and in any case rarely seen as relevant to the central issues of religious, political or even social history. Moreover, on both sides of this artificial barrier, the claims of secularization have been persistently overstated. Needless to say, music history has always taken full account of religious music (that is, music composed and performed for religious purposes); but, like other historical disciplines, it continues to undervalue the wider implications of the still

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*The Dissenters, Volume I: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 308; Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Watts and Wesley to Maurice, 1690–1850* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 100; Donald Davie, *The Eighteenth-Century Hymn in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 17–18.

126 Anon., *The Principles of a People Stiling themselves Philadelphians* (London, 1697), 2.

127 Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, I, 172.

128 Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, 10.

129 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 171.

130 Roach, *The Imperial Standard*, xix.

131 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 106.

132 Walker, *The Decline of Hell*, 256.

133 Roach, *The Great Crisis*, 50, 203.



culturally dominant function of religion in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century English society.<sup>134</sup> Recognizing the interplay of music and spirituality in a context such as the one addressed here has emphasized the underlying sacred imperative capable of informing the most ostensibly secular of musical practices, helping to direct us to unaccustomed trans-disciplinary perspectives.

That the beliefs and values shown here to have been held by individuals such as Roach and his friends did little to impede their integration into London musical and intellectual society is a finding that helps to question the validity of the customary watersheds of 1660, and more specifically 1688/1689, and the 'long eighteenth century' that they imply. The emerging 'public sphere', with its associated coffee-house culture and developing concert life, has been deemed to represent the new world emanating from these artificial boundary lines, a world contrasting sharply with what has continued to be seen as the diminishing 'lunatic fringe' of religious enthusiasm. The experience of Roach suggests otherwise. Any temptation to portray this 'enthusiast' as belonging to some ostracized minority is negated by his full participation in the public musical and social culture of the time. Similarly, his potential dismissal as a relic of an age that had been substantially swept away by the scientific debunking of the music of the spheres is invalidated by his innovative approach to musical forms and ideas in the face of the prejudice of conservative critics. At the same time, the direction of his innovation toward the renewal of perennial forms of musical and prophetic inspiration suggests a more subtle relationship between change and continuity in this period than is usually allowed. If we add to these traits Roach's enlightened views on the interplay between gendered psychological characteristics and his conception of a God of love and compassion rather than of retribution and eternal torment, the picture that emerges is of a thinker no less worthy of serious attention than many of his more conventionally 'rational' contemporaries.

In Roach's own time, 'enthusiasm' was increasingly analysed as a form of psychological imbalance, to be treated with medication – or, in less formal contexts, with ridicule, an approach that can be seen to have influenced in turn that of later historians. Even so receptive a commentator as Walker has characterized the Philadelphians, in his own version of gentle Shaftesburian mockery, as 'slightly crazy'.<sup>135</sup> This, of course, is not the only reason for the absence of someone like Roach from our historical consciousness. Historians have been slow to give credence to those whose ideas are seen to have failed to bear fruit – although we must remember that the existence of an eighteenth-century 'undercurrent' leading eventually to Blake and the English Romantics remains to be fully explored.<sup>136</sup> I have tried to suggest here that treating Roach on his own merits as a thinker of some individuality can help form a more nuanced interpretation of a number of entrenched oppositional categories: conforming and dissenting, high- and low-church Anglican, Tory and Whig, religious and secular, conservative and progressive, enthusiastic and rational. Our musical perspective has assisted in achieving this departure from stereotype, through drawing attention to the absorption of developing genres into the background of an age-old universal model. History is all too often presented as a chronicle of change; the stability and longevity of ideas and traditions are less frequently stressed. But trying to understand the interplay of change and continuity invariably produces the most valuable insights. Taking Roach seriously in a musical context has provided a case in point.

134 McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, 121. For elaboration of this point in a broader context see Clark, *English Society*, 28 and *passim*.

135 Walker, *The Decline of Hell*, 262.

136 This seems scarcely less the case now than when Hirst made the observation in 1964: *Hidden Riches*, 162.