

group of musicians' in the 1850s and 1860s rather than part of broader historicist trends in the whole of the nineteenth century.

Kallberg's essay, 'Peeping at Pachyderms', is easily the most provocative and least relevant to the Italian operatic focus of the volume. To begin the discussion of 'convergences of sex and music in France around 1800', it offers as 'emblematic' of visual-musical convergences throughout the culture, a lengthy, rather tasteless tale of a Parisian experiment charting the effects of music on elephant behaviour (p. 134); it then considers the use of song in erotic literature and depictions of sexual peeping, with allusions to Rousseau's *Le devin du village*, in Jacques Cazotte's *Le diable amoureux* (1772), and 'concludes' with Stendhal's sexually explicit responses to Rossini duets c. 1820, which reveal 'habits of thinking about sex and music' that also hint at the 'trope of peeping' (pp. 143, 145). Sociological study this is not, but a set of loosely tied references whose forced connection to an unfulfilled thesis is hidden by an excess of titillating images and vocabulary.

Perhaps the restricted length of these essays curtailed some discussions, or made it difficult to question fully the retention or loss of 'powerful messages' in the music that was promised in the volume's introduction. Topped off with an epilogue on intersections between performance and scholarship by John Mauceri, the essays generally prove, however, that investigations of operatic 'fashions and legacies' beyond authorial control can enliven the expanding scholarly discourse as they reveal the unbounded nature of opera as a captivating cultural force.

Diana R. Hallman
 University of Kentucky
 Diana.Hallman@uky.edu
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Ian Taylor, *Music in London and the Myth of Decline: From Haydn to the Philharmonic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). xiv+208 pp. £55.00.

Colin Timothy Eatock, *Mendelssohn and Victorian England* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2009). xi+189 pp. £49.50.

Charles Edward McGuire, *Music and Victorian Philanthropy: The Tonic Sol-fa Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). xxiii+240 pp. £53.00.

In the past few decades, the growing body of research on British music has challenged Britain's long-held reputation as *das Land ohne Musik*.¹ This scholarship has revealed a rich history of music in Britain that offers many opportunities for further study. A trio of recent books providing unique insights into previously unexplored facets of British life and musical culture greatly enriches

¹ *Das Land ohne Musik: englische Gesellschaftsprobleme* was the title of Oskar A. H. Schmitz's 1914 book about Britain's national identity (Munich: Georg Müller, 1914). The phrase came to represent Britain's long-standing view of its own music. See Nicholas Temperley, 'Introduction: The State of Research on Victorian Music', in *The Lost Chord: Essays on Victorian Music*, ed. Nicholas Temperley (Bloomington, 1989): 5–6; and Robert Stradling and Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1840–1940: Constructing a National Music* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001): 83–111.

this scholarship: Ian Taylor's *Music in London and the Myth of Decline*, Colin Eatock's *Mendelssohn and Victorian England* and Charles McGuire's *Music and Victorian Philanthropy*. All three fill glaring holes in scholarship and encourage new approaches to research on British music and culture.

Ian Taylor's reevaluation of London concert life after Haydn's visits in the early 1790s and before the establishment of the London Philharmonic, a previously unexplored period, invites us to reconsider long-perpetuated and inaccurate views of British music. In both subject and breadth of research, his work follows in the footsteps of the studies of music organizations and British performance culture by Cyril Ehrlich, William Weber, Leanne Langley, Christina Bashford and Simon McVeigh. Though Taylor states that the focus of the study is to clarify the role of symphonic music and orchestras in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, the book is more about the evolution of British concert culture. The central aim of the study is to debunk the so-called myth that London experienced a dearth of orchestral activity between Haydn's departure in 1795 and the formation of the Philharmonic Society in 1813. (One could argue about whether this presumed lack of orchestral activity is a myth or part of the larger ill-informed view of nineteenth-century Britain as a musical wasteland.) Drawing extensively on primary sources (including the Royal Philharmonic Society archives at the British Library, a collection of programmes collected by the London flautist Andrew Ashe at the Bodleian Library, and contemporary newspapers), Taylor shows that the creation of the Philharmonic was 'the emergence of a new voice within London's musical culture' (p. 4), rather than the end of a dark period in London's musical life. After a brief introduction outlining the purpose of the book and resources used, the first chapter places 'the Philharmonic "myth"' within the historical context of Haydn's activities in London, his impact on British music and the formation of the Philharmonic Society. The following chapters cover the same period (1795–1813) but focus on other organizations or issues: the importance of the symphony and the evolution of concert life in London, individually organized events (such as the Johann Peter Salomon and Franz Cramer concerts), performance organizations (e.g., the New Musical Fund, the Vocal Concerts, Billington–Naldi–Braham concerts, etc.), music outside the West End, and domestic music concerts. The final chapter attempts to bring these disparately presented strands together, though the conclusions drawn often repeat statements from earlier chapters rather than bringing the study to a satisfying close. More clearly defined chapters might have minimized repetitiveness and allowed for more meaningful connections between the various strands London musical culture to be made.

