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flaws. Szego and his colleagues deserve hearty congratulations for presenting much important information and many useful images in an area of guitar research that has hitherto been neglected and sometimes misinterpreted.

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Stephen Cottrell. *The Saxophone*. The Yale University Instrument Series. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012. 390 pp.: 120 black-and-white illus., 22 musical exx., 6 tables. ISBN: 9780300100419. \$45.00 (cloth).

Stephen Cottrell's long awaited volume offers a comprehensive scholarly history of this iconic instrument. Until now, academic research on saxophone topics has tended to be in the form of "detective work" in DMA theses, but as the author states, "most writing about the instrument occurs in newspapers and magazines or, more recently, on forums and blogs" (xv). From these and from his own exhaustive pursuits, Cottrell's purpose was to synthesize an all-encompassing *book*, the first of its kind. While written for the general reader, there is plenty for pupil and professor alike, with "many other voices" (scholars, journalists, critics, and saxophonists) telling much of the story (xvii). The author is to be commended, for although there appears to be almost no stone unturned in his search for clarity, at no point did the prose collapse under the weight of superfluous facts and data. Considerable print is devoted to anthropology, including the class, cultural, racial, and gender associations in which the saxophone came into its own. Cottrell provides a thoughtful, thorough, and even-handed account from start to finish.

For those new to the subject, the author provides a basic "how-to" introduction to the saxophone, with brief, yet enticingly descriptive overviews with pictures of the instrument and its accessories, along with acoustical and performance considerations. In his biography of Adolphe Sax (1814–1894), Cottrell offers the most complete portrait to date of the celebrated inventor, who, in his long career appears to have had as many successes as setbacks and friends as foes. Sax was an influential figure, as well as a complex psychological study, a man of determination who, as the author states, is "possibly deserving of a more extensive biography" than what is presently available (xvii). Particularly painful for this reader was the missed opportunity to discuss more thoroughly Richard Wagner's impressions, who stated that because of Sax, who worked as a

conductor of stage ensembles at the Paris Opéra, "It was an impossibility ever to get this [offstage] music [from *Tannhäuser*] played properly" (33).

Cottrell painstakingly traces the evolution of the saxophone family through practically every design change, innovation, and offshoot until 1970. With a multitude of technical considerations, this section is not for the merely mildly interested, since much of the language is derived from patent copy, though sketches provide some relief, and occasionally some British terms are inconsistent with international usage, e.g., "button" vs. "bis" B-flat fingering (73). The photos in this section and throughout the book are eye-catching in size and resolution, full of wonderful details and seductive contours. However, one plate mislabels Rothophone and Sarrusophone (68), and another, showing a Selmer Mark VI alto with a rare low A extension, is accompanied by the claim that this model is "often equipped" with such a feature (265).

While the early performing history of the saxophone remains a patchwork, Cottrell is clear on several points: initial demand for saxophones was low; few skilled performers were to be found; most composers were unwilling to score for the instrument; thus, in Europe, the saxophone went into decline, although there is no accounting for the eight saxophonists in a Russian band at the 1867 Paris Exhibition. One curious point of etymology might have been further investigated: the early attempts of Jullien and others, over a five-year period, to establish the saxophone as the *corno musa*. The moniker "Sax," as attached to a musical instrument, smacks of aggressive, modern-day branding, so perhaps an enlightenment-era identity matching the instrument's lofty timbre associations might have fared better in the inventor's lifetime?

The most colorful chapter relates to the period between 1885 and 1930, particularly in the United States, where vaudeville, circuses, minstrelsy, and ragtime fueled the public's near insatiable appetite for saxophones. Cottrell follows long-touring saxophone ensembles such as the Musical Spillers and Brown Brothers, and the rise of virtuosos, particularly Rudy Wiedoft, and outlines the evolution of the dance band sax section. Improved recording technologies and greater efficiency in instrument production coincided with the popularity of jazz, all together spawning a saxophone craze. In leading up to this, the author mentions then Congressman C. G. Conn's influential bill, passed into law in 1899, requiring saxophones in all US military bands, yet he later fails to point out how band instrument companies, such as Conn and Buescher, again

conspired to create the market for “student-line” instruments in the 1920s, an even greater boon for saxophone manufacturers. The most fascinating fact was that Rachmaninoff, during his 1924 recording of his Piano Concerto No. 2, replaced the double basses with a bass saxophone.

As is to be expected, the chapter on jazz has the greatest continuity. Much scholarship and popular writing on the subject already exists, and with first-person accounts being commonplace, these are used liberally. Cottrell chooