



for its early use of the chalumeau in the context of Zelenka's output; while the instrument was used in two works by Zelenka in the 1720s, it was used more frequently and in some of his most important works in the 1730s. Keeping this in mind, Ósakarsson examined the composer's own history with the chalumeau, including when and where he first encountered the instrument, the works in which he used it and how it was treated. This thought-provoking investigation also revealed new information about the Dresden oboe and chalumeau player Johann Wilhelm Hugo and the possible improvements he made to the chalumeau, inviting further research into this instrument and Zelenka's relationship with it.

The final two papers of the day examined myths about Zelenka's life and works. The first of these, from Jiří K. Kroupa (Association for Central European Studies), sought to determine whether Zelenka had a library and, if so, what its origins, contents and fate were. Following Kroupa, we heard from Frederic Kiernan (University of Melbourne), who examined representations of Zelenka in a variety of literary sources, including those in two biographical studies by Friedrich Rochlitz (*Für Freunde der Tonkunst* (Leipzig: Carl Cnobloch, 1824–1832)) and Moritz Fürstenau (*Zur Geschichte der Musik und des Theaters am Hofe zu Dresden*, volume 2 (Dresden: Rudolf Kuntze, 1862)), in order to trace the emergence of the long-held assumption that the composer was 'lonely and isolated'. Kiernan pinpointed the origin of this assumption in Rochlitz and Fürstenau, arguing for the importance of being critical of these texts as they themselves sometimes relied on questionable sources or interpreted reliable sources in questionable ways. Both Kroupa and Kiernan highlighted the need for musicological scholarship constantly to re-examine and re-evaluate existing knowledge, particularly those popular assumptions that have long been unchallenged.

The papers in the 2018 conference presented widely varied yet complementary investigations of Zelenka's life and works. This was highlighted towards the end of the day by Stockigt, who attributed this variety to the wealth of new information on Zelenka that has been uncovered since the publication of her book in 2000. Stockigt also drew our attention to the new internationalism of Zelenka scholarship. Over the past four years these conferences have drawn reports on Zelenka research from Australia, Iceland, Germany, Russia, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States. It was a privilege to attend this gathering of scholars from around the world presenting their innovative and exciting work; it is to be hoped that we will see many new developments in Zelenka research at the 2019 Zelenka Festival.

HANNAH SPRACKLAN-HOLL

hannah.spracklan@unimelb.edu.au



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FRANÇOIS COUPERIN: A 350TH ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM
ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE, 9–10 NOVEMBER 2018

The three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of François Couperin 'le Grand' (1668–1733) was commemorated by an international symposium convened by Shirley Thompson and Graham Sadler at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Packing as much into a day and a half as some longer fully fledged conferences, the event was also part of the celebrations of the recently rebranded conservatoire's impressive new building, hosted by the institution's Forum for Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Music, and supported by its French Music Research Hub and the Music & Letters Trust.

The birthday bash was inaugurated on the evening of Friday 9 November by Denis Herlin, director of research in musicology at the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique in Paris and current International Chair in Musicology at the Royal Northern College of Music. His new critical editions of



Couperin's *pièces de clavecin* (Bärenreiter) have unearthed a wealth of inconsistencies, variants and corrections in the composer's own publications from the first editions (1713 and 1717) and their subsequent reprints; Herlin described his studies of surviving exemplars of Couperin's Book 1 (seventy-two copies) and Book 2 (fifty-two copies) as 'a bibliographical imbroglio', and offered a substantial advance in our understanding of the sources of Couperin's keyboard music on Kenneth Gilbert's pioneering 1972 study (see the review of Herlin's editions in this issue). The evening concluded with a sagacious recital by polymath Davitt Moroney (University of California Berkeley), who has recently completed the ambitious project of recording a complete series of Couperin's harpsichord works (twelve discs for the American label Plectra). For this commemorative concert, Moroney handpicked a selection from Couperin's four books of *pièces de clavecin* (1713–1730), interspersed with preludes from *L'Art de toucher le clavecin* (1716), which concluded appropriately with a movement from *La Muse Victorieuse* (Book 4).

The next day was Couperin's birthday. The celebrations comprised five sessions of new scholarship, commencing with two papers devoted to attributions. Graham Sadler (Royal Birmingham Conservatoire) discussed the contradictory attributions of the bawdy three-part canon *L'Épouse entre deux draps*. It survives in six eighteenth-century sources, only one of which has an attribution (to 'M.^r Couprin'). Despite the attribution to Couperin in the one source, Sylvie Boissou has recently suggested that the canon is by Rameau, because one of the anonymous sources is among papers said to have been in his possession at the time of his death. Sadler weighed up the evidence and compared the content of all six sources (some of which feature a less salacious text but also less musical interest); during the paper it was also sung capably by three students. Sadler's assessment was that the canon is probably by Couperin after all. Julien Dubruque (Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles) gave an entertaining lecture-recital demonstrating why he believes that the cantata *Ariane consolée par Bacchus*, rediscovered in an anonymous manuscript by Christophe Rousset, is an authentic composition by Couperin. It is known from Titon du Tillet's *Le Parnasse françois* (Paris: Jean-Baptiste Coignard fils, 1732) that Couperin was the author of a cantata about Ariadne being abandoned by Theseus on Naxos. Rousset has recorded the cantata (Aparté AP130, 2016) and collaborated with Dubruque on an edition published by the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, and Dubruque demonstrated at the harpsichord how idiosyncratic basso-continuo figuring – in particular, an unprepared and unresolved 7-5-2 chord – strengthens the case for Couperin's authorship. A complete performance of the cantata was given by students.

