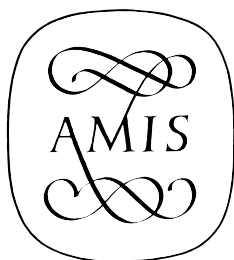


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Manufacturing the Muse comes at an opportune moment, since the town of Brattleboro is in the process of developing an Estey Organ Museum (see www.esteyorganmuseum.org).

DARCY KURONEN
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Alfons Huber, editor. *Das Österreichische Cembalo: 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2001. 638 pp.: 21 color illus., 110 black-and-white illus., 56 line drawings. ISBN: 3-7952-1039-9. €200 (cloth).

There is an old adage that admonishes us not to judge a book by its cover. The same may well be said of book titles, particularly in the case of this massive, sumptuously produced, and lavishly illustrated tome, bearing the prestigious imprint of Vienna's great Kunsthistorisches Museum. A review can scarcely offer more than a survey of so vast a book. One is immediately alerted not to take its title "The Austrian Harpsichord" as referring merely to present-day Austria. The endpapers are maps showing the Habsburg territories in their fullest historical extent in central and eastern Europe before their final fragmentation in 1919 into many smaller independent countries by the treaties of St. Germain and Trianon. The lands ruled by the Habsburgs for centuries covered territories now in Italy, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Slovenia, and Romania in addition to Austria proper. Keyboard instruments from most of these outlying countries accordingly receive their due.

The present book grew out of a symposium held at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in 1997, exactly 600 years after Hermann Poll of Vienna wrote of an instrument of his invention that he had christened *clavicembalum*. It is to his memory that this volume is dedicated. The participants in the symposium contributed expanded versions of the papers delivered there, no doubt taking full advantage of the opportunity to flesh them out with additional charts, graphs, line drawings, and photographs. It is well that these revised and expanded texts should be those of permanent record, for they fill lacunae that had remained after the history of the harpsichord in Italy, the Netherlands, France, and England had been exhaustively researched, and Iberia and Scandinavia somewhat less so. The German collective noun *Kielklaviere*, embracing harpsichords, spinets, virginals, and the stringed portion of claviorgans, cannot be rendered literally in English; all these are perforce termed harpsichords here.

The 22 chapters (15 in German, 7 in English) vary greatly in scope and degree of detail. By way of extended introduction, Herbert Haupt leads off in chapter 1 with an essay on the concept of Austrian. John Koster follows in chapter 2 with a remarkably condensed history of the earliest harpsichords, analogizing to other family trees, so to speak, even those of mammals and abstract art. Chapter 3, by Wolfgang Strohmayr, discusses the mathematical formative principles in Arnaut de Zwolle's instrument plans, an excursion that strays rather far from the central theme of the book. In a brief chapter 4 Denzil Wraight covers the development of keyboard instrument actions and scaling in the fifteenth century, essentially as disclosed by the Arnaut manuscript, which is virtually the sole source of significance for the period.

The truly Austrian core of the volume begins with chapter 5, in which Alfons Huber presents the earliest textual and iconographic evidence of harpsichord making in the Habsburg realm. In chapter 6 Huber (in 111 pages) describes in exhaustive detail the constructional features of Austrian harpsichords from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century. This chapter is exceptionally interesting, and especially notable is the section dealing with the uniquely elaborate forms of short octave (*Wiener Baßoktav*) with split keys having as many as three divisions. The use of such divided keys (*tasti spezzati*) to add notes below C, as distinguished from those providing missing accidentals, is traceable to Italian harpsichord makers in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. The Viennese short octave persisted into the time of Haydn, who wrote for it in at least two of his earliest keyboard pieces, datable to 1765 (Hoboken XVII:1 and 2). In chapter 22 Huber gives systematic descriptions and illustrations of seventeen extant harpsichords from c. 1564 to 1804 known or believed to be of Austrian origin. (Harpsichords made as late as the early nineteenth century were most likely intended for orchestral use, particularly in the opera house.) Why it was decided not to combine these two complementary chapters is a mystery. Be that as it may, they provide a fully documented study of what can now be seen as a distinct tradition of harpsichord making, one hitherto hardly explored. John Henry van der Meer sums up in chapter 7 his research of many years into the orientation and ranges of stringed instrument keyboards, in this instance as relating specifically to the instruments and musical literature of Austria.

