



This book lacks a bibliography, but each chapter offers richly detailed footnotes, and the several appendices reproduce primary sources (selected ballet scenarios from northern Italy, Paris, Vienna's Kärntnertheater, and Naples's Teatro San Carlo), or extremely useful tabulations (a preliminary list of known 'Grotteschi in Italy, 1750–1800', a Table of Contents and an index of 'Steps, Other Dance Terms, and People' for Magri's *Trattato*). This last is meant to complement Mary Skeaping's English translation of Magri's *Trattato* (London: Dance Books, 1988), which was not indexed. As a result of the cumulative expertise of its authors, this volume is a useful (indeed essential) resource for researchers interested in eighteenth-century dance and mime.

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LEWIS M. HOLMES

KOSEGARTEN'S CULTURAL LEGACY: AESTHETICS, RELIGION, LITERATURE, ART, AND MUSIC

New York: Peter Lang, 2005

pp. x + 218, ISBN 0 8204 7924 1

This broadly interdisciplinary study brings to the attention of English-speaking scholars a writer and thinker whose eclectic interests reflect the cultural richness of German romanticism. As such, it complements Holmes's earlier biographical monograph, *Kosegarten: The Turbulent Life and Times of a Northern German Poet* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004). Ludwig Gotthard Theobul Kosegarten (1758–1818), a prolific author of poems, novels, essays and sermons, also wrote a treatise on aesthetics (*Ueber die wesentliche Schönheit*, 1790) and a doctoral dissertation on theology. He was a keen art collector, to whom Goethe sent some landscapes in 1818 and who, Holmes suggests, 'influenced the works of two of the most important artists of the Romantic era: Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840) and Philipp Otto Runge (1777–1810)' (115). He was also an amateur pianist and flautist, whose poems were set to music by a wide range of contemporaneous composers, documented by Holmes in the 'Music Appendix' (185–192). The breadth of Kosegarten's interests was shared by many of his friends and professional acquaintances, including Goethe, Schiller and the Schlegel brothers; and his ideas and intellectual concerns were characteristic of the age dominated by Kant's critical philosophy.

Holmes's book is subdivided into four parts: 'Aesthetics and Religion', 'Poetry and Fiction', 'Reception by Artists' and 'Reception by Musicians'. The first part comprises two chapters – 'Beauty in Nature' and 'Nature in Religion' – and is especially thorough in its examination of Kosegarten's thought in relation to contemporaneous developments in the history of ideas. In Chapter One, 'Beauty in Nature', Holmes situates within the broader context of eighteenth-century aesthetic thought the central tenet of Kosegarten's *Ueber die wesentliche Schönheit*, namely that 'beauty is godliness in nature' (3). Acknowledging the seminal influence of Plato on his essentially neoclassical concept of beauty, and his indebtedness to the ideas of Hamann and Herder, Holmes presents Kosegarten as 'an innovative pre-Romantic scholar' (12) whose aesthetic bears similarities to that of Wackenroder. In so doing, Holmes identifies some interesting continuities in the development of eighteenth-century thought, in particular regarding the close kinship of art, nature and religion, but fails to acknowledge that the aesthetic category of the sublime had effectively supplanted that of the beautiful in many early romantic writings. In Chapter Two, 'Nature in Religion', Holmes likens the sermons given by Kosegarten on the island of Rügen to the Chautauqua assemblies (first held in New York State in 1874) on the grounds that an egalitarian spirit and didactic purpose is common to both. Less idiosyncratically, Holmes presents Kosegarten as 'a pre-Romantic theological scholar' (24), whose



pantheistic world-view and notion of individual feeling as central to religious experience is closely akin to the conception of religion propounded by the Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834).

'Poetry and Fiction' includes extensive English translation by Holmes of Kosegarten's writings, presented alongside the original German texts, interspersed with historical and biographical contextualization. In Chapter Three, 'The Writer in Context', Kosegarten's literary oeuvre is considered in relation to seminal literary and philosophical movements of the eighteenth century (*Empfindsamkeit*, *Sturm und Drang*, Weimar classicism and German romanticism). Chapter Four focuses on texts set on the island of Rügen – the poem *Ekloge* (1796), the novel *Ida von Plessen* (1800) and the 'rustic poem' *Jucunde: Eine ländliche Dichtung in fünf Eklogen* (1803) – while Chapter Five situates *Der Anbeter auf Arkona*, a poem first published by Schiller in 1796, in the context of Kantian thought. An exploration of Kosegarten's *Legenden* (1804) – religious 'folk sagas' translated into German from pre-fifteenth-century Latin sources – follows. Kosegarten acknowledged Herder as the inspiration for these texts, which were subsequently adapted by Gottfried Keller in the first half of the nineteenth century. Holmes's discussion focuses on Kosegarten's description in the *Legenden* of St Celia's martyrdom as a possible source of inspiration for Heinrich von Kleist's tale *Die Heilige Cäcilie oder Die Gewalt der Musik* [*Eine Legende*], and considers both texts within the broader context of 'a St Cecilia vogue in German art, literature, and music in the years around 1800' (96).