Problematic organization and Taylor's obsession with the myth often interfere with any sense of narrative. The chapters, which are largely blow-by-blow presentations of facts, lack fluid prose and a clear sense of direction, leaving the reader to sift through repetition and verbosity for the invaluable material. The 'myth' is defined repeatedly, and is often refuted with each new piece of evidence. Since the myth is successfully debunked within the first two chapters, this study might have been more successful as a substantial journal article rather than a full-length book. As a book, it would have been more useful if it had offered a re-evaluation of London concert life at the turn of the nineteenth century, with the refutation of the lack of orchestral activity playing a small role in a larger, more broadly focused study. In spite of these drawbacks, Taylor presents a lot of important, previously unpublished information that will be useful for anyone studying orchestral music in London in the early nineteenth century.

In tracing the growth of Mendelssohn's popularity in Britain from his first visit in 1829 to its peak in the 1870s and its slow decline through the turn of the century, Colin Timothy Eatock offers an insightful perspective on history of London's musical culture during the nineteenth century. The first chapter, an overview of the vibrant London concert life in 1829 (the year of Mendelssohn's first visit), serves as an excellent introduction to nineteenth-century British culture and music, particularly since there are few general studies of British music history. Subsequent chapters follow the growth of Mendelssohn's reputation – from that of a former child prodigy and grandson of Moses Mendelssohn to a celebrated and iconic composer, whose popularity in Britain rivaled Handel's. Chapter 2 covers his 1829 trip, his visits to Britain and relevance to British music in the 1830s and 1840s are discussed in chapters 3 and 4 respectively, and chapter 5 is devoted to the importance of *Elijah* and to Mendelssohn's final trip in 1843. The final two chapters focus on Britain's reaction to Mendelssohn's death and on Mendelssohn's legacy. Eatock includes two helpful appendices: a glossary of names and an extensive list of Mendelssohn's participation in public and semi-public performances in England.

Mendelssohn was a brilliant businessman who excelled in the role of gentleman as well as a musician, and who was an able cultivator of beneficial friendships. His influence on British musical culture was multi-faceted: as a teacher and conductor he taught British musicians studying at the Leipzig Conservatory, expanded the British concert repertoire and improved the authority of the conductor. In addition, the pervasiveness of his music influenced British musicians throughout the century and further underscored British composers' reliance on German traditions. Perhaps most importantly, Mendelssohn 'convinced many people that England could become a "musical nation", like Germany: all the English had to do was to do it' (p. 148). To this end, after his death, a Mendelssohn scholarship was created to support a British student studying at the Leipzig Conservatory. The first award went to Sir Arthur Sullivan, in 1856. By planting the seed for supporting native music among the upper classes, Mendelssohn helped prepare the way for the rapid growth in British music of the late nineteenth century. Though many of these composers, including Sir Charles Villiers Stanford and Sir C. Hubert H. Parry, have been eclipsed by later composers, their music and careers, often defined as aligning with or going against Mendelssohn, were necessary stepping stones in the evolution of British music that eventually led to the international and enduring successes of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Edward Elgar. These developments would have occurred without Mendelssohn, as Eatock notes, but exploring the widespread and lasting impact of Mendelssohn offers an insightful view of nineteenth-century British musical culture as it began asserting its own identity.

