

*Journal of the
American Musical
Instrument Society*

VOLUME XXIV • 1998



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only a few feet away from her, he does not continue to paint; instead, he turns, rests his arm on the back of her chair, and leans forward over her back, the better to share with her the special intimacy of the clavichord, with its ability to sound music so soft that one is not even sure it exists.

At the end of the first century of its revival the clavichord has arrived at a crossroads, in some ways a victim of its own success. Its practitioners have succeeded in liberating it from its traditional role as practice instrument, but in so doing they are changing the way the clavichord is being played and built. The clavichords I heard at Magnano II were loud and not very refined; one cannot make an instrument that can on the one hand respond to extravagant gestures and fill a hall, and on the other express the most intimate of sentiments. It is as much for this reason as for the important scholarship in its pages that *De Clavichordio II* is such a noteworthy document, and belongs on the bookshelf of anyone concerned with the evolution of musical instruments and musical style.

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Edward L. Kottick and George Lucktenberg. *Early Keyboard Instruments in European Museums*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997. 276 pp.: 103 black-and-white photographs. ISBN: 0-253-33239-7. \$35.00.

It is interesting to observe how much attention has been paid in recent years to early keyboard instruments, as compared with historical winds, strings, and percussion. Numerous books and articles have appeared, some of them presenting the forefront of scholarship and addressing select areas of research, while others have been intended as more general or introductory studies, including a few of the "coffee-table book" variety. Countless recordings that feature the sound of the harpsichord, clavichord, and early piano are now available, and there is no sign that their production will slow anytime soon. North America alone supports more than a half-dozen regional and local organizations devoted solely to early keyboard instruments, all of which sponsor conferences and other programs at least yearly. And, although business has leveled off since the 1980s, the country continues to support many artisans who specialize in the replication of all types of historic keyboard instruments.

Little wonder, then, that during a seventeen-year period between 1978 and 1995, Professors Kottick and Lucktenberg were able to find enough interested persons to lead several tours around Europe for the sole purpose of seeing, and often hearing, first-hand some of the world's most interesting and beautiful early keyboard instruments. Those tours have now ceased, but the group's two leaders have attempted to capulize in print the experience of those visits as a guide to others who might want to undertake their own pilgrimage, or perhaps dream about it from the comfort of an armchair.

The book is divided into separate chapters for each of sixteen countries, with thirty-five cities and forty-seven collections discussed in all. The writers do a wonderful job of presenting brief historical and cultural background for each collection, including how and by whom it was assembled and interesting facts about the city or building in which it is located. Some readers will notice the omission of one or more significant collections (there are none included from Russia, for example), but, as noted in their introduction, the authors felt that attempting systematic coverage of every European museum might prevent the book from ever being completed; hence the work is drawn primarily from those places that were actually visited. (In a few clearly noted instances, information about a collection was taken from secondary sources rather than first-hand observations.) Which collections to include was only one of the subjective decisions that the authors had to make. Given the considerable holdings of some of the museums covered, it would have been unwieldy to discuss every keyboard instrument contained therein, even briefly, so only the most noteworthy are mentioned in these instances. Nonetheless, the size and scope of the keyboard collection in each museum are always presented, and references are made to any catalogs or other pertinent publications that exist. Descriptions of instruments are necessarily brief, usually focusing on obvious features such as range, disposition, and decoration. These limited details will no doubt frustrate certain readers who will crave more technical details, but such complete descriptions are not within the stated aims of the book. The intention, rather, was to present an overview of selected collections to give readers a better sense of what their holdings are and, for those making an actual visit, to arm them with more knowledge than they are likely to gain from reading the labels in most museums.

A travelogue of this nature (for that is truly what the book is) will, of course, reflect the tastes and interests of its writers. Consequently, one generally finds more attention and loving detail given to harpsichords (a

specialty of both authors) than to clavichords or pianos. (Organs were, perhaps wisely, not included at all.) Likewise, more focus is generally given to harpsichords from the Northern European tradition than to Italian ones, because (regarding the former) "There are fewer of them, more are signed, and as a group they show greater variety in their dispositions and decorative schemes" (p. xxv). Despite these personal leanings, the authors do an equitable job of pointing out the highlights of each collection, attempting to help the reader understand the significance of certain pieces and often drawing attention to features that might be missed or misunderstood by the casual observer. In discussions of individual instruments, there is usually ample cross-referencing to other related instruments mentioned in the book, a feature of great use to all but the most knowledgeable reader.

One question that vexed me as I attempted to read the book objectively was "What sort of reader would find this book useful?" In the introduction the authors state that it is "aimed at readers who are interested in the history of keyboard instruments, whether or not they are planning a European trip" (p. xxvi). Let us consider those who will not be traveling abroad to view the instruments described. Depending on their level of knowledge of the subject, they may very well first need to read one or more books from those suggested in the introduction, because the work under review actually assumes a fair amount of knowledge. Understandably, the writers did not wish to present an entire history of keyboard instruments or their construction. As a consequence, however, beginning with the first two pages of the first chapter, the uninformed reader might be confused by the mention (on page 1) of a 1780 Anton Walter "piano" in the Burgenländische Landesmuseen in Eisenstadt, only to turn the page and read about an early 1780s Anton Walter "fortepiano" in Mozart's Birthplace in Salzburg. Are these two different kinds of instruments? (As a museum curator, I am often asked how a fortepiano differs from a piano.) Upon reaching page 3 the reader will need or might wish to know what is meant by the terms "short brass scale," "jackrail," and "keywell." A glossary at the end of the book does, under the heading "scale," briefly explain the first term, but neither of the latter two is listed. Likewise, if one turns to the glossary to look up the term "bentside," one is told that it is the section between the tail and the cheek, although neither of these two case members appears to be defined anywhere. It seems to me that in constructing a glossary it is important not to lead the user into any dead ends. What would be better yet, however, would be to include a few basic diagrams labeling the parts

of instruments. (Even in these days of monetary inflation, is a picture not still worth a thousand words?)

But let us suppose that the reader is already fluent in the jargon of early keyboard instruments. With no terminology problems to stumble over, he or she will likely enjoy the writers' narrative of what they have seen and played, which is presented in a manner that is informed, comfortably chatty, and generally without error. The authors are, however, quick to point out that the dating, attribution, and even authenticity of historic instruments continues to be scrutinized, and so the information recorded is certainly subject to change. For the armchair traveler, I would think that more and better photographs would offer more interest than almost any amount of text. What is presented are mostly photographs supplied by the institutions visited, with a few additional ones apparently taken by the authors. Some of the latter are, perhaps understandably, of marginal quality. More unfortunate, however, is that all the photographs are in black and white, and are about the size of a postcard or smaller, as dictated by the size of the book. Color photography, of course, drives up the cost of most books tremendously, and would have at least tripled the cost of this modestly priced work. I for one, however, wish that more books in the field of organology were able to offer color photographs.

Finally, one might ask how many readers will actually use this book for the purpose for which it seems best designed—as both a preparatory and a take-along reference for visiting the great musical instrument collections of Europe to see their stringed-keyboard instruments. The authors wisely warn that one cannot be certain which instruments any particular museum will be displaying at a particular time, given the changes in taste, philosophy, and available gallery space. (To this I would add that the addresses, phone numbers, and visiting hours given in the book for each museum may also be subject to change, so it is best to check ahead whenever possible. Likewise, regardless of your credentials or past dealings with the staff of a museum, it is always wise to contact curators well before a visit if you will require some of their time.) As mentioned at the outset of this review, the number of early keyboard aficionados is fairly large. Will some of them retrace the trail of Kottick and Lucktenberg, just as some other history buffs have retraced that of Lewis and Clark? Time will tell.

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