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soundboards are rarely gilded and cannot be used to identify particular makers (p. 41).

Such little oversights mar the text in spots but do not destroy the book's usefulness. Hollis treats stringed keyboards in refreshingly broad perspective without sacrificing essential detail; her pictorial record is pleasant and rewarding to peruse.

LAURENCE LIBIN

Brigitte Geiser. *Studien zur Frühgeschichte der Violine*. Publikationen der Schweizerischen Musikforschenden Gesellschaft, series 2, vol. 25. Bern: Paul Haupt, 1974. 153 pp. plus 216 black-and-white illustrations. FS48.

Brigitte Geiser's *Studies on the Early History of the Violin* is a needed and conscientious summary, mainly along traditional lines, of the work others have done up until recently on a difficult topic of interest and importance to a broad readership. Four types of sources, each forming a separate study within the volume, are employed: writings on the subject from 1805 forward; organological studies of surviving instruments made by both the author and, more preponderantly, other writers; material found in music theoretical writings and tutors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and iconographical data, also mostly familiar from other publications. In addition to discussing the wide variety of body-forms found in early bowed strings, all of which Geiser seems to feel are germane to the history of the violin—except for those of the viols which she, surprisingly, virtually ignores—the author pays more than usual attention to shapes of bows and fittings, as well as ways of holding the instruments and their bows. A very extensive bibliography, a chronological table of the most important literature of violin history between 1782 and 1972, and other useful apparatus are provided. The comparatively brief and very dense text is supplied with a mind-boggling total of 945 footnotes, but these fortunately are printed on the relevant pages of text for easier access and use.

An important virtue of these studies is the clear exposition of the essential points relating to the history of the violin found in the earlier sources and in more recent historical studies, all of which Geiser has read attentively and summarized succinctly. Even more important perhaps is her eye for details of early construction, notably the fittings of instruments, such as pegs, bridges, and tailpieces, many of which are presented in neat redrawings that are placed beside illustrations of the original graphic arts and sculptures from which they are derived. Geiser's is possibly the first relatively extensive exploration of such details and her most original contribution to the literature.

Confronted with a work which clearly reflects devoted and serious inquiry by a trained musicologist, the reader may nevertheless be left with an uneasy mind after close study of Geiser's text. The author herself points to a fundamental difficulty that her study, as well as nearly every previous one of early stringed instruments, leaves unresolved. Speaking of the lack of reliable descriptions of extant instruments, she writes, "What has in part long existed for the works of graphic artists—descriptive catalogues of their works—is lacking for the study of violins, apparently because of the private interest of violin dealers. . . . A complete apparatus of sources doesn't exist, for only a few instrument collections are well catalogued. For this purpose it is possible only for experts in bowed-instrument making [i.e., dealer-experts] to recognize old violins without their appropriate labels by means of characteristic details, to fix their origin and date, and to distinguish authentic valuable violins from forgeries" (p. 36, my translation). One may place the problem in still clearer historical perspective: few musicologists have had the innate eye, the years of training, and the daily contact with authentic stringed instruments necessary to distinguish them from fakes and forgeries and to identify their makers; and conversely, few violin experts have had the innate taste for patient archival study, training in historical research, and the ability to exercise critical judgment free of commercial pressures which would lend scholarly weight to their assertions and publication.

The *Studies* suffer from other problems as well. Since they lean heavily on earlier publications, they perpetuate the often mistaken conclusions, erroneous datings or attributions, and wishful thinking

of other writers. For example, of the sixteen surviving instruments of the violin family pictured in this work, numbers II, V, VI, IX, XII, and XIV repeat highly questionable attributions from earlier publications, and numbers III, IV, V, VI, VII, IX, XI, XII, and XIV repeat questionable dates: the latter are much less likely to date from the sixteenth century than from the seventeenth century or later. Despite the very well documented importance of violas in the sixteenth century and the likelihood that fully developed violas preceded fully developed violins, no authentic viola by Gasparo da Salò, Maggini, Andrea Amati or his two sons, or the predecessors and near contemporaries of these makers is mentioned or depicted in the text, although many such exist; early cellos are not mentioned or shown at all. While Geiser concurs with the widely held opinion that the violin family developed in North Italy during the earlier sixteenth century, she does not discriminate adequately between Italian and non-Italian historical developments, and as a result she takes the statements of Agricola in 1529 and Praetorius in 1618–1619, to choose two examples among many, to have complete relevance for Italian instruments, a view I do not share. The confusion of northern and Italian sources tends to involve Geiser, as it has countless of her predecessors, in tedious discussions about nomenclature, which varies greatly among different writers, and the precise meanings in today's terms of such nomenclature. Such puzzles are probably insoluble.

