



perhaps, is no small contribution from a single book. Its postmodern nature arises not least from the fact that it takes on a similar character to the subject at hand: as a piece of literature, *Unfinished Music* is outwardly complete, yet internally, with its circular argumentation and ambiguous language, it is closer to being a romantic fragment itself.

LOTHAR SCHMIDT, TRANSLATED BY BIRGIT IRGANG



Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2011
doi:10.1017/S1478570610000515

KATHRYN LOWERRE

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS ON THE LONDON STAGE, 1695–1705

Farnham: Ashgate, 2009

pp. xvi + 412, ISBN 978 0 7546 6614 1

Although music, and therefore musicians, had always been part of London theatre and had become increasingly important in the last decade of the seventeenth century with the development of ‘semi-opera’, or ‘English opera’, direct evidence of that trend is in short supply until roughly 1695. In that year the Lord Chamberlain allowed a break-away cooperative of actors to open a licensed alternative to the Patent Company, so that London again had two theatres, but the thirteen-year United Company hiatus had reduced the number of experienced playwrights still active. While good new plays were hard to find, new songs were easier to commission. Kathryn Lowerre shows that music was an important – even crucial – part of the competitive strategy of both companies, and publishers gradually became alert to the possibilities of reproducing (at least in simplified form) some of the repertory applauded by audiences. As with any ephemeral publication, song sheets were issued irregularly and preserved even more sporadically, but between 1702 and 1711 John Walsh published many works from the theatres in *The Monthly Mask of Vocal Music*, now helpfully collected in a facsimile edition by Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). Music manuscripts survive only haphazardly, and more often as collection copies than as working parts and scores. The first theatre advertisement in London’s first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, dates from 1 June 1702, and both companies used the new medium rather tentatively during the period covered in this book. Most notices are for benefits, not quotidian performances, so the full repertory remains unknowable: a whole season, with apparatus, may take no more than ten pages in the *London Stage* performance calendar, despite the fact that both companies were giving upwards of two hundred performances per annum. Nevertheless, the evidence makes clear that music was a valuable commodity, distributed more and more widely.

Lowerre has collated the information from all the music sources with the texts of ‘dramatic operas’ and plays of all kinds. Thus she is able to explain part of the appeal of many performances, regardless of the literary merits of the plays. Her close readings build on and extend my study *Thomas Betterton and the Management of Lincoln’s Inn Fields, 1695–1708* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979) – which acknowledged music but did not dwell on it – as well as Curtis Price’s *Music in the Restoration Theatre* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1979) and his *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), both of which end before the introduction of Italian/Italianate opera (and the second of which focuses on a single composer).

After a brief scene-setting prologue that explains the initial competitive circumstances of the two entirely unsubsidized theatre companies, Lowerre divides her book into two parts. ‘The Place and Function of Music in Dramatic Productions’ is organized by genre; it traces general patterns, illustrating them with close readings of a selection of comedies, tragedies and ‘dramatic operas’. ‘Music and Musicians in Theatrical



Competition' works through the ten-year period chronologically, tracing 'Initiation', 'Competition', 'Power Shift' and 'Realignment'. If time was inevitably on the side of the Patent Company, young and innovative, the rebels at Lincoln's Inn Fields did not retire without a fight. A brief epilogue is followed by a glossary of musical terms and concepts and a table of the active composers of the period. The book is generously illustrated with music examples.

Lowerre does not apologize for the deficiencies of the entirely commercial work (verbal and musical) that she studies. Indeed, she often writes about some of the excesses of the period with humour. She seeks patterns, though few surprises turn up: comedies used more music than tragedies; playwrights varied in how skilfully they integrated music; and what started out as quite specifically tailored music was recycled and generalized. I wish there had been more speculation as to why this last development happened, even if hard evidence is lacking. Recycled music was cheaper, just as old plays were cheaper. It cannot be coincidence that John Eccles left the theatre to be Master of the King's Music and that Jeremiah Clarke and William Croft turned to sacred music and shared an appointment as organist for the Chapel Royal (270, 335). Commercial pressures show up everywhere, if we pay attention.

This observation leads me to raise an issue that everyone concerned with the theatre of this period needs to consider more carefully. What constitutes a 'revival'? When the term appears in the first two parts of *The London Stage*, it almost always originates from scholars, not from their primary sources. I know of no contemporaneous theatrical definition, so we must consider the circumstances under which it appears and relate it to the work necessary to stage an evening's performance. Otherwise, like Lowerre, we are all apt to misuse the term. Any piece that had been out of the repertory for a substantial but variable number of years would require more work than a recent one to bring it back to the stage, especially if most of the original cast were still available to perform in the newer play. Hence the contrast between notices that say 'Not acted these fifteen years' versus unadorned ads for recent productions – and by recent, I mean those that were one, two or perhaps even as many as five years old. We can seldom document this contrast before newspaper advertisements became regular, but performers' workloads and the quality of their performances are at issue.

