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the pages on which their transcriptions and translations are given. (5) Clarify ambiguous terminology in the text such as use of the term *ìyáàlù* for both the main *bàtá* drum and the main *dùndún*. (6) Clarify, as needed, captions on the notated examples so they coordinate with the recorded music. These include Ex. A II. 1., p. 132, in which two drum ensembles are scored together, whereas these are actually heard separately, *seriatim*, on the CD; and Ex. 3.7., p. 82, for which the caption lists “*dùndún* and *bàtá*,” whereas the referenced recordings are of *bàtá* first and *dùndún* later.

Nevertheless, this book is a tour de force. It is a welcome resource for organologists, ethnomusicologists, and drummers; and it also offers much of interest to linguists, anthropologists, and persons involved in African Studies.

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**Barbara Owen.** *The Great Organ at Methuen: From its Celebrated Arrival in Nineteenth-Century Boston to the Present.* OHS Monographs in American Organ History, no. 7. Richmond, VA: OHS Press, 2011. xiii, 397 pp: 172 illustrations (157 black and white, 15 color), 1 table, 8 appendices. ISBN: 978-0-913499-40-5. \$39.99 (hardbound).

Barbara Owen's scholarship is widely known and respected through her numerous books about the pipe organ and countless articles in many publications; perhaps best known is *The Organ in New England*, published by Sunbury Press in 1979. Her latest book, *The Great Organ at Methuen*, not just for organists and organ historians, is a fascinating history of one of America's most loved organs, its triumphs and trials over nearly 150 years in two cities.

The first section, consisting of eight chapters, chronicles the developments that led to the commissioning of the organ for the Music Hall of Boston, Massachusetts. Owen begins with the movers and shakers of Boston, coalescing in the conscious need to build a large auditorium for musical and other cultural events, much like concert halls then found across the Atlantic Ocean. Music Hall opened on November 20, 1852, with a concert attended by 2,500 people. Choral and instrumental programs were featured initially, and the hall was used for lectures and religious meetings. Studios were provided for teaching and other activities.

Once Music Hall was in operation, attention turned to procuring a world-class pipe organ for the space. A committee, driven by the efforts of Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham, led the charge to finance and purchase what would be the first concert hall organ in the nation. Indeed, it was the largest organ installation in America to date. Owen's narrative is particularly intriguing as she paints a vivid picture of the people involved in directing the course of organ selection. In 1857, a contract was signed with E. F. Walcker of Ludwigsburg, Germany, to build the instrument, leading to considerable consternation that an American builder was not selected. The ship carrying parts arrived in Boston on March 23, 1863, and the Great Organ was opened with imposing ceremonies on Monday, November 2. Owen provides comprehensive data of the frequent programs that utilized the organ, not just solo organ recitals. Analyses of composers, organ literature, and organ transcriptions provide us with a glimpse of how the recitalists selected programs. The source for much of this information is John S. Dwight and his *Dwight's Journal of Music*.

Installation of the organ caught the attention and imagination of the entire nation. For the next decade, large organ installations nationwide were frequently compared to this instrument, in size and in other qualities. One can find mention of the Great Organ and its influence in organ dedication accounts as late as 1915, several years after the Walcker organ was moved to Methuen. The magnificent carved case, designed by Boston's Hammatt Billings and executed by Gustav and Christian Herter of New York, was often reproduced in illustrations, and had an obvious influence in the design of the organ case in the Mormon Tabernacle, as far away as Salt Lake City, Utah.

In less than two decades, however, the fate of the organ was in jeopardy, as tastes in music had shifted. The uniqueness of the instrument lessened as more concert hall organs dotted the American landscape. With the establishment of the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Music Hall, it was decided to remove the Great Organ. With little fanfare, it was placed in storage in May 1884, with the intent to reinstall the instrument in a concert hall at the New England Conservatory, but this plan did not come to fruition.

The second part of the book, encompassing seven chapters, tells how the organ "sold for a song" at auction, purchased by the wealthy Edward F. Searles for \$1,500, a fraction of its original \$60,000 cost. The Great Organ was rebuilt and installed in a new concert hall erected at Searles' Methuen Organ Company factory in Methuen, Massachusetts. It was inaugurated in concert on December 9, 1909. Owen details for us

how the organ has survived in its present home for more than a century, despite dangers and dark periods of time due to fire in the adjacent factory in 1943, periods of disuse, and flood. She documents how the organ was rebuilt in 1909 and again in 1947 by the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company of Boston, in addition to more recent alterations. Today, the organ is featured in regularly-scheduled concerts with visiting artists from around the globe. The story ends approaching the organ's sesquicentennial in 2013. Owen's narrative is vivid and engaging; it is obviously a story she is deeply inspired to tell.

Visually appealing in its layout, the monograph is profusely illustrated, including stunning photographs of the organ taken through the decades. Of particular note are black-and-white photographs by W. King Covell, taken between 1929 and 1947, and a beautiful set of contemporary color photographs by Len Levasseur. The book is well edited, with few noticeable typographical errors and a typeface that is elegant and easy to read. The organ's specifications from 1863, 1909, 1947, and the present are grouped in the appendices for easy reference. Other sections at the end of the book provide an analysis of music played on the organ in 1863 and a list of recordings made with the instrument on various media.

It is difficult to imagine how the book could be improved. Undeniably a monumental work about a monumental organ and its influence in America, it is a model upon which one hopes other books will follow in detailing other important pipe organs in this country. The book embodies the mission statement of the Organ Historical Society, which established the OHS Press, in its dedication to "documenting and preserving historic pipe organs and to raise public awareness and appreciation of America's organ heritage."

STEPHEN SCHNURR

SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH, VALPARAISO, INDIANA

**John Milnes, ed. *Musical Instruments in the Ashmolean Museum: The Complete Collection*. Oxford: Oxford Musical Instrument Publishing, 2011. 384 pp., over 300 color photographs, tables, bibliography. ISBN 978-0-9567679-0-5. £290 (hardbound).**

For two centuries the Hill family was at the center of the violin trade in England, from the time Joseph Hill (1715–1784) was apprenticed to Peter Wamsley until 1992 when the legendary firm of W.E. Hill & Sons