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John R. Watson. *Artifacts in Use: The Paradox of Restoration and the Conservation of Organs*. Richmond, VA: OHS Press, 2010. 249 pp.: 85 black-and-white photographs (all available in color at <http://aiu.PreservationTheory.org/illustrations.aspx>). ISBN: 0-913499-34-X. \$39.95 (paper).

John Watson likens his role in writing this book to that of a journalist or ethnographer reporting upon cultures with which he has come in contact. This is a very perceptive insight when one considers that the fields of restoration and conservation of cultural property cross so many watersheds, boundaries, and borders. To practice the craft of cultural object restoration one must, of course, be a skilled and well-rounded practitioner in arts and sciences, but to understand fully the ramifications of intervention on artifacts one must add philosopher, anthropologist, ethnologist, sociologist, historian, and scholar. Few practitioners can even skip a stone over the surface of all these disciplines while still getting their work done at the end of the day. Fortunately for them, they have this book. John Watson has laid out the philosophical background that is such a large component of intervention with tools, and has made it infinitely clearer for them. In addition, and very unusual in a book dedicated to the interventive treatment of historic artifacts, there is a wider appeal to anyone who deals with historic properties, be they historian, musician, musicologist, or organologist. This is not a book solely for practitioners of restoration and conservation, although that is its primary intended readership.

This is an extremely dense book and, as the author warns in his prefatory material, it is not wise to skip the philosophical foundations that constitute the first half of the book. When an author feels he needs a preface subtitled "How to Read This Book" the reader can suspect a long, hard slog. However, any reader who has had the pleasure of attending one of John Watson's addresses at organ society or conservation conferences will be on familiar ground; the reader will find that Watson's didactic thrust is tempered by wit, well-chosen practical examples, very helpful diagrams and charts, and truly excellent writing. The latter is not often encountered in technical publications, so when one does come across a writer who can wield language with confidence, skill, and artistry, one cherishes it. Thus, while the reader is required to put in a lot of work in order to understand the thought framework that places the subsequent practical sections in their full context, it is a pleasure to do so. Seven primary conceptual models are presented: the Foundations of Heritage, two Values Taxonomies, Historic Objects as Primary Docu-

ments, the Paradox of Restoration, the Lifecycle of Historic Objects, the Form and Substance Dichotomy, and the Elements of Conservation. These are presented as a hierarchy, and it is best to attack them in the order presented. The reader is well rewarded.

The section dealing with the paradox of restoration is particularly noteworthy, as this theme underlies the entire work. Indeed, its importance is emphasized by its presence in the subtitle of the book (although one could wish for a comma after “restoration”). The paradox lies in intervention to restore an object to a presumed earlier historical state contrasted with the process of renewal, which thrusts the historic object further away from that very same original state, while also confusing the residual evidence. The author provides a presage of this dilemma in his introductory chapter: “The precarious nature of restoration as the remover of selected evidence, creator of new evidence and simulated old evidence is why this book is largely about evidence and its integrity and preservation through the act of restoration” (p. 12). Every functioning historic artifact is vulnerable to having someone’s views imposed upon it, and the more famous the object, the greater the vulnerability.

The key concept that Watson wishes to inculcate is restorative conservation; the “have your cake and eat it” concept that should be so beguiling to those who wish for musical results, yet still desire to protect and nurture the historical record as written on the surfaces of the artifact. Restoration and conservation are contrasted as emphases either on form or on substance. While traditional restoration seeks to re-establish form, conservation seeks to elucidate substance. Perhaps the most expressive images in the book are the illustrations of form and substance on pages 70 and 71. Watson uses a drawing of the toe board of an organ to show form as the maker’s originally envisioned concept, and substance as close-up photographs of no less than ten features of the surface that provide valuable historic information on the construction of the piece, the methods employed and, by extension, the thought processes that underlay those methods. Traditional restoration, concentrating as it does on form, might well obliterate or overlie this information, thus compromising or erasing a part of the artifact’s story. Traditional conservation might well preserve this evidence, but do so at the cost of lost musical function. Lying between these two, and by no means a merely theoretical construct, is restorative conservation.

