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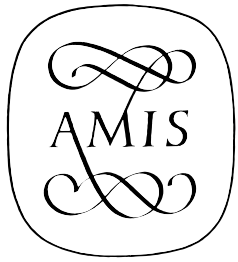

comparing fragility and rarity with state. The numerical values are then used as a key to the amount of use an instrument can sustain. Barclay provides protocols for numerical values from 1 to 7, ranging from "there are no circumstances under which the instruments should be played" to "instruments assigned this numerical value are durable and of low heritage value. They can be used for didactic purposes . . ." (pp. 239–40). An appendix called "Calendar of Sources" provides a historical chronology and explanation of published sources concerning restoration in general, restoration techniques, and significant publications dating from 1833 to 1998 in particular. Notes and a bibliography close the book.

Who is the audience for this book and who will benefit most from it? Clearly, the book addresses curators, conservators, collectors, museum trustees, and individuals in charge of collections of musical instruments. Barclay admirably covers a difficult and treacherous subject in a very complete manner. The text reads well, even though the repetition of actions and rationales throughout the case studies can be annoying—the editor should have been able to prune some of the more verbose sentences. One or two important sources are not listed in the bibliography. But these are minor criticisms. This book is highly recommended to college, university, and public libraries and to all museum personnel and individuals who own or are involved with musical instruments.

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Bruce Haynes. *A History of Performing Pitch: The Story of "A"*. Lanham, MD, and Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2002. lvii, 569 pp.: 4 black-and-white photographs, 36 graphs, 27 tables, bibliography. ISBN: 0-8108-4185-1. $85.00 (hardcover).

This is a remarkable book, and it's too bad so few people will actually read it. Yes, a lot of people will *see* it, but they will dip in on the way to something else—for a quick check on, say, which *corps de rechange* to use for a particular work by Telemann. It will be a success that way, I'm sure: no one who performs early music will go many months at a time without consulting it. But as the subtitle (a good one, by the way) implies, there is a story here too, and a story of surprisingly broad musical interest.

How did pitch standards originate, and how did they evolve over the centuries and in different parts of the world? It's a simple, basic ques-

tion, a matter of physics and numbers ultimately, but there is only one way to go about answering it: to assemble many tiny bits of data, pull the important information in each of them out from the maddening mire of interpretation, and painstakingly shape them into a coherent account. Bruce Haynes has been at this for many years (the book grew out of his doctoral dissertation), and his method is a model of patience, rigor, musical experience, and sanity.

Haynes's boldest methodological stroke, visible in one form or another on almost every page, may also be his most controversial. As an oboist himself, he recognizes the absurdity of expressing individual pitch standards in terms more precise—say, down to tenths of a Hz—than anyone's ears can sustain. So he simplifies and clarifies things a great deal with a system that starts with a′ = 440 and works its way out by semitones, so that any pitch level from 428 to 452 he calls A+0, anything from 409 to 427 he calls A–1, and so forth. You can see the appeal of this system, which has the double advantage of communicating quickly with twenty-first-century readers and muscling a welter of numbers into manageable rows. The danger, of course, is that the system has a way of making things look more clear-cut than they are; and careful readers will be especially wary of numbers near the borders of his rows, judgment calls that might have gone another way. Mind you, I mention this as a caution and not a criticism. The actual numbers are there, well organized and accessible to anyone who wants to reinterpret them: the appendixes, for example, provide more than fifty pages of tables showing the measured and reported pitches of historical organs, cornetts, flutes, recorders, and pitch-pipes, which should be plenty to keep any skeptic busy. For me, the A± system is a good example of what Haynes does extremely well: he is not afraid to take rather heroic steps to make his story communicate.

Even more welcome is his success in clarifying the contemporary vocabulary, or rather vocabularies, of pitch. Bad enough, I had always thought, that pitch standards varied from place to place, and that we so often have no explicit information at all; but to see the sparse data then confounded further by the side-by-side existence of *Chorton*, *Cammerton*, *Cornett-ton*, *tief-Cammerton*, and so on, not to mention *Quire-pitch*, *Ton d'Opéra*, and everything else in other countries and centuries, just seemed to plunge the whole business into an Enigma Code for which we had not recovered the machine. But Haynes makes perfect sense of it, and even manages to account for changes in the way the various vocabularies were used over time. It's an amazing piece of patient reasoning,

and the implications are much bigger than one might expect—as he demonstrates in a chapter on "Sebastian Bach and Pitch," in which we can see how modern editions of Bach, with all the parts transposed to the same level, misrepresent what his actual performers did, with the strings tuned to one pitch standard, the organ at another, the winds at one or two others.

I find myself resisting his narrative only at the very beginning, in the first few pages of chapter 2, where he writes of the medieval and renaissance roots of pitch standards and the irrelevance of such standards in *a-cappella* vocal institutions. Haynes expresses himself carefully and soberly and brings in a few documents I had never seen; still, the idea that, unencumbered by instruments, singers could put the pitch level of a piece anywhere they felt like, has always seemed to me a bit of a copout. Tinctoris's long discussions of "irregular modes," for example, which are essentially transpositions of the regular modes up or down via key signatures, would seem to imply that written pitch levels meant something to singers, and the extensive use of *chiavette*, or high clefs indicating small downward transpositions, in the sixteenth century further belies the notion that singers' pitch levels were a matter of local whim. But I admit this is more qualm than quarrel, and that we are all on much firmer terra for instruments than for voices.

In short, as soon as I finish this review, the book will take a proud place among my reference collection, and I am going to put it where I can get at it easily. So, I am sure, will many of you. But as I say, it is also worth reading through from beginning to end. We all know the history of Western music told as a story of composers—or composers and patrons, or composers and markets. To read Haynes's book is to see it as the story of musicians, real musicians like us, struggling to do good work without driving themselves crazy. Historical pitch standards today—let us face this frankly and bravely—are a pain, for string players who must crank their instruments up and down, for harpsichordists whose movable keyboards confine them to equal temperament or require frequent complete retuning, for wind players who have to keep buying new instruments for every repertory. And there is a human comfort in seeing that they were a pain back then too. This is a beautiful piece of intelligence-gathering, thinking, and writing.

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