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Of the pictures, 366 are from period documents and books, or of sculpture, the latter including some real instruments incorporated into church organ cases. These are interspersed with 40 photographs of actual instruments, much to be welcomed: although many a museum shows the history of the flute or clarinet with examples of the most important and innovative designs, no museum presents the history of the timpani in more than a few examples. There is just not room to display a collection as comprehensive as we have in these pages, even if one existed. Equally welcome are the 42 photographs of orchestras, their percussion sections, or their timpanists.

The 382 “documents” have to be regarded as material for further research, or for essay writing, since they make rather indigestible reading as they stand. Some are excerpts from books, diaries, and other texts of the historical period, many in translation (presumably by Bowles himself). Others, however, are lifted verbatim from secondary publications, including some self-quotations from Bowles’s earlier writings. None is in facsimile. More commentary on these documents would have been welcome (for example, to point out that the *Distin* monster gong drum was not actually a kettledrum, although the word “timpani” occurs in the quoted text [Document 309]).

This grand volume has been well worth waiting for. In its stylish text and copious illustrations the author provides a rare resource for learning and research.

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Jeremy Montagu. *Timpani and Percussion*. The Yale Musical Instrument Series. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. xii, 268 pp.: 76 illus. [61 black-and-white photographs, 15 color photographs], 4 figs., 2 tables, 21 musical exx. ISBN: 0-300-09337-3. \$35.00 (hardcover).

This excellent book is the second published volume in the new Yale Musical Instrument Series. (The first volume, Ardal Powell’s *The Flute* [2002], was reviewed in this JOURNAL 29 [2003]: 237–44.) The choice of Jeremy Montagu to write a historical overview of timpani and percussion instruments was brilliant—he brings a unique blend of the professional performer and dedicated scholar to the task. His more than fifty years’ performance experience and his academic acumen shine forth on every

page. Montagu superbly mingles arcane bits of information with wonderful anecdotes drawn from a long professional career that included membership in the Royal Philharmonic and the BBC Symphony. His scholarly contributions encompass both Western and non-Western music and instruments, and he is currently working on an annotated catalog of his personal collection of more than 2500 instruments (the first volume, on reed instruments, was reviewed in this JOURNAL 29 [2003]: 263–66). In *Timpani and Percussion*, Montagu exhibits a polymathic command of the subject, yet his writing style is engaging and lucid. The 76 illustrations and 21 musical examples are clearly printed and unambiguously labeled.

Montagu dedicates the book to his teacher James Blades, author of the long standard *Percussion Instruments and Their History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970; 3rd ed., 1984). He sees “no point in repeating much of what [Blades] wrote” (Introduction, p. 3), and only overlaps with and corrects Blades’s book as necessary. He also warns us that he was limited in what he could include both by length restrictions imposed by the publisher and by his own personal interests. Montagu organizes his book chronologically. The first three chapters briefly speculate on and explore the use of percussion from prehistory through the Renaissance. Chapters 4 through 8 cover the Baroque period through the twentieth century, and chapter 9 deals with “World Percussion.”

For the first three chapters, Montagu bases his conclusions mostly on surviving instruments, iconographic evidence, and historical documents. A section near the beginning of chapter 3, “The Renaissance,” illustrates Montagu’s perceptive insights. He describes the emergence in the late fifteenth century of “the military transverse flute, the fife,” in the “new mercenary armies [marching] across Europe” (p. 32). Montagu surmises that since the fife required two hands to play it, the old method of pipe and tabor playing fell from prominence. The fifer needed a separate drummer to provide “rhythmic accompaniment.” Montagu then explains how this led to changes in playing style and terminology:

The drum could then be larger than the old tabor and because a larger drum was heavier, it was better slung at the player’s side than from the arm. Hence its later name: the side drum. Since the drummer no longer had to play the pipe with one hand, he could use both hands on the drum. More elaborate rhythms immediately became possible, as did more elaborate playing techniques. It is clear that it was at this period that this elaboration occurred because whereas, in the earlier Middle Ages, drum names had always been based on the sound of separate strokes—tabor, tambour, bedon, and such like terms—suddenly we have the names *trommel*, *dromme*, *drum*, and

so forth. These names, with their rolled R, are the indications that players had begun to introduce the bouncing strokes that we use today (p. 32).

As Montagu moves into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he discusses more musical and theoretical sources and surviving instruments. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present much new and important information. One detail on the construction of timpani illustrates the depth to which Montagu often pursues a specific point. Many surviving eighteenth- and perhaps early nineteenth-century timpani have a funnel or horn (*Schalltrichter*) affixed to the air hole at the bottom of the bowl. We are only now studying the purpose of the funnel systematically.¹ Montagu has measured, or has had measured, funnels in several timpani; he notes that these and “other variables . . . are seldom if ever recorded” in museum catalogs or by scholars (p. 81). He reproduces a picture of one as illustration 19 (his own photograph of an instrument similar to one depicted in the 1979 catalog of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg). He then goes on to quote from private correspondence from Cynthia Adams Hoover and Robert Sheldon to him in 1973. Sheldon restored a pair of timpani in the Smithsonian collection “which measure 23 and 22 inches in diameter . . . and reported that when the funnels were reinstalled they ‘not only make the drum sound better when struck in the center but also make it possible to use the higher drum in a range where it ought to function in relation to the other drum (a 4th or a 5th higher).’ ” Montagu then asserts:

Various authors have surmised that these funnels amplify or improve the sound, but so far as I know this is the only case where a pair of drums has been tested without and then with them and the result clearly described. Since eighteenth-century drumskins are no longer available, there must still be some slight uncertainty as to the funnels’ function, but it seems very probable that these experiments have provided the true answer. One suspects that the drum makers of the period had only a somewhat hazy idea of how these funnels worked, as of acoustics in general, for otherwise there would be much greater uniformity in size, shape, and height (I have never seen two pairs the same in these respects) (pp. 81–82).