Two papers dealt with topics of 'Influence and Inspiration'. Shirley Thompson acknowledged that although there is no documentary evidence that Charpentier and Couperin ever met, they spent most of their working lives within the same few square miles in Paris. She argued convincingly that there must have been some meaningful connections between the two French masters who were both infatuated with Italian music, perhaps amounting to a 'mentor–student relationship'. One possible connection involves the two composers' use of *croches blanches*, the style of white-note notation imported from Italy to France by Charpentier (no doubt under the influence of Carissimi) and seldom used by other French musicians, but used occasionally by Couperin in his sacred pieces. Another trait their church music has in common is the use of rubrics specifying periods of silence between sections. In addition, both composers idiosyncratically used numerals above nine in continuo figuring. Perhaps further investigation and comparison will yield more connections. Looking at other influences on Couperin, Jane Clark gave a lecture-recital on possible references in his *pièces de clavecin* to scenes in plays performed in Paris by Evaristo Gherardi's Théâtre Italien. Clark speculated that a broad range of examples from harpsichord pieces illuminate the new and diversified character of a 'down-to-earth and often subversive world'.

There were two papers on 'Couperin and His Cultural Milieu'. Marie Demeilliez (Université Grenoble Alpes) examined contrasting influences on Couperin's *L'Art de toucher le clavecin*, and compared passages related to seating, position and fingering to seventeenth-century books of conduct that discuss the rules of civility and personal control. Comparisons were also made with other musical methods published in France during the previous few decades. The thorny issues of iconography of the entire Couperin family, placed in the context of portraits of Parisian composers between 1669 and 1750 (Lully, Marais, Campra,



Lalande and Rameau and many more), were evaluated thoroughly by Florence Gétreau (Centre National de Recherche Scientifique; Institut de Recherche en Musicologie, Paris). In a nutshell, doubt was cast over the attractive anonymous portrait at Versailles (perhaps the sitter is not François Couperin), and new light was shed on extant exemplars of an engraving by Jean-Charles Flippart (1735) after a lost portrait of the composer by André Boys.

Davitt Moroney gave a fascinating fifty-minute lecture-recital entitled 'La Couperinéité de Couperin, or What makes Couperin Couperin?'. He proposed a dozen features that 'catch my attention when I listen and that I find it fruitful to draw attention to while playing'. It was a masterful integration of artistic ideas, observations on compositional style and important issues of performance practice, demonstrated by playing of elegant fluidity.

There were three papers on 'Performance and Posterity'. Chloé Dos Reis (Sorbonne Université) discussed the notation of ornaments in Couperin's published harpsichord pieces, referring to them as 'testimony to a transition between two schools'. She questioned whether or not there was an evolution of aesthetics informing practices of embellishment by French keyboardist players between Chambonnières (whose first book of harpsichord pieces was published in 1670) and Couperin's *Premier livre de pièces de clavecin* of 1713. Dos Reis suggested that Couperin inherited ideas about ornaments from his predecessors (Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, Louis Marchand, Louis-Nicolas Clérambault and others) but also created a personal style. A lecture-recital by harpsichordists Emer Buckley (Dublin) and Jochewed Schwarz (Tel Aviv) presented practical and artistic issues that arise when playing Couperin's chamber sonatas from *Les Nations* (1726) on two harpsichords. Supported by copious performed examples, they proposed that playing chamber music for multiple instruments on two keyboards might have been a practice that Couperin encouraged in domestic and teaching situations. Buckley and Schwarz described how their preparations for recording assorted pieces for two albums (Toccatà Classics) required them to find more flexible and creative solutions than merely playing four parts with four hands. To conclude, Susan Daniels (a PhD student at King's College London) delivered an excellent paper on the Australian émigrée Louise Dyer (later Louise Hanson-Dyer), whose immersion in the cultural boom of Paris in the early 1930s inspired her to launch the publishing company Éditions de L'Oiseau-Lyre that played such a vital part in reviving interest in long-neglected French 'early music'. Dyer sponsored the pioneering *Œuvres complètes de François Couperin*, and even made some personal interventions with the scholars who undertook the musicological work. It was a fitting climax to a symposium that reconfirmed Couperin's stature as a monumental French baroque composer whose music continues to fascinate and inspire scholars, musicians and audiences.

DAVID VICKERS

david.vickers@rncm.ac.uk



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OPERA AS INSTITUTION: NETWORKS AND PROFESSIONS (1700–1914)

UNIVERSITÄT GRAZ, 23–24 NOVEMBER 2018

'Opera as Institution' was an international conference organized jointly by the Universities of Graz and Salzburg, held in Graz. The conference venue – the restored baroque palace of Meerscheinschlössl at Mozartgasse 3 – was an absolutely delightful if acoustically challenged venue. Built, rebuilt and rebuilt again, with the gardens subdivided in 1843 and with a sanatorium on the premises for the mentally ill and morphine addicts, it finally became an educational institution in 1914, only narrowly to escape demolition in the 1960s.