



of the many senior Bach scholars came together in a way such that all in attendance gained a clearer sense not only of how Bach might fit into this modern, global era, but how he should fit in. One thing is certain: the magnitude of Bach's craft and the force of his creative persona will always inspire. As we explore new interpretations and meanings in his music, however, we must remember to temper our collective imaginative spirit with responsible historical scholarship to ensure that our conclusions are trustworthy.

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SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL KEYBOARD SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA, 26–29 APRIL

Ever since the merger of the Southeastern and Midwestern Historical Keyboard Societies in 2012, the annual meetings of the Historical Keyboard Society of North America (HKSNA) have provided a focal point for North American performers, historians, musicologists, instrument builders and collectors to come together and share their discoveries, expertise and common passion for historical keyboard instruments.

Attendees came from all corners of the US – and, in a handful of cases, from abroad – to Greenville, a quaint city situated in western South Carolina. The first three days of the conference, though, were held at 'Zen', a sleek, modern event space located right in downtown, while the final day's events were held at St James Episcopal Church (with its excellent 2007 organ by Halbert Gober) and at nearby Furman University. The conference programme itself was substantial: over the course of three full days (following the introductory events of the first registration day), no fewer than three dozen papers, 'mini-recitals' and lecture-recitals were presented. The fact that only one of the twelve sessions was a parallel session – all others being plenary – obviated the need to pick and choose between presentations of interest, darting awkwardly from room to room, as so often is the case at these events.

One of the great highlights of the conference was the presence of twenty keyboard instruments (including ten harpsichords, a clavichord, and a variety of square and grand pianos), which were set up throughout the spacious, gallery-like rooms of Zen and available for attendees to make free use of. Thirteen of these were original eighteenth- and nineteenth-century instruments, most of which were brought in from the Carolina Clavier Collection of HKSNA member Thomas Strange. Not only did these magnificent historic (antique) and historical (new) instruments enrich the live musical examples and performances at the heart of each presentation, but they became points for congregation during breaks, inspiring all kinds of organological discussions, musical experimentation and impromptu performances. As befits a conference such as this, there was always plenty of music in the air.

One especially fortunate – and most unexpected – outcome of the conference was the positive attribution of an otherwise unsigned instrument. For over three years, John Watson, the recently retired conservator and associate curator of instruments at Colonial Williamsburg (Virginia), had searched in vain for the maker of a 1790s upright grand piano that was later 'organized' – that is, a pipe organ was added to the original instrument – by the London firm Longman, Clementi & Co. Although the unattributed piano portion of the instrument included a number of unique design and construction features that, taken together, amount to an identifying signature of its maker, no strong candidates had come to light. The breakthrough came on the second day of the conference when Watson examined a 1790s grand piano that had just arrived from its former home in Florida, and which Strange was in the process of acquiring for his collection. The piano's



nameboard was inscribed Longman & Broderip, a firm that was re-formed in 1798 as Longman, Clementi & Co. – the ‘organizers’ of the Williamsburg instrument. Not only did the former piano bear the same tell-tale construction hallmarks as the latter, but, to the delight of all present, its bottom key was clearly signed by the individual maker himself: Mr Thomas Loud, a builder associated with Longman & Broderip. Loud later emigrated to America, where he founded one of the more significant early piano manufacturing firms in Philadelphia; and in an ironic twist of fate, Loud already had been the subject of an extensive research project by Strange. Thus, in a testament to the value of gatherings such as these, the mystery of the Williamsburg organized piano was solved, and the transatlantic character of the Carolina Clavier Collection was enriched.

This serendipitous discovery aligned perfectly with the theme of the 2017 meeting, ‘From the Old World to the New’ – a theme that also was reflected in several of the conference’s presentations and performances. In the realm of organology and instrument culture, we heard from John Watson about his work restoring the London-made harpsichord that George Washington ordered for his Mount Vernon estate in 1793; Patrick Hawkins (Columbia, South Carolina) shared his research on the trade of English-made pianos in Charleston, South Carolina, during the late eighteenth century; Thomas Strange gave an overview of the first fifty years of piano making in America; and Karen Hite Jacob (Belmont Abbey College) related the interesting story of a mid-nineteenth-century piano that, together with a collection of 1850s sheet music, remained in a North Carolina family through the generations. The music of English-born keyboard composers who emigrated to America was highlighted in a paper by Linda Pointer (St Petersburg College) on James Hewitt, a one-time leader of the court orchestra of George III who was active in New York and later Boston during the early nineteenth century; and by Matthew Bengtson (University of Michigan), who performed the ‘Philadelphia’ Sonata (1786) by Alexander Reinagle. Organ music in the New World was explored in Alexander Meszler’s (Arizona State University) lecture-recital based on a Quebec organ manuscript that includes numerous pieces by the great Parisian keyboard player and composer Nicolas Lebègue; and by Frances Fitch (Gloucester, Massachusetts), who gave a mini-recital of organ music associated with Spain’s American colonies.

