

been alive and well until the latter decades of the century. The French connections that musicians in the city had might prove an effective counterpoint to the German-dominated musical culture of the north.

These points only serve to demonstrate how vital Shadle's book is to our understanding of American music history. When a book stimulates its readers to ask more questions and to consider more deeply the matters it addresses, it proves its success. *Orchestrating the Nation* redefines how musicologists tell the story of American music. Shadle's unremitting exploration of major concepts through exhaustive research sets a new standard for cultural analysis, fusing elements that signal a new understanding of not only American music, but music history in general. That he manages to do so in such an engaging manner yields a remarkable example of scholarship that will be seen as exemplary for future work in the field.

Candace Bailey
North Carolina Central University
cbailey@nccu.edu

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John Carnelly, *George Smart and Nineteenth-Century London Concert Life* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015). 329 pp. £60.00

Anyone researching British musical culture in the first half of the nineteenth century is likely to have encountered Sir George Thomas Smart. His life spanned 91 years (1776–1867), during the course of which, as John Edmund Cox described in his *Recollections* of 1872, he 'was so mixed up with all the prominent musical proceedings of the period ... that it is impossible to refer to one without continually mentioning the other'.¹ Among his many achievements, he was a founder member and conductor of the Philharmonic Society, he befriended (and championed the music of) Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn and Spohr, he numbered Jenny Lind among his singing pupils, and he directed the music for two coronations and numerous royal weddings. The principal legacy of this rich life for historians has been his vast collection of programmes, journals, account books and scores, deposited at the British Library.² Yet despite his ubiquity within the music life of his times, his biography was never written. Alec Hyatt King produced a short article detailing 'The Importance of Sir George Smart'.³ Percy Young went a step further and wrote a book about him, albeit disguised as a book about Beethoven.⁴ In general, however, Smart has remained a footnote to other people's stories.

¹ John Edmund Cox, *Musical Recollections of the Last Half-Century* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1872): 90–91.

² Sir George Smart's papers, GB-Lbl Add. MS 41771–9 and 42225; annotated programmes, Lbl C.61.h.2, K.6.d.3.

³ Alec Hyatt King, 'The Importance of Sir George Smart', *The Musical Times* 91 (1950): 461–2.

⁴ Percy M. Young, *Beethoven, A Victorian Tribute: Based on the Papers of Sir George Smart* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1976).

John Carnelly has provided this long-needed monograph, the present book being a development of his thesis of 2008.⁵ Fittingly, while the thesis positioned itself as 'a commentary on the first forty years of London's nineteenth-century musical life ... through the example of the career of [Smart]',⁶ the book proudly declares itself 'a new critical biography of Sir George Thomas Smart' (p. 1). It is an excellent, meticulously researched account of Smart's career as it pertains to London's musical culture. Biographical work covering the entirety of Smart's life is enhanced by a detailed survey of concerts in London from 1800 to 1825 (Chapter 2), a period Carnelly explains is traditionally regarded as moribund, and an 'Interlude' (Chapter 4) based on Smart's European tour of 1825 exploring points of comparison to be found between the various cities described in his journal.

Smart's wide-ranging influence inevitably generates a procession of famous composers with whom he interacted – Haydn, Ries, Beethoven, Weber, Rossini, Spohr, Mendelssohn. Similarly, we find a roll call of institutions, from the Chapel Royal (where he served first as a chorister, later as its Composer and Organist) to Covent Garden. Yet, as Carnelly highlights, while the big names are undoubtedly important, it is the more practical aspects of how it all worked, the connections and interactions and practice of musical life, which makes Smart and his story so interesting. It is, then, arguably the current trend in musical historiography that William Weber has termed 'the mundane side of it all' that allows this biography to be written, albeit with the caveat that Smart's life was never mundane.⁷

A glance at his achievements would seem to render a defence of Smart's significance unnecessary, but is in fact much needed. While his obituaries and early biographical dictionary entries were highly flattering, by the second half of the twentieth century he was being portrayed as a social opportunist, a view epitomized by Cyril Ehrlich's dismissive remark that 'Smart was probably not particularly skilled in any single branch of music' (p. 5). Carnelly politely but pointedly refutes such statements, taking great care throughout the text to right a number of historical wrongs. Particularly notable here is an assessment of Smart's work at the front of the orchestra. Nicholas Temperley dismissed Smart in his entry for *New Grove* (1980) as 'not a "conductor" as the term is now understood' (p. 4), but Carnelly argues convincingly that Smart should be regarded as 'the first British musician to make conducting his career' (see in particular pp. 52–9), presenting evidence that he used a baton as early as 1823, but also, more importantly, highlighting Smart's fulfilment of the three main functions of the conductor, as described in *New Grove*: beating time, making interpretive decisions and participating in the administration of the ensemble (footnote 172, p. 52).

For those familiar with Carnelly's original PhD thesis, the majority of changes in the book are relatively minor: generally a more determined use of language or some reordering and expansion of text. Very little is omitted – a detailed discussion of the Fétis letters (thesis pp. 226–33), the programmes of a couple of benefit concerts not directly related to Smart (thesis pp. 123–6) and the thesis's Appendix 1, which is a detailed record of Smart's concert activity at five-yearly intervals from 1805 to 1825. Arguably, the book gains more than it loses, whether in the development and clarification of points and facts throughout the text, or in

⁵ John Carnelly, *Sir George Smart and the Evolution of British Musical Culture 1800–1840* (PhD dissertation, London, 2008).

⁶ Carnelly, 'Sir George Smart', 7.

⁷ William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004): xxxv.

the expansion of detail regarding Smart's life after 1838, summarized into a single paragraph in the thesis, but constituting an entire chapter in the book.