Studies of particular instruments follow, beginning in chapter 8 with Rudolf Hopfner's essay on the claviorgan of c. 1564 from the Schloß

Ambras collection, an instrument now in Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum. Recent research has resulted in ascription of this oldest extant claviorgan to Servatius Rorif. The instrument's spinet at 4' pitch is barely mentioned, as the article is basically concerned with reconstructing the probable disposition of the organ. In chapter 9 Stewart Pollens anatomizes in fullest detail the claviorgan by Lorenz Hauslaib (Nuremberg, 1598) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The organ and octave spinet each has its own keyboard, in contrast to the Rorif instrument, which has a single keyboard. Chapter 10, by Alfons Huber and Klaus Martius, is concerned with an anonymous harpsichord initialed HN and dated 1696 (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). This single-manual harpsichord, disposed 2 x 8', had already been rebuilt by 1703, and later in that century suffered further transformation into a fortepiano. This chapter perforce includes discussion of the conservation measures needed to preserve an instrument that arrived at the museum in a truly ruinous state. In chapter 11 an unsigned, undated harpsichord of late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century date (Historisches Museum, Basel, Inv. Nr. 1877.70), identified only as from the southern portion of the German-language area, is the subject of very thorough examination by Sabine Klaus and Malcolm Rose. A single-manual instrument disposed 2 x 8', its original compass of forty-nine notes (C–c''') was enlarged to fifty-three (B–d''', e'''). The illustration shows a highly decorated instrument, but only the lid painting—on canvas and possibly replacing an earlier applied textile—is discussed, and that only briefly. Expert examination by a qualified art historian might have shed significant light on the origin and history of the instrument. Martin Pühlinger's chapter 12, quizzically entitled "A Bohemian Harpsichord in Prague?" describes an unsigned and undated single-manual, five-octave instrument with chinoiserie decoration and disposed 2 x 8' (no. 1352 E in the National Museum, Prague). A hypothetical Czech origin is supported by measurements said to be based on the Prague foot (296.416 mm), although in a number of respects the instrument resembles Viennese and Saxon harpsichords.

A brief description of the anonymous seventeenth-century harpsichord in the Courtauld Institute, London, is provided by Christopher Nobbs in chapter 13. Why this single-manual, five-octave instrument is so datable and fits into the Austrian tradition is briefly discussed. (It was at one time, incredibly, believed to be of Spanish origin!) The harpsichord is housed in an outer case, likely not the original one. The rich

decoration of the keywell and outer case, the lid and front flap paintings, ormolu hinges, and other details, altogether a bit incongruous, pose more questions than they answer. Gerhard Stradner in chapter 14 records the stringed keyboard instruments listed in Austrian inventories from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century, including a scant handful of identifiable survivors. Chapter 15, by Bohuslav Čížek, deals with stringed keyboard instruments in Bohemia and Moravia, including the three harpsichords in the National Museum, Prague. The two-manual instrument disposed 2 x 8', 4' by Johann Heinrich Gräbner (Dresden, 1722) underwent structural changes when its pitch was raised in the late nineteenth century. The unsigned and undated single-manual harpsichord with an integral stand in the form of a cupboard or commode with drawers (No. 1344 E) is dated c. 1700 both here and by Huber in chapter 6. The typical Viennese short octave (FF/C-d'") argues for Vienna as its birthplace rather than Prague.

Eva Szórádová in chapter 16 must limit her treatment of stringed keyboard instruments in Slovakia largely to eight clavichords and one curious late nineteenth-century unsigned harpsichord that is left undescribed. The history of instrument making in the region is supplemented by a biographical listing of known builders. Eszter Fontana in chapter 17 writes of clavichord and harpsichord building in Hungary, including Transylvania. The historical treatment begins in the fifteenth century. The essay also covers subsidiary topics such as pitch and the pedagogical use of the clavichord, and includes a biographical listing of makers. Chapter 18, by Darja Koter, is entitled "On the Role of the Harpsichord in the former Gorizia, Carniola, and Istria," territories lying between Italy and the Slavic lands of Slovenia and Croatia. Two fifteenth-century depictions of harpsichords are of particular interest.

In chapter 19 Denzil Wraight deals with the influence of Italian harpsichord building on Austrian instruments. (Like his equally valuable chapter 4, the text, regrettably, is in German rather than Wraight's native English.) Specific features of Italian instruments, principally as regards form and stringing, are related to corresponding traits of Viennese harpsichords. In chapter 20, "From Harpsichord to Fortepiano in Vienna," Richard Maunder draws on advertisements for harpsichords in Viennese newspapers between 1760 and 1800 to show not only how the transition to the pianoforte progressed, but also how the instruments were disposed and decorated. It is doubtful that harpsichords with six-octave keyboards were actually built, as one might assume from Maunder's text

and quotation; it is virtually certain that the sixth octave was due to a 4' stop, a comparatively rare feature of Viennese harpsichords, which were generally disposed 2 x 8'. Rudolf Hopfner's chapter 21 gives an extensive and remarkably detailed biographical listing of harpsichord makers in Austria proper. An appendix numbered 23 (for chapter 22, see above), although not a chapter properly speaking, takes in a miscellany: information on strings, descriptions of four instruments that might well have been treated in earlier chapters, the documents recording what is known of Hermann Poll's career, and the 1733 inventory of the estate of a Viennese harpsichord maker, Franz Lothar Walter, even more detailed than the well known French inventories. A brief biographical listing of the contributors and a very full bibliography, plus lists of illustrations and indices of names, places, and objects conclude the book. In sum, this volume is an indispensable and fundamental work of reference, founded on solid research, painstakingly edited by Alfons Huber, and produced to an uncommonly high standard.

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