The central part of the book—Introduction to Conservation: Considerations for Organ Specialists—is a superb tour de force of definitions, investigative methodologies, and conservation and restoration

techniques. To illustrate his many points, Watson provides a plethora of practical case studies, each carefully chosen to illustrate the philosophy of restorative conservation. Here are documentation, analytical techniques, repair methods, cleaning protocols, coatings, infills, and much more, all laid out as didactic exercises in maintaining function while not compromising substance. Although aimed at practitioners in organ restoration, there is much here of a general nature and very useful to non-specialists. This is the book's toolkit, and it is a very complete one.

Of particular importance, especially in large and complex restoration/conservation projects, is the team approach. Watson's 2005 publication, *Organ Restoration Reconsidered* (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press), is evidence that this aspect of conservation practice is dear to his heart. He describes the church organ in its multi-faceted nature as musical workhorse, liturgical prop, historical artifact, donor's memorial, decorative element, architectural component, voice of a past composer, and record of historical organ-building. Watson argues that the instrument can be all of these things, and thus a variety of diverse stakeholders might well need to be consulted. A table on page 196 shows the advisors and the values and expertise they represent for a range of potential scenarios. "To borrow language from the courts, judging the best treatment of an organ requires the testimony of not one or two, but all the expert witnesses who can shed light on the case" (p. 199). Discussion of the team approach is followed by description of the five phases of the conservation sequence, with the assistance of a clear symbolic flow chart (p. 200).

The appendixes provide information on the Companion Website to the book (a very clever additional resource), historical and construction specifications of all the organs used as didactic material in the book, and the *Organ Historical Society Guidelines for Conservation*. The latter is a very clear, detailed, and valuable document, adopted by the Society in 2008, and demonstrating a forward-thinking attitude among its membership. The bibliography is extensive and complete, covering all the standard museological texts but also including social history and philosophy references not normally found in technical textbooks.

Although this book is about the preservation and restoration of organs, the philosophical background and practical approach are equally applicable to the whole range of those historic artifacts that must be used in order to be fully interpreted. Anyone involved in the treatment of historic artifacts—whether they be aircraft, steam locomotives, clocks, firearms, or violins—will derive enormous benefit from this work. The

title *Artifacts in Use* is well chosen because it alludes to a greater readership, and one hopes that this will assist in making the book widely known and read. There is a risk, especially with modern highly directed bibliographic searches, of missing key works whose titles fall outside the parameters of the search. At this point I shamelessly plug my own work, *The Preservation and Use of Historic Musical Instruments* (London: Earthscan, 2004), and wish I had had John Watson's foresight in, at least, titling my work to appeal to that larger readership.

Artifacts in Use: The Paradox of Restoration and the Conservation of Organs is an essential book, and one that should be on the bookshelf of every conservator and restorer or, better still, on their workbenches and held open with a suitably heavy tool or a scrap of wood. Additionally, much of the philosophical background that occupies the first section of the book will be of equal interest to those players, musicologists, and organologists who deal with older instruments and other functioning historic properties. The description and elucidation of the social transactions that create and maintain historical and aesthetic value are universally applicable. This is a work that will stand, in its depth, detail, methodology, and scope, for a generation and more as a definitive text on a very complex and little-appreciated subject.

R. L. BARCLAY
OTTAWA

Tina Frühauf. *The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 284 pp.: illus. ISBN: 978-0-19-533706-8. \$74.00.

Writing about a vanished culture is a daunting task when there has been somewhat sporadic previous work in the field and the author approaches the subject from without. The scholarly work of Tina Frühauf, a German musicologist who is neither a Jew nor an instrument builder, is in large part motivated by a cultural curiosity that can be exercised more calmly two generations following the most recent of the Jewish diasporas. Her ground-breaking monograph, *The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture*, investigates the organ's role in post-Enlightenment German-Jewish society.

This is not a book about organs *per se*, but an investigation that places the instrument in the context of how Jewish culture, worship,