



composers from across the Alps. Sigismondo prioritizes aesthetic concerns above all else, taking interest in music ‘from every century and from each of the most cultivated nations’ (87).

For those who wish better to understand musical life in eighteenth-century Naples and its celebrated conservatories, the *Apotheosis* offers a unique account in vivid detail. Kandler referred to Sigismondo as ‘a mine of knowledge in the whole domain of theoretical and practical music, as well as in musical literature’ (xliv). With this splendid new edition of Sigismondo’s work, we can begin to unearth a trove of important insights into the golden age of the ‘Kingdom of Naples, in which music holds its true empire’ (294).

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ANDREW TALLE

BEYOND BACH: MUSIC AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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In her famous 1987 essay ‘The Blasphemy of Talking Politics During Bach Year’, Susan McClary recalls how she ‘was told outright by prominent Bach scholars that Bach . . . had *nothing* to do with his time or place, that he was “divinely inspired,” that his music works in accordance with perfect, universal order and truth’ (in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception*, ed. Richard Leppert and Susan McClary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 14). Over thirty years later, the direction of Bach scholarship seems to have largely moved away from this lofty image towards situating the composer more in his social, theological, institutional, political, cultural and musical contexts. In *Beyond Bach*, Andrew Talle has made a further important contribution to bringing Bach (in his own words) ‘back down to Earth’ (2).

Talle’s approach to studying ‘the musical lives of ordinary people’ (2) is informed by the disciplines of historical anthropology and *Alltagsgeschichte* (history of everyday life). His book is a multi-faceted social and cultural history of keyboard playing in eighteenth-century Germany, a work whose nuance is hinted at by the beautiful image on the book jacket’s front cover. Talle investigates the role keyboard instruments played in ordinary people’s lives as cultural capital through which they could pursue self-fashioning, courtship, social networking and, last but not least, careers as professional musicians. He presents a series of individual case studies, portraying female amateur musicians and male amateur and professional musicians from a variety of social backgrounds. The wealth of Talle’s material extends far beyond music: one gains, among other things, many valuable if occasionally uncomfortable insights into themes such as the oppression of women, strategies of courtship, and sexual violence (as well as the demonization of homosexuality) in boarding schools and student culture in 1740s Jena.

One of the merits of this book is that most of Talle’s fascinating sources are made available here for the first time in English translation. Most of his sources can be classified as ‘egodocuments’, such as letters, diaries, autobiographies and expenditure lists. His narrative approach mirrors his research objective and the nature of his sources. Talle clearly takes delight in telling stories instead of framing them with theoretical reflections. Accordingly, chapter beginnings occasionally resemble the tone of historical novels. While his approach emphasizes accessibility, Talle does not get carried away by literary fancy, but supports his narratives by archival evidence and ample data.

In chapter 1, ‘Civilizing Instruments’, Talle provides a broad overview of cultural currents from early to mid-eighteenth-century Germany, establishing a useful framework for his case studies. The first section of this chapter is concerned with the meaning of the word ‘galant’ in the context of the affluent German



bourgeoisie, which was eager to emulate courtly values and behaviours. As Talle points out, 'galant' behaviour emphasized control of the body and, more specifically, 'artifice in . . . personal comportment' (14). 'Galant' behaviour therefore had an effect on attitudes towards the production and reception of music, which was still thought to have a 'mysterious power to engage the body' that needed to be resisted (17). Talle makes a convincing case that keyboard instruments were 'galant' instruments par excellence in eighteenth-century Europe because of their mechanical nature: 'Engineering genius brought keyboard players closest to the galant ideal of physical transcendence: simply thinking of music and hearing it resound in the air' (25). In the concluding pages of this chapter, Talle discusses the increasing demand for literature for solo keyboard in Germany, the increased commercialization of keyboard repertoire, which was focused mainly on keyboard *Galanterien* accessible to amateur keyboard players, and, finally, the concerns of professional musicians, for instance the organist Johann Heinrich Buttstedt, who attacked this 'lightweight' musical fare (29–30).

Chapter 2, 'The Mechanic and the Tax Collector', sheds light both on the professional self-image of Barthold Fritz, an eighteenth-century instrument maker from Braunschweig, and on the professional identity and social class of his clients. At the end of the chapter, Talle uses a brief analysis of the iconography of a painting decorating one of Fritz's four surviving clavichords to reflect on the social function of these instruments. Talle argues that the painting – a hunting scene – 'celebrates control' yet also allows 'a thrilling glimpse of violent disorder' (42). These contradictory meanings, he suggests, are also associated with the decorated instrument, which both evokes and controls the mysterious power of music. Brief reflections like these, occurring throughout the book, illustrate the author's ability to subject his texts to nuanced close readings that reveal a depth and plurality of meanings.