Occasionally condescending views of British music appear, such as in the final chapter on Mendelssohn's legacy, which contains a few moments of canonizing. This, in part, reflects the views of Victorian critics and scholars, and of the twentieth-century scholars who perpetuate this unfortunate view. More than anything, this minor issue points to the lack of adequate histories of British music and underscores the importance of Eatock's research. Throughout the book, Eatock uses the word England, even when referring to the whole of Britain. Even though Eatock discusses Mendelssohn's travels to Scotland and Wales, the use of England in the place of Britain unfortunately obscures how his presence impacted the whole of the British Isles and downplays the fact Mendelssohn interacted with British composers from Ireland, Scotland and Wales. On the

whole, however, this is an excellent, well-researched and well-written study that is the first to integrate Mendelssohn's influence within the history of British music. Eatock goes beyond filling a hole in scholarship on British music by bringing British music into the broader history of continental European music.

Charles McGuire engages with larger issues of British Victorian culture, studying 'the links between music and the moral philanthropy of the age' by focussing on Tonic Sol-fa (p. xvi). Rather than presenting a history of Tonic Sol-fa, a largely unexplored aspect of Victorian music, McGuire portrays this democratising form of musical notation as a tool for moral uplift and change highlighting the powerful role of music in Victorian Britain. Tonic Sol-fa played a role in educating the working classes, shaping the musical taste of Britain and spreading British morals and ideals throughout the British Empire. Proponents of Tonic Sol-fa used it, in the Victorian spirit of moral improvement, as a tool to better people and society. For this reason, Tonic Sol-fa was integrated into Victorian society in specific ways and, as McGuire shows, it offers a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary studies. After a chapter outlining the basic history of Tonic Sol-fa and laying the framework for the remaining chapters, there follow three case studies of Victorian philanthropic movements – the temperance movement, foreign evangelical missions, and woman's suffrage – viewed through the lens of Tonic Sol-fa, and revealing 'aspects of the contemporary view of the power of music, the place of philanthropy in society, and the responsibilities of society to make such music and philanthropy possible' (p. xvi). The first two movements were heartily endorsed by the Tonic Sol-fa founders, the Curwens. The last was not. We thus see both how the Curwens used of Tonic Sol-fa in their favoured causes, and also how their invention could be effective even without their interference or propaganda. McGuire's epilogue provides a fitting end, by looking at the 'decline of Tonic Sol-fa's influence – parallel to the decline in the influence of the volunteer moral reform movements and philanthropic organizations—that occurred after Spencer Curwen's death in 1916' (p. xx).

This meticulously researched, ground-breaking study goes beyond the usual 'top-down' approach to British music 'that looks at elite composers and elite institutions' by studying ephemeral music associated with amateurs that does not necessarily focus on the 'best' music (p. xvii). The broad topic required the use of contemporary journals and various archives, including those of missionary and women's suffrage societies and temperance organizations. By avoiding of a history of Tonic Sol-fa and drawing upon larger social and culture issues, McGuire produces a cultural history of music that shows the lasting impact these three philanthropic movements had on British music and culture into the early twentieth century. With this refreshing approach, McGuire provides a new model for studies on British music and expands our view of the role of music in Victorian Britain. In an effort to keep the narrative structure and key points clear, the prose is slightly repetitive at the beginnings and ends of sections and chapters. This minor detail in no way detracts from the beautifully written book that encompasses an impressively broad view of the Victorian era.

These three books cover the whole of nineteenth-century Britain, offering refreshingly new views of seemingly disparate neglected topics. As a whole, however, they show how the many strands of British music and culture were intimately connected. With Taylor and Eatock, one can follow the development of an increasingly vibrant concert life in London that led to the establishment of the London Philharmonic and from which Mendelssohn benefited. Though initially seeking to grow as a composer and musician, Mendelssohn took an

interest and championed advances in British music culture. Mendelssohn's popularity was partly fuelled by the growing popularity of Tonic Sol-fa, which McGuire skilfully shows to be a powerful and pervasive force in Victorian culture. These books are valuable additions to our ever-expanding view of British music in the nineteenth century and encourage further exploration of British concert life and the role of music outside of the concert hall.

Jennifer Oates
Queens College & The Graduate Center
City University of New York
Jennifer.Oates@qc.cuny.edu
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