To judge by the full records for later years, a successful new play usually accounted for no more than a dozen performances during a season, and well over half the new works failed to draw that many nights. That means a great many of the two hundred each season had to be filled with what the rebel company's prompter, John Downes, called 'stock' or 'living' plays – plays the actors could mount with very little notice and few rehearsals (*Roscius Anglicanus* (1708; reprinted London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), 8, 45). These were not revivals; they counted as part of the *active* repertory, and the number of plays involved ran easily to seventy or more, for all of which the actors were constantly responsible. For a benefit, an actor might choose a play not performed in ten, fifteen or thirty years, if colleagues could be persuaded to 'revive' it. They tended to be cooperative, in case they wanted to ask the same favour that season or the next, but it did mean more work – and some of the benefit performances were probably fairly sketchy. Definitive evidence is lacking, but my impression is that audiences allowed, and even encouraged, singers to repeat entr'acte songs much more often than they let theatres repeat plays. We all make mistakes, but to speak, as Robert D. Hume once did, of a revival of *The Way of the World* within five years of the original production is just not right. The instances of recycled music that Lowerre points out are merely the tip of an iceberg: changing the music in most plays was easier than changing the play.

Ashgate has not helped users of this book by restricting apparatus to a stingy nineteen pages. The bibliography is only 'selected', and there is no subject index at all, just unanalysed lists of persons and productions. These imposed defects will seriously limit utility. For example, although Lowerre is careful to mention the instances in which word-books survive for masques, interludes and operas – an important facet of audience participation – readers are deprived of an easy means of finding these items. Lowerre has cited a great deal of useful scholarship in the notes; but since scholars are not among the persons indexed, there is no easy way to find all the work by a given author. If the reader does not happen to know or remember the name of the German visitor Johann Sigismund Kusser, how is he or she to find the job-hunting advice Jakob



Greber gave him on playing the two theatre managers off against one another? The only easy way would be to flip through the book until one locates the numbered list (336). A better copy-editor could also have prevented some unnecessary inconsistencies and errors: citations waver between 'Eubanks Winkler' and 'Winkler'; McGeary's name does not appear with the first citation of his 1998 *Philological Quarterly* article, but three notes later (360); Lowerre's own dissertation is not identified until page 304 and does not appear in the bibliography, though there are constant references to it for fuller discussion.

Lowerre provides not only a musical/theatrical context for the 'genius' of Henry Purcell but a discussion of how the theatres moved beyond his death in 1695 and how the music establishment prepared the way for, or alternatively resisted, the introduction of fully-fledged Italian opera. If she has stuck resolutely to a 'who, what, where and when' format, rather than applying cultural studies to her subject, she has nevertheless pinpointed the utility of music to London theatre in this crucial ten-year period.

JUDITH MILHOUS



EDITIONS

Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2011
doi:10.1017/S1478570610000527

TOMASO GIOVANNI ALBINONI (1671–1751), ED. MICHAEL TALBOT

THE CANTATAS FOR SOPRANO AND BASSO CONTINUO IN THE STAATSBIBLIOTHEK ZU BERLIN

Launton: Edition HH, 2010

pp. xv + 164, ISBN 978 1 905779 41 3

Few today would contest Tomaso Albinoni's importance to the history of Western art music, given his role as an early innovator and (in the words of Quantz) 'improver' of the fledgling concerto genre. Without Michael Talbot's continued and far-reaching research on the composer, however, the chances are that Albinoni would be familiar to us only through the famous 'Adagio', which he didn't even write (it is of course the work of the musicologist Remo Giazotto, who supposedly based it upon a surviving fragment of a sonata by the composer). Beginning with his doctoral work on the composer's instrumental music ('The Instrumental Music of Tomaso Albinoni (1671–1741)' (PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1968)), Talbot has devoted his career to researching Albinoni and his contemporaries, resulting in countless articles, as well as the standard reference book *Tomaso Albinoni: The Venetian Composer and His World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990). The edition reviewed here provides the opportunity for both scholar and performer to become better acquainted with more of the composer's music.

Like virtually every other composer of the period, Albinoni wrote not only operas and instrumental music, but also cantatas, with the total count of reliable attributions currently standing at forty-six. Whilst this may seem unremarkable when compared with the hundreds written by figures such as Alessandro Scarlatti or Benedetto Marcello, the number nonetheless suggests a clear interest in the cantata at a time when Albinoni also had links to several Italian courts, given that he appears to have composed in this genre for only a period of ten to fifteen years (commencing in the mid-1690s). Indeed, in 1702 Albinoni's set of twelve cantatas Op. 4 (six for soprano and six for alto) was published with a dedication to Francesco Maria de' Medici. The present edition is based not on a printed source, but a manuscript housed in Berlin's Staatsbibliothek (Mus. ms. 447). This collection, comprising eighteen soprano cantatas, is of importance not only as the largest single source of Albinoni's cantatas, but also because this is the only extant source of nine works in the collection. Alongside Talbot's 1979 edition of Op. 4 in the series *Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era* (Madison: A-R Editions), the publication of the present collection means that half of