In the following four chapters (3–6), Talle investigates how women musicians both conformed to and subverted their societal roles through their performances on keyboard instruments. Chapter 3 depicts moments in the musical life of Christiane Sibylla Bose, the daughter of a wealthy Leipzig silver merchant who owned a house (which still exists today) across from the Thomaskirche. In chapter 4, Talle investigates the role of harpsichord performance as a tool for communication (and subsequent miscommunications) in the complicated amorous relationship between Caroline Henriette Kircheisen, the daughter of the president of the Berlin city council, and the Scottish aristocrat and writer James Boswell. Chapter 5 discusses the musical and social significance of a collection of keyboard music assembled for two aristocratic teenage girls, the Countesses zu Epstein, who resided at the court of Hesse-Darmstadt. As the author convincingly shows, the girls were able to advance their socially disadvantaged status through their musical education. Chapter 6 portrays the musical activities of Luise Gottsched, the wife of German writer and literary theorist Johann Christoph Gottsched. Her rather negative view of J. S. Bach's music sheds important light on how rationalist intellectual circles viewed Bach in eighteenth-century Leipzig.

In chapters 7 and 8, Talle turns his attention to the musical lives of male amateur keyboardists. Chapter 7 deals with the role of music in the education and lives of a theologian, Karl Friedrich Bahrdt, and two lawyers, Johann Stephan Pütter and Johann Heinrich Fischer. Chapter 8 evaluates the fascinating, voluminous autobiography of the theologian Johann Christian Müller, illuminating the role of musical performance and instruments in everyday student life in 1740s Jena and Leipzig, as well as the opportunities (and dangers) of keyboard instruction in the service of flirtation and courtship.

The three remaining chapters of the book are devoted to professional keyboard players. Chapter 9 illuminates the social and symbolic function of church organs in eighteenth-century Germany. Chapter 10 discusses issues related to the organist's profession, such as training, payment, and courtly and civic performance contexts. Chapter 11, 'The Daily Life of an Organist' – the most substantial chapter of the whole book – is devoted to Carl August Hartung (1723–1800), known to music historians primarily as the music-theory and composition teacher of Louis Spohr and as an avid collector of J. S. Bach's works. On the basis of Hartung's own very detailed expenditure book, Talle admirably reconstructs Hartung's daily life as an instructor at the local orphanage in Cöthen, the residential city of the state of Anhalt-Cöthen, where J. S. Bach had served as Kapellmeister (1717–1723). Hartung eventually moved to Braunschweig, where he finally achieved 'his dream of becoming a well-regarded and well-paid musician and teacher' (250). Talle's



close reading of the sources illuminates Hartung's social networks and musical values, in which Bach's music evidently played a central role.

The very brief conclusion (only a little over two pages) recalls the relevant themes of the book, and finally addresses (albeit very briefly) how Bach fits into the whole picture. Talle concludes that '[f]or many people, [Bach] was an extraordinarily gifted composer whose works projected an image they did not wish to embrace. The introverted, intellectual character of Bach's music did, however, impress a small but influential group of followers', who were 'chiefly professional musicians and connoisseurs' (259).

Overall, this book provides a fascinating panorama of cultural and social life in eighteenth-century Germany that is an important resource for music historians and cultural historians alike. It will provide future scholars ample opportunities to select one of its many threads and develop, conceptualize and theorize it further. For instance, it would be fruitful to revisit some of the cases of women musicians Talle writes about within a more explicit framework of early modern gender theory.

Occasionally, the extended source quotations Talle provides, though fascinating by themselves, tend to overshadow and distract from his main line of argument. On a similar note, even though the cultural and social context that Talle provides generally helps to illuminate musical matters, one occasionally wishes he had made a more rigorous selection of material that is more clearly related to music. Furthermore, one could also argue that this book's connection to Bach, as implied by its title and the frequent references to 'Bach's Germany' (11) or 'Bach's world' (8) in the main text, is rather tenuous, since the composer is only very occasionally one of the focal points of the author's arguments (see also the rather short list of Bach-related topics in the Index, 332). If, as Talle points out, 'ordinary people' and their practices of keyboard playing are indeed the focus of the book, one would have wished for these to be acknowledged in the book's title.

However, these are only minor criticisms in view of the work's many merits. Talle discusses a rich, fascinating, hitherto largely inaccessible source material, and presents it in the form of an engaging, readable narrative, making this book not only appealing to specialists, but also to a more general audience interested in eighteenth-century German music and culture.

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ROBIN A. LEAVER AND DANIEL ZAGER, EDS
 ORGAN ACCOMPANIMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL SONG: HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND
 SETTINGS, VOL. 2: EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GERMANY

Historical Organ Techniques and Repertoire 13
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 pp. 165, WL500030

With this edition, the second instalment of a planned five-part series, Robin Leaver and Daniel Zager have assembled, in essence, a twenty-first-century *Choraltbuch* that not only demonstrates the sheer variety of eighteenth-century approaches to organ accompaniment, but also encourages 'contemporary organists to improvise their own harmonizations' (8) as practised by their baroque counterparts. Designed for scholars and practitioners alike, the volume is arranged in three sections: an introductory essay that surveys congregational singing practices from the Reformation to the end of the eighteenth century, a collection of excerpts drawn (primarily) from eighteenth-century German sources that describes facets of the organ's