literature, however, music occurs within the private sphere with someone often *performing* for another character – a beholder. As a result music becomes objectified and loses its sense of temporality and space. What we are presented with is not music, but the emotional resonances of the beholder. In effect, Cuillé's narrative does not tell a story about music, but about beholders of music. The type or genre of music does not matter at all; what matters instead is that there is music, and that the music has an emotional affect upon its beholder.

For Gluck, and indeed everyone who engaged in the eighteenth-century opera-related quarrels, the ultimate aim was for music to become more closely aligned with its text, so as to create a far more powerful and intense dramatic presentation. In these literary examples music is in a sense separated from its (con)text, and ascribed a new meaning by its beholder. Indeed, in all the examples the songs actually require no text at all. These literary musical tableaux use music to heighten the emotions of the beholder (and the reader) and if understood in this sense could be said to foreshadow the writings of Ludwig Tieck, Friedrich Schlegel and E. T. A. Hoffmann who praised music for its mysterious qualities that could most powerfully affect the listener. This is, of course, the story of Hoffmann's *Don Giovanni*.

Cuillé's investigation into literary perceptions of music provides a springboard for new areas of musical study, inviting us to reassess audience perceptions in the eighteenth century and to re-evaluate the way that music is perceived to affect its beholder. *Narrative Interludes* is a stimulating and impressive study covering a vast array of literature that spans almost fifty years. It is a thoroughly interdisciplinary venture that combines literary, philosophical, political and musical modes of thought. As a result Cuillé raises a variety of issues for scholars to consider across a broad disciplinary spectrum, and, in particular, draws attention to important texts yet to receive musicological attention.

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ANDREA FABIANO

HISTOIRE DE L'OPÉRA ITALIEN EN FRANCE (1752–1815): HÉROS ET HÉROÏNES D'UN ROMAN THÉÂTRAL

Paris: CNRS Editions, 2006
pp. 295, ISBN 2 271 06396 5

Italian opera in eighteenth-century France is an important topic, but one about which eighteenth-century musicologists know little. Our ignorance stems from a lack of basic understanding of the repertory, the composers and the institutional history. In addition, we know little about the contexts in which Italian operas were produced and disseminated. Andrea Fabiano's *Histoire de l'opéra italien en France (1752–1815)* provides – for the first time – a solid documentary history for anyone interested in French operatic history.

Fabiano begins his enquiry with a question: why was Goldoni hired at the Comédie-Française in 1762? While this question is aptly posed, the answer Fabiano provides is not as satisfying as the question itself. In keeping with Catherine Kintzler's schematic analysis of the 'poetics' of French opera (17), Fabiano explains Italian opera in France from the perspective of a 'cultural need' (9). This schematic view makes Fabiano's claim unnecessarily dichotomous. Rameau's *Platée* (1745), for example, was 'the first symptom of the need to design a national comic reaction to Italian opera buffa' (41). This claim is problematic not only because it overlooks the burlesque tradition in French theatre, but also because it is uncontestable. How do we know that the French 'needed' anything? Even though the majority of eighteenth-century audiences did in fact 'need' something, what forms did 'needs' take? These questions invite cultural, intellectual and political analyses that explain the ways in which 'Italian opera' formed an 'Other' in French culture (9). Unfortunately, the formation of this cultural 'desire' – if any – remains hypothetical.

One of the strengths of the book is its structure and clarity. In order to construct a history of Italian opera in France, Fabiano adopts a four-stage approach. First, he compiles a comprehensive work-list of Italian operas performed in France; second, he discusses theatrical events, troupes, structure and legislation; third, he considers the reception history of Italian opera in general; and finally he discusses select Italian operas and their reception in Paris. This methodology might strike Anglo-American readers as incomplete, for Fabiano neglects the discussion of music altogether. As a matter of fact, Fabiano almost never talks about musical sources, even though they are readily available in the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra. (There are occasional exceptions, for example when he notes that the score of *Bertholdo in corte* is not extant (34).) This methodological drawback makes the book less substantial than it may initially appear.

The neglect of musical sources explains the absence of musical analyses. There is not a single musical example in the book. Given the emphasis on Goldoni, especially on the ways in which he mediated between French and Italian styles, one is tempted to ask: where do we find traces of mediation in the music? How could a scholar interested in operatic 'poetics' not deal with genres and styles that form the very 'poetics' in question? And what are 'poetics' in any case? At times, however, Fabiano does show traces of analytical thinking. He asserts, for example, that the parody *Le Joueur* (1729) includes bilingual texts (that is, French and Italian) that were sung to the same music (24). His assertion is unsupported, for he does not demonstrate how these two languages fit in the music. Elsewhere, he argues that the most important Italian opera in the 1752 season was Goldoni's *Bertholde in corte*, the first Italian opera with 'dramatic coherence' (33), and not Pergolesi's *La Serva padrona*. But in his discussion, Fabiano ignores the published libretto of a parody of *Bertholde in corte*, *Bertholde à la ville*, even though a quick comparison may help exemplify the ways in which *Bertholde in corte* was a cultural phenomenon. Similarly, in the second performance of *Le Finte gemelle* by Petrosellini and Piccinni in June 1778, 'several scenes are removed' and 'recitatives are shortened. . . without losing the logical sense of the libretto' (84). How are we to evaluate comments like these? Fabiano does not get into the musical details, claiming instead that the opera was a success. This problem recurs elsewhere. In his discussion of *La buona figliola* (94) by Goldoni and Piccinni, Fabiano discusses the performing forces followed by a report of its reception. Nowhere does he talk about the work itself. How can we understand what made an opera 'successful' in eighteenth-century terms? What were the critics of *Mercure de France* referring to when they noticed there was something 'new' in Piccinni's operas? How did Goldoni and Piccinni put this work together? Without a discussion of musical sources, how could Fabiano evaluate or even begin to understand these reviews?