While applauding Geiser's *Studies* for their sound résumé of what has been printed before, as well as for a little valuable new information, I hope that future studies of this compelling subject will address themselves to a close examination of the surprisingly large number of relevant surviving instruments (much larger than is suggested in this work), original archival research on their shadowy makers, and much fuller use of contemporary graphics. Also a *rapprochement* between the worlds of the dealer-expert and the musicologist, long separated by suspicion and mistrust, and a sharing between them of information and knowledge are urgently needed. Only in these ways can significant additional progress be made in the study of the early history of the violin.

LAURENCE C. WITTEN II

Edwin M. Ripin, ed. *Keyboard Instruments: Studies in Keyboard Organology, 1500–1800*. New York: Dover Publications, 1977. ix, 86 pp. plus 74 black-and-white illustrations. \$3.00. (Unabridged republication, with a new preface and some additions, of the collection of essays originally published in 1971 by the Edinburgh University Press.)

Wouter Scheurwater and Rob van Acht. *Oude klavecimbels: hun bouw en restauratie (Old Harpsichords: Their Construction and Restoration)*. Kijkboekjes, no. 2. The Hague: Haags Gemeentemuseum, in association with Frits Knuf, Buren, 1977. 64 pp. Hfl 30.

It is fitting that the republication of *Keyboard Instruments*, a superb collection of essays on keyboard organology, should have occurred at such a time as to permit a review to appear in the journal of this Society in whose founding Ed Ripin was so instrumental. The fact that the book was published at all attests first to the debt owed by all of us to Ed for the contributions which he made to our knowledge of “early” keyboard instruments, and second to the need for the existence of a journal such as this one, for each of the studies contained here might appropriately have been published as a journal article.

Arley Ripin notes in her preface to the Dover edition that the principal changes from the original are in the addition of six entries (three clavichords, two harpsichords, and one “variant form”) to Edmund A. Bowles’s contribution, “A Checklist of Fifteenth-Century Representations of Stringed Keyboard Instruments,” and the relocation of the plates from the back of the original volume to their appropriate places at the ends of each article in the collection. (The decision to reproduce these plates on the same rather thin paper as that used for the body of the text, rather than on the heavier, glossy paper of the original edition, has resulted in a pleasant loss of glare under fluorescent lighting, without any substantial loss in definition. Indeed the enlargement from half to three-quarter page of two of the plates—numbers 26 and 27 of Bowles’s “Checklist”—results in somewhat greater ease of study than in the original.)

The ten essays which make up this collection fall into three categories, as noted by Ripin in his original preface: (1) “specialized articles dealing with much-debated topics in the history of keyboard

instruments"; (2) descriptions of unique surviving instruments not previously described adequately; and (3) "a survey of the present state of keyboard organology." Although each of the essays maintains the high level we have come to expect of anything connected with Ed Ripin's name, three or four may be singled out even in this company for their thought-provoking qualities. One is that by John Barnes, Curator of the Raymond Russell Collection of the University of Edinburgh, on the "specious uniformity" of Italian harpsichords. Mr. Barnes comes to the conclusion, based on a study of surviving sixteenth-century Italian harpsichords, that the previously held notion of a prevailing uniformity of construction techniques used by Italian harpsichord makers of the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries may more than anything else reflect the practice of altering earlier instruments so as to make them conform to later building methods—a practice akin to the French *ravalement* of earlier Flemish harpsichords. One of the more interesting conclusions of Mr. Barnes's study is that the scalings of at least four sixteenth-century Italian harpsichords before their alterations indicate a pitch significantly lower than modern pitch (approximately seven semitones in one instance!). Barnes has pursued this matter further in "The Stringing of Italian Harpsichords," in *Der klangliche Aspekt beim Restaurieren von Saitenklavieren: Bericht der internationalen Tagung von Restauratoren für besaitete Tasteninstrumente*, ed. Vera Schwarz (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1973); some counterarguments are referred to in Arthur Mendel's recent "Pitch in Western Music since 1500—A Re-examination," in *Acta musicologica* 50 (1978): 1–93.