'Reception by Artists' provides biographical details of Kosegarten's own personal art collection, of his enthusiasm for the visual arts, and of his interest in the illustration of his writings. This serves in turn to introduce discussion of his possible influence on Caspar David Friedrich and Philipp Otto Runge. Holmes considers it highly probable that Friedrich and Kosegarten met during one of the former's six visits to Rügen after 1800, and that Friedrich's paintings, *Hünengrab im Schnee* (1807) and *Der Mönch am Meer* (first exhibited in Berlin in 1810), may have been inspired by Kosegarten's writings. *Der Mönch am Meer* was immediately linked with Kosegarten by Heinrich von Kleist in a review of 1810 in the *Berliner Abendblätter*, and by Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim in a review of the painting in which a conversation between a fictitious governess and her charges at the Berlin exhibition includes reference to Kosegarten.

Holmes is not a musicologist, but rather a scholar of German literature and history, and the final part of his book, 'Reception by Musicians', discusses musical settings of Kosegarten's poems by various composers (most famously Schubert, Reichardt and Carl Friedrich Zelter) without in-depth analysis of the music per se. His discussion of Schubert's 1815 musical settings of twenty of Kosegarten's poems – reconstructed from Schubert's autograph manuscripts as a *Liederspiel* by the Norwegian musicologist Morten Solvik, and described by Holmes as 'an early attempt by Schubert to create a narrative arrangement of songs based on the works of a single poet' (169) – is of particular interest here. By way of broader contextualization, Holmes provides a brief history of the German song, discussing Kosegarten's texts as literature in which central themes of German romanticism are explored.

It is all too easy to identify deficiencies in an ambitious interdisciplinary project. One is nonetheless struck in Holmes's study by the predominance of narrative exposition and the relative scantiness of dynamic, critical argumentation. In particular, there is a dearth of *critical* engagement with extant secondary literature relating to Kosegarten, although a good command of source material (much of it in German) is evident. The intrinsic merits of Holmes's book are also occasionally undermined by unsubstantiated statements, such as that 'the most famous of the German writers grew with and out of the Enlightenment' (39), and that '[Klopstock's] pivotal role in the renewal of German literature in the years after 1750 is universally respected' (44). Similarly, the inclusion of trivialities – 'both [Kant and Kosegarten] seem to have had physical weaknesses of the chest' and 'both enjoyed walking alone' (86) – and witticisms, such as the pun on Descartes's famous maxim in Holmes's subtitle 'You Ought, Therefore You Can' (72), lend the text a slightly unscholarly tone. The scantiness and unconventionality of some of the referencing is epitomized by the use of just 'K' and the appropriate page number for references to Holmes's earlier study – a practice frustrating for the reader not in possession of the companion book but curious as to the origin of a particular quotation. There are also occasional irregularities in the book's presentation, such as the variation in font size within the main body of the text on page 25.



All in all Holmes's monograph represents a significant contribution to English-language scholarship on a little known, but fascinating, German romantic thinker. The author's suggestion that he 'provides a tantalizing glimpse of musicological riches waiting to be mined' (183) could be applied equally to the other facets of Kosegarten's 'cultural legacy' introduced here, namely theology, art history, German literature and the history of ideas. Holmes's book presents a wealth of empirical evidence, including biographical links between Kosegarten and prominent early romantic thinkers such as Wilhelm von Humboldt, that will provide a foundation for further interdisciplinary research in this area.

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DANIEL R. MELAMED

HEARING BACH'S PASSIONS

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This very interesting book on Bach's passions may be small in compass but it manages to encompass an impressive breadth of material. Although written with the general reader in mind, it exhibits impeccable scholarship that has much to engage the more committed reader. It is something of a *tour de force* in the way in which it addresses many problematic questions that relate to these works, as well as the economy with which scholarly opinions are discussed, dismissed or endorsed with grace and clarity.

For many in the twenty-first century the passions of Bach are heard with preconceptions based on the mode of presentation: in a concert hall, with a separate array of soloists who only sing the respective recitatives and arias, with a relatively large chorus and orchestra – which in the case of the St Matthew Passion are each divided into two sections – and vocal and instrumental resources 'staged' in front of the 'audience'. This, as Melamed stresses, is far removed from Bach's performances in eighteenth-century Leipzig, where physically and spiritually these works were experienced and received quite differently – in church, in a liturgical rather than concert setting, with relatively limited vocal and instrumental resources that were placed in a gallery (or galleries) unseen by most of the attending congregation, and which featured soloists for recitatives and arias who together formed the chorus.

The book has three clearly defined sections. The first addresses Bach's performing forces and their significance. Here Melamed demonstrates that the one-to-a-vocal-part performance practice advocated by Joshua Rifkin and others is not a contemporary passing fad or fashion but a carefully researched understanding of the usual eighteenth-century (and earlier) practice; this practice in turn enables us to understand clearly many of Bach's compositional choices with regard to his settings of the passion. Thus modern performances are 'monumental' on account of their use of substantial choral and instrumental resources, whereas Bach's music is different in character when heard with the more limited number of singers and players that he customarily used – more like chamber than symphonic music. Melamed also takes issue with the modern practice of using dedicated soloists like characters in an opera – the Evangelist, Jesus, Peter, Pilate, and so forth – which is not what Bach indicates in his scores and parts. They were to be sung by the various voices in the small group of singers who are given more than one 'character' to sing; so the same bass voice that has sung the part of Jesus is directed to sing an aria after Jesus has died! Bach is retelling the biblical story in musical form, and while it has its dramatic moments, it is very different from an opera.

The second section deals with Bach's performances of his two passions, St Matthew and St John, and the anonymous St Mark Passion (often attributed to Keiser). Here Melamed reprises for a general audience his article on the 'double chorus' of the Matthew Passion that appeared in the *Journal of the American*