That said, Fabiano's methodology enables him to recreate a world of Italian opera in France that was controlled by administrators, singers and entrepreneurs. The discussion of Papillon de La Ferté (45–49), the triad of Duni, Goldoni, and the Italian singer Maria Anna Piccinelli (53), Marguerite Brunet (162–163) and Dominique-François Gobert (189–190) are fascinating. Fabiano is at his best when he discusses politics and bureaucracy. His argument weakens, however, when he makes sweeping historical claims. For example, his claim of 'parody' as 'French theatrical revolution' (39) underestimates the convention of parody in French theatrical history. The issues Piccinni faced in France in the 1770s confirm the 'prophesy' that Perrin made in the 1660s (84). This kind of sweeping generalization reduces Italian operas to a 'concept' that – according to Fabiano – remained constant throughout the period in question while eliminating agency of the very 'héros' and 'héroïnes' about whom Fabiano sets out to write.

In order to give a pre-history to Italian opera in 1752, Fabiano includes a five-page Chapter 1 that outlines the ways in which Cardinal Mazarin imported Italian operas to France in the 1660s. Since Fabiano discusses Mazarin's work in a stand-alone chapter, readers are tempted to ask a basic question: how many Italian operas were performed in Paris between the 1660s and 1752? Fabiano dismisses them as 'isolated cases' (11). While it may be true that *Serpilla e Baiocco* by Giuseppe Maria Orlandini and *Don Micco e Lesbina* (1729) did not leave much of an impact on French operatic history (23), should there not be some discussion of the Italian performers of the fair theatres in the 1720s through 1740s? In Fabiano's history, the arrival of the Bambini troupe in 1752 made it the 'great season of Italian opera' in France; perhaps this is an exaggeration.

Instead of painting a sweeping historical purview that stretches from the 1660s to 1752, perhaps Fabiano could have focused more on performances of Italian opera in the first half of the eighteenth century, a period that immediately precedes the emergence of Bambini's troupe in 1752.

Chapter 1 presents a much bigger problem that is never acknowledged in the book. What is the 'Italian opera' about which Fabiano writes? Mazarin introduced seventeenth-century *dramma per musica* to French society. Nowhere does Fabiano mention the Italian operatic reforms by Zeno, nor does he define 'Italian opera'. More problematically, he seems to group all of the operas performed in the Italian language in France under the label 'Italian opera', assuming that Francesco Buti and Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo* is somehow related to Giambattista Pergolesi's intermezzo *La Serva padrona* and Angelo Anelli and Ferdinando Paër's opera semiseria *La Griselda* (1803). The problem is that Fabiano does not explain these generic differences. Quite the contrary, he uses Pierre Perrin's denigration of 'Italian opera' in 1661 as a means of ironing out generic differences, thus projecting a vague concept of 'Italian opera'.

The underestimation of the generic differences of Italian opera seems to stem from a neglect of Anglo-American research on Italian and French opera. A brief glance at the bibliography reveals prominent Anglo-American scholars such as Daniel Heartz, Martha Feldman, Margaret Murata, Wendy Heller, Neal Zaslaw, Reinhard Strohm and Mary Hunter to be missing. Even though these scholars have not worked directly on Italian operas performed in France, their work provides in-depth discussion of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italian operas. How can we discuss 150 years of Italian operas (wherever they are performed) without clarifying the multiple genres that form 'Italian opera'? What do we gain from a 'vague' concept of 'Italian opera'? Is it sufficient to talk about Italian opera in Paris solely as an 'Other', an 'explicit poetic opposition' to French opera (9)?

These drawbacks undercut Fabiano ambitious aims and reduce his history of Italian opera in France to that of institutional history. An otherwise excellent book may have benefited from more critical discussion of Italian operatic genres and in-depth analyses of selected operas. That said, the numerous tables in the book, and the forty-six pages of appendices carefully documenting relevant archival sources make it an indispensable reference for scholars working on the operatic scene in eighteenth-century France.

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HANS-JÖRG NIEDEN

DIE FRÜHEN KANTATEN VON JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH: ANALYSE – REZEPTION
Munich and Salzburg: Musikverlag Katzbichler, 2005
pp. 134, ISBN 3 87397 147 X

My first impression of this book, deriving from its title and physical appearance, was a mixture of surprise and curiosity. The surprise came from the title's close resemblance to a famous monograph by Alfred Dürr – *Studien über die frühen Kantaten Johann Sebastian Bachs* – his doctoral dissertation first published in 1951 and revised in 1977, and still considered by many to be the cornerstone of modern Bach scholarship. In contrast, Nieden's book looked rather too thin to compete with Dürr's thesis, which aroused my curiosity. The two key words appended to the title of this book – 'analysis' and 'reception' – are important as they represent areas that Dürr did not explore.

Nieden's book examines only six cantatas currently believed to predate Bach's Weimar period (whereas Dürr's book examines all the Weimar cantatas), and they are discussed in the following order: 'Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich' (BWV150), 'Christ lag in Todes Banden' (BWV4), 'Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir' (BWV131), 'Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit' (BWV106), 'Gott ist mein König' (BWV71) and 'Der Herr denket an