Some of the other mini-recitals featured on the conference programme included Rebecca Pechefsky’s (New York) sparkling performance of sonatas by Antonio Soler, and an exquisite rendering by Randall Love (Duke University) of Schubert’s Sonata in A major D664. Robin Morace (University of North Carolina at Greensboro) treated those in attendance to a selection of pieces by Chopin, performed on an 1845 Broadwood & Sons grand piano – an instrument that is known to have been played upon by Chopin himself. Stephanie Schmidt (University of North Carolina at Greensboro), meanwhile, used an 1834 Nunns & Clark ‘unichord’ square piano for her enchanting performance of European pieces found in private music collections from the antebellum South.

Of the various presentations less directly related to the Old World/New World theme, many concerned themselves with theoretical issues. One paper bridged this gap: Marcos Krieger (Susquehanna University) discussed the transfer of basso-continuo practices and pedagogy from Portugal to colonial Brazil. Several other papers dealt with modern-day applications of historical, theoretical and didactic models, collectively giving a sense that this is an area of growing interest in historical keyboard and performance-practice circles. Along these lines, Francis Yun (Ann Arbor) explored how Handel’s fugue exercises, created for Princess Anne in the 1720s, can provide tremendous insight into his fugal works, such as the Six Voluntaries HWV605–610, and vice versa. Yun dissected several of these fugues at the keyboard, thereby revealing the process by which Handel designed his fugal subjects in real time. Monique Arar (University of Nevada Las Vegas) presented a systematic approach to using Francesco Durante’s partimento *regole* in the context of teaching modern-day music students; and in a similar vein, Gilad Rabinovitch (Georgia State University) demonstrated his method for using galant schemata (such as those formulated by Robert Gjerdingen) as the basis for an almost Schenkerian kind of reductive musical analysis. Although such reductive approaches are hardly groundbreaking in and of themselves, it was edifying to see (and hear) them applied in practical terms. Further in the vein of the theory-practice dichotomy, my own paper (John McKean, Boston) sought to connect the gradual obsolescence of paired fingering and concomitant ascendancy of thumb-under technique in the early eighteenth century to the practice of continuo playing.



A poignant moment in the conference proceedings came on the third day, when a memorial session was held for four recently deceased individuals who had had strong ties to HKSNA: Peter Williams (acclaimed musicologist and member of HKSNA's international advisory panel), Karyl Louwenaar-Lueck (HKSNA member and past president of the Southeastern Historical Keyboard Society), Sihyun Chen (2016 finalist in the HKSNA Jurow International Harpsichord Competition) and Helen Skuggedal Reed (HKSNA Treasurer at the time of her death). Following remarks offered for each by friends and colleagues, Max Yount (Beloit College), Vivian Montgomery (Longy School of Music) and Matthew Bengtson took turns on the harpsichord bench in a moving collaborative tribute performance of J. S. Bach's *Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother*, BWV992.

Each of the conference's action-packed days was capped off with an evening concert. The opening night concert was in two parts: the first, billed as a 'celebration of Muzio Clementi's work', featured HKSNA members and period musicians from the Greenville area, while the second part consisted of eighteenth-century songs and flute sonatas by Arne, J. C. Bach, Handel and Francis Hopkinson (1737–1791) – one of the signatories to the Declaration of Independence – all performed by the members of Savannah Baroque. The second and third nights showcased respectively the Lomazov–Rackers Piano Duo, performing four-hand music by Mozart and Schubert, and the ensemble 'Muses' Delight', which performed a programme of eighteenth-century English songs. The conference concluded with an inspired recital of works by Hässler, Clementi, Voříšek, Field, Moscheles and Dussek, given by fortepianist Andrew Willis (University of North Carolina at Greensboro) on a 1791 Broadwood grand and a c1825 Schanz grand, both from the Carolina Clavier Collection.

Taken all together, the HKSNA annual meeting once again offered an enriching diversity of perspectives from within the discipline. Between the more musicologically inclined research papers, various organological investigations of design, construction and provenance, explorations of historical theory and performance practice, and, of course, performance itself, there can be little doubt that the conference successfully foregrounded the multifaceted nature of historical keyboard instruments themselves, rather than confining their study and enjoyment to any one methodology or discipline. Let us look forward to more of the same at next year's event, which will be held on 10–12 May in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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MUSICKING: IMPROVISATION, ORNAMENTATION AND VARIATION

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, 23–27 MAY 2017

The University of Oregon's second annual 'Musicking' conference encompassed twenty-one events divided between academic paper sessions, formal concerts and workshop/lecture-demonstrations. The conference aimed to bring together research, education and performance of historical music in the broadest sense by considering topics such as "Beyond the Notes": Challenging Current Ideas of Performance, Improvisation, and Composition"; "With Voice & Pen": Improvisation vs. Notation"; 'Rhetorica: Improvisation, Ornamentation and Variation'; 'Variation: From Machaut to Messiaen'; and 'Improvisation and Authorship'. There was also a roundtable discussion entitled 'Follow the Money: Early Music, Improvisation, and Cultural Heritage'.