It does at times feel as though Carnelly is careful to tick off all the 'Issues' – class, canon, nation – necessarily covered in the thesis, but perhaps a little over done in the book. The general background detail is nonetheless still interesting, and where discussion of these themes integrates with Smart's biography, such things as his role in canon formation or the advancement of a nationalist music agenda are undeniably important. Smart held a dual role in the evolution of British culture, promoting new works by leading continental composers (in some cases appropriating them as British through their texts and patriotic values, in the manner of Handel), while also encouraging the developing school of native composition, whether through Philharmonic Society commissions or support for the Royal Academy of Music. As with so much of Smart's life, the broader issues and trends in music of his age may be traced through his activities.

Reading reports of Smart's speeches, or the countless annotations in his programmes, his good humour and generosity shine through. This book captures his character well, particularly in some of the little details that leaven the text and footnotes. For example, Smart once got into a drinking contest with Beethoven (p. 153); he caricatured Rossini at a dinner party in the composer's presence (p. 169),⁸ and his curiosity led him to install a chemistry room in his house, recording in his journal a bill for 'a Furnace and part of the floor covered with iron' (p. 47). The importance of his character to his success cannot be overstated, particularly as it is apparent throughout the book how much of his work, whether administrative or musical, required deft handling of other people.

This trait is particularly evident in his music festival employment. Smart was a particularly prolific conductor of provincial music festivals, including those at Liverpool, Bath, Newcastle, Norwich, Edinburgh and Manchester. His role as conductor here generally encompassed all the administrative details of deciding repertoire and fixing players, in addition to directing rehearsals and conducting concerts, so his working relationships with provincial musicians and his dealings with festival committees have much to reveal about developments in national musical culture. Here it is necessary to note that the focus of this book is very much on London. This is perhaps inevitable, given the scope of Smart's life and the need to draw boundaries somewhere, but does mean that an account of Smart's work in relationship with the rest of Britain remains to be written, and Carnelly notes this himself in his Introduction (p. 13, n. 41).

Small quibbles at the editorial level include a couple of footnotes contain referencing omissions, where page numbers appear as pp. 00–00 or p. 000 (footnote 174 on page 53 and footnote 194 on page 57): these should be cross-references to other sections of the book, pp. 17–20 and pp. 85–7 respectively. Appendix 1 is perhaps a little crowded and Appendix 3 loses some clarity due to page divisions, but given the interest to be found in these archival records it is still better that they are included but crowded than for content to be cut. Apart from this, the text is clear and elegantly produced.

⁸ 'July 21st [1824]. Dinner at Mr Salomon's (in the City) to meet Rossini ... We all had plenty of Wine – this induced me to ask Rossini (who requested me to accompany a Vocal Piece) 'whether I should do so in his style or in my own!' 'Oh! in mine' (replied Rossini) upon which, I thump'd away upon the unfortunate P.F. as *Fortissimo* as possible, to the great amusement of Rossini and the Company' (p. 169; the stray opening quotation mark before 'whether' seems to be an error, which may have originated with Smart).

These are however minor concerns. This book has been written with warmth and enthusiasm underpinned by exhaustive research. Setting out as a record of the everyday working life of an individual professional musician, it is ultimately an important biography of an exceptional man.

Rachel Johnson
 Royal Northern College of Music
 rachel.johnson@student.rncm.ac.uk

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Julian Young, *The Philosophies of Richard Wagner* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014). xix + 149 pp. £52.95

Julian Young's study is – as the title states – a comprehensive introduction to different stages of Richard Wagner's thinking. In contrast to previous literature on Wagner's writings, however, Young's survey is not restricted to Wagner's aesthetic outlook and the various changes it underwent throughout his life. Rather, it explores Wagner's general philosophy, including his critique of the state, of capitalist economy and of culture, as well as his theories concerning the decline of art since ancient Greek tragedy – as Young aptly calls it: Wagner's 'Greek Ideal'. The first three chapters of Young's analysis meticulously summarize the lesser-known aspects of Wagner's youthful socialist agenda and its manifold implications for his concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* ('collective artwork'). Young explores Wagner's reasoning in great detail and shows how political ideas of his revolutionary period directly shaped his artistic outlook, and vice versa. Young does not divide Wagner's thinking into distinct, unrelated categories – aesthetics, politics, culture, etc. – but rather traces the subtle mutual influences among these entangled intellectual territories, thereby making the first three chapters of his book particularly valuable.

However, in suggesting that there is a virtually universal lack of scholarly discussion on Wagner's thinking apart from aesthetic issues or his musical dramas (p. xiv), Young overstates the case, thereby undermining his own call for more serious research on Wagner's cultural, political and social stances. Whereas Anglophone publications devoted primarily to Wagner's philosophy might be rare,¹ German scholarship on Wagner's writings has produced numerous studies on these facets of Wagner's worldview.² Given Young's vast expertise in German

¹ In his short list of thematically relevant books, Young misses studies like David Aberbach, *The Ideas of Richard Wagner: An Examination and Analysis of his Major Aesthetic, Political, Economic, Social, and Religious Thoughts* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), Roger Hollinrake, *Nietzsche, Wagner, and the Philosophy of Pessimism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982) and Hannu Salmi, *Imagined Germany: Richard Wagner's National Utopia* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999).

² I provide merely a select list of fairly recent examples: Udo Bermbach, *'Blühendes Leid'. Politik und Gesellschaft in Wagners Musikdramen* (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler, 2003); Udo Bermbach, *Der Wahn des Gesamtkunstwerks: Richard Wagners politisch-ästhetische Utopie*, second edition (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler, 2004); Hansjörg Jungheinrich, *Richard Wagners*