

*Journal of the
American Musical
Instrument Society*

VOLUME XVII • 1991



Copyright by the [American Musical Instrument Society](#).
Content may be used in accordance with the principles of fair
use under [Section 107 of the United States Copyright Act](#).
Content may not be reproduced for commercial purposes.

nale degli strumenti musicali di Roma" ("Two Keyed Trumpets marked 'Pirozzi' in the National Museum of Musical Instruments of Rome," no. 13: 29–30). The other is Pierluigi Ferrari's "La liuteria veneziana del Cinquecento e la viola da gamba di Antonio Ciciliano del museo civico di Bologna" ("Sixteenth-Century Venetian Instrument Makers and Antonio Ciciliano's Viol in the Museo Civico of Bologna"), nos. 17–18: 49–53. This instrument is similar in many ways to the other surviving Venetian viols described by Martin Edmunds¹ and other writers, except for its having a carved rather than a bent top.

Besides articles of interest to scholars and performers of early music, *Il flauto dolce* provides reviews of books, editions of music, and recordings. One might infer from the occasional tendency to pair together some of the "semiannual" issues into one annual offering that the editors are somewhat more concerned for the quality of the product than for its timely publication. It is handsomely presented (in quarto format), with numerous clearly reproduced photographs and diagrams. In the latest example available for review are subtended summaries of the main articles, written by the authors and translated into English by Hugh Ward Perkins; these will prove to be an obvious boon to many readers of this *Journal*.

HERBERT W. MYERS
Stanford University

1. "Venetian viols of the sixteenth century," *Galpin Society Journal* 33 (1980: 74–91).

Alison Crum, with Sonia Jackson. *Play the Viol: The Complete Guide to Playing the Treble, Tenor, and Bass Viol*. Early Music Series, 10. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. xii, 185 pp.; 41 black-and-white illustrations, 79 musical examples. ISBN: 0-19-317422-7. \$45.00.

The growing fascination for Western music from periods earlier than the eighteenth century has brought a renewed interest in playing early instruments. A fine instructional book on the viol is especially welcome because we have so few modern methods for the instrument. *Play the Viol*, as its title suggests, is a tutor primarily for beginning players, but it can equally well be used by more experienced players desiring to review their technical and musical knowledge of the instrument and its repertoires.

Five clearly organized chapters present elementary technical principles, more advanced technical matters, repertoire and performance practices, suggestions for effective practice, ensemble playing, performing, and recommendations on buying and maintaining viols and bows. Three appendices provide a discussion of tuning (by Elizabeth Liddle); addresses of societies, journals and dealers in the United Kingdom and the United States; and a list of published music for the viol. These are followed by a bibliography of period treatises, modern tutors, books, and periodical articles, a selected discography of viol music; and an index. The book is engagingly written, with much practical advice, helpful photographs of posture and position, encouragement for the discouraged beginner, imaginative metaphors (for smooth bow changes, "imagine a silk scarf being trailed through water"; for different tonal shapes, those of "pears, lemons, carrots, and parsnips"), and well-chosen quotations from period sources. For a study repertoire, students are referred to companion volumes edited by Alison Crum. The English terminology for rhythmic values may at first be daunting to American beginners, but this is a small point; perhaps slightly more important is the fact that while the authors claim that the book presupposes only the ability to read music, a number of fairly sophisticated terms are used without explanation: harmony, phrase, cadence, eight-foot pitch, consort, obbligato, and Urtext, for example. The interested reader can, of course, look these up.

Not surprisingly, we find little organological information. The discussion of buying a viol centers around practical matters such as the size of the instrument and the relation of price to quality. The authors note that different instrument models are suited to different repertoire: early Renaissance-type viols are appropriate only to sixteenth-century music, while the seven-string bass can be used for most baroque music. They suggest English-type instruments as the most suitable to players who wish to play a wide range of viol music, recommending copies of Jaye's and Rose's consort instruments for early seventeenth-century music and copies of Barak Norman's or Meares's for later music. They include photographs of Martin Edmunds viol after Ciciliano (c. 1560), a seven-string bass by Robert Eyland after Bertrand (1704), a treble by Neil Hansford after Jaye (c. 1630), an alto by Norman Myall after Jaye (1662), a tenor by David Rubio after Rose (1598), and a bass by Robert Eyland after Rose (1595). Bows are categorized as either the early "stick" type (fixed frog, narrow hairing; suitable for Renaissance instruments)

or "transitional or baroque type" (with a tension screw or a clip-in frog), and the authors provide photos of representative bows by Christopher Allworth, Doug Eaton, Sue Watt, and others. The maintenance of instruments and bows is, of course, treated with more detail, and the authors make an important distinction between repairs and adjustments that can be made by the player and those that require professional attention.

An entire chapter surveying the viol repertoire and its performance practices covers types of music, including consorts, dance music, fantasies, accompanied songs, continuo playing divisions, lyra viol music, chamber music, and French suites, with useful suggestions for novice players. They are told, for example, how important it is to bring out subject entrances in imitative passages and to clarify cross-rhythms in dance pieces and other music; that repeats in dance forms should be ornamented; that English sarabandes tend to be fast and light, French ones slow and stately. With vocal music, the viol player should be sensitive above all to the vocal line and to the words, regardless of instrumental phrasing. In continuo playing, the harmony is first in importance: chord-tones should be held down on the fingerboard for the duration of the chord to enhance its resonance. The discussion of division playing culminates in Christopher Simpson's five-step method for timid improvisers, beginning with the ground-bass played in notes of smaller rhythmic value, gradually elaborating upon and return to the ground-bass notes, finally playing harmonizing notes and filling in gaps with passing tones; by now, the viol-player is ready to add a true descant to the ground. Crum and Jackson suggest that tenor players learn the lyra viol repertoire, as they have no solo music of their own. They help the beginner to decipher French tablature and provide a useful table of lyra-viol tunings. Their discussion of the performance of sonatas, arias, and chamber music calls attention to works by J. S. Bach, Telemann, C. F. Abel, and Schenk. I am not persuaded, however, that when slurs in identical phrases differ "for no apparent reason" or solo parts are in parallel phrases, the slurs ought to be made uniform. Sources have such frequent disparity that I doubt that we must always attribute it to error, and by doing so we may diminish musical interest. In regard to French style, the authors refer to Sainte-Colombe's introduction of the seventh string, the pardessus, *inégalement* playing, French ornaments, with a table of those used by Marais, and several practice examples taken from Marais, with humorous allusions to his personality.

Elizabeth Liddle's appendix on tuning offers a helpful discussion for students ready to venture into that thorny subject. Preliminary explanations of the harmonic series, commas, and various temperaments lay the groundwork for practical information on setting temperaments. Fret diagrams and a table of measurements in cents for quarter-comma, fifth-comma, and sixth-comma meantone and for Valotti's system add much to this synopsis.

I noted only a few omissions. In the second appendix, Early Music America ought to appear along with the Viola da Gamba Society of Great Britain and the Viola da Gamba Society of America Inc., and this *Journal* along with *Early Music* and *Early Music News*. Deborah Teplow's *Performance Practice and Technique in Marin Marais' Pièces de viole* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986) and Jason Paras's *The Music for viola Bastarda* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986) do not appear in the bibliography, and I wish that the fine live concern recording, *In memoriam Jason Paras* (Focus 821), were in the discography.

These few reservations aside, Crum and Jackson's book is a worthy contribution to the beginning and intermediate study of viol playing. Readers of this journal will be most interested in the discussions of performance practice.

M. ALEXANDRA EDDY
Sweet Briar College

Martin van Schaik. *De harp in de middeleeuwen: Studies naar de symboliek van een muziekinstrument.* Utrecht: [the author] 1988. 244 pp., 52 black-and-white illustrations. ISBN: 90-9002348-8, Softbound. 75 Dutch guilders.

Martin van Schaik's dissertation covering aspects of symbolism of the medieval harp is a very welcome addition to the literature. As he notes, a vast body of information about the early harp has been transmitted to us but there are comparatively few modern studies devoted to this instrument. A reason, in part, for both circumstances is that the harp was awarded religious symbolic meaning by a culture very remote to ours, resulting in a profusion of sources that were protected and hence survive and now must be interpreted. In this study, van Schaik successfully separates the real from the symbolic in a way that illuminates the mean-