Ed Ripin's own contribution to the volume, "On Joes Karest's Virginal and the Origins of the Flemish Tradition," is provocative in its suggestions of a derivation of the Flemish harpsichord-making school from Germany. If this is so—and Ripin's evidence is convincing—then our view of the development of various traditions of harpsichord-making north of the Alps has also been significantly altered.

Finally, we can point to both Bowles's "Checklist" and John Henry van der Meer's "More about Flemish Two-Manual Harpsichords" as being of exceptional interest. The latter, in addition to a lucid, brief

summary of the state of our understanding of the Flemish double, provides a valuable description of a relatively early (1658), probably "contrasting" or "expressive," double from the Ruckers workshop.

An important contribution of twentieth-century technology to the scholarship represented in *Keyboard Instruments* is in the area of instrument repair and restoration, in which not only have highly sophisticated techniques been evolved for the purposes of restoration which involves minimal alteration of the surviving evidence, but also restorers have increasingly recognized their obligations to future scholars to provide as detailed information as possible not only about their own restorative procedures, but also about whatever they might find inside a particular instrument when they have it apart.

* * *

Oude klavecimbels, the "Kijkboekje" published by the Haags Gemeentemuseum, is essentially a bilingual (Dutch and English) description of the restoration workshop in the instrument collection of that museum. The little book begins with a brief description of the different kinds of plucked-string keyboard instruments and then moves on to the question of "why instruments are restored." The argument presented is that "historically responsible restoration can make such an instrument sound the way it used to." This rather idealistic—and in point of fact debatable—notion is later tempered by the remark that "if there is any doubt [as to the suitability of a particular instrument for restoration], the right decision is not to embark on restoration at all, for there can be several often widely divergent reasons for an instrument's unsuitability for restoration." If this comment can be accepted as indicative of an increasing wariness on the part of museum directors and their curatorial staffs of the value of restoration, it is indeed a sign of increased sophistication as well. How much better it is to preserve as faithfully as possible the remains of historically significant instruments so that they may be studied by future generations of organologists and builders. For however representative of the most responsible restoration a particular effort might be (and the three detailed in this publication seem to be exemplary in that regard), there are too many examples of technological developments which have made earlier restorative work look downright primitive for us to be sanguine about any restoration

which involves more than a minimum of repair to a surviving historical document.

This "Kijkboekje" is marvellously—indeed, lavishly—illustrated with both photographs and detailed drawings. Furthermore, the English translator, Ruth Koenig, is to be commended for the smooth, idiomatic quality of her prose. While the book is clearly directed primarily toward the nonspecialist, it does contain considerable information of value to both the organologist and the builder with regard to three specific instruments. One looks forward to future similar publications.

R. PETER WOLF

François Bédos de Celles. *The Organ-Builder*. Translated by Charles Ferguson. 2 vols. Raleigh, N.C.: The Sunbury Press, 1977. \$320.00.

Until Dom Bédos published his treatise *L'art du facteur d'orgues* (1766–1778), there was no book that explained the practical and theoretical aspects of organ building in a systematic way. Since Dom Bédos, no author has equaled his achievement, although several have given us books of similar scope. Dom Bédos must remain unique, because no other will face the challenges he did.

His shortcomings are few, but obvious in retrospect. His "Brief History of the Organ" is based on a broad humanistic and theological culture and little else: having traced the bellows organ from ninth-century Germany to Rome and thence to the rest of Europe, his essay becomes ever rougher and more fragmented as it approaches the Renaissance. Throughout *L'art du facteur*, French craftsmen and particularly the leading Paris workshops are taken as the vanguard of progress, progress being of course steady and desirable. Dom Bédos says nothing of organs abroad, except to comment on German reeds (poor) and bellows (worse). His main reference to Flanders is an admiring description of some case pipes in Béziers. If he knew the Spanish tradition, as he must have in his native Midi, he never mentions it. His only known trip abroad was a visit to the great new Gabler organ in Weingarten: the instrument was locked, and Gabler