To summarize the rest of Montagu’s argument, a pair of modern timpani has a size difference of about three inches, and teachers tell per-

1. Ben Harms, percussion instrument maker and performer, is completing an article on the *Schalltrichter* or funnels used in eighteenth-century timpani. His sources range from the early eighteenth century through the end of the nineteenth. He has carefully investigated and measured many drums and uncovered several heretofore unknown documents that discuss *Schalltrichter*.

formers to strike the head about three to four inches from the rim to get the optimum sound. Montagu suggests that if the funnels make the smaller drum sound better when tuned a 4th or 5th higher and when struck in the center, we are probably dealing with drums used in the cavalry. In such performances and with the flourishes often described, he says that “so long as one struck the drum somewhere on its head (while avoiding the horse!), everyone was happy” (p. 82). So he concludes that “if these funnels did ensure a good tone quality when the drum is struck in the centre of the head, as Dr. Sheldon has shown that they do, it would explain why they are so widely used in central Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries” (p. 82).

In the final three chapters, dealing with percussion instruments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and throughout the world, we enter more the world of Montagu the performer and pedagogue. These chapters are profusely illustrated, and many of the color photographs show non-Western instruments from the author’s personal collection.

The appendices are informative and delightful. In the first two, Montagu describes basic playing techniques and explains the now nearly forgotten art of lapping or tucking skin heads. Plastic heads are ubiquitous on most modern drums, and Montagu may be making a silent plea for a return to the more traditional skin heads. Indeed, many timpanists in major orchestras (besides those who perform in period instrument ensembles) are doing just that. Timpanists in the Vienna Philharmonic continue to use goatskin heads today.

In Appendix 3, “The Need to be Inventive,” Montagu recalls some of his solutions to unique musical problems. He also follows up on some intriguing comments made earlier in the text. For example, tucked away at the end of his chapter “The High Baroque” are reminiscences of when he was called upon “to characterize a larcenous spider” (p. 95). In his “Need to be Inventive” appendix he explains that he “used an Audubon Bird Call (a pewter rod twisted to and fro in a hole in a piece of wood) to represent the movements of a thievish spider” (p. 206). Just to illustrate how much fun his copious notes are, his “the kleptomaniac spider” is identified in the note as being “for a Peter Sellers film” (p. 231, n. 115).² His last appendix, addressed to “Drummers,” all too briefly wades into social and economic issues confronting musicians. Particularly useful to

2. For those who want to hear and see the spider, it was used in the 1980 film *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu*, directed by Michael Anderson and starring Peters Sellers, Helen Mirren, and Sid Caesar.

researchers are Montagu's excellent notes and bibliography. He cites and documents many sources that will provide the means to pursue many of the points he makes and investigate many of the questions he asks. The more than 350 bibliographic entries are enriched by a comprehensive listing of museum catalogs, an unusually rich source for organologists.

Montagu's volume succeeds in just about every respect. Even for non-percussionists it makes for informative and enjoyable reading. As a scholar and performer Montagu takes us for a wonderful, rhythmical journey through musical time, from the perspective of one who has been there and just about done it all. He ends by saying "Still, we [drummers] do have more fun than anyone else. We create more new sounds than most people, we are more likely to do things *ad lib.*, and if the worst comes to the worst, we can always drown the rest of the orchestra" (p. 211). A reviewer of another book once wrote, "Rarely is so much learning displayed with so much grace and charm. My only regret is that the book was not twice as long."³

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Paul M. Gifford. *The Hammered Dulcimer in America: A History*. Lanham, MD, and London: Scarecrow Press, 2001. American Folk Music and Musicians 6. xxiv, 429 pp.: 32 black-and-white illus., 28 figures, 3 maps, 2 tables, 22 musical exx. ISBN: 0-8108-3943-1. \$59.00 (cloth).

Given the current popularity of the hammered dulcimer, it is difficult to remember that less than thirty years ago the instrument had all but disappeared from the American musical landscape. In this important, impeccably researched book, Paul Gifford traces the evolution and musical history of the hammered dulcimer in Europe and Asia, documents its extensive use in eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early twentieth-century America, and charts its recent revival. By establishing links between the American dulcimer, its ancestors, and cousins, and by presenting a wealth of new material documenting the instrument's place in American musical history, Gifford has produced an indispensable reference. Since

3. Bergen Evans, from his *New York Times* book review, quoted on the back cover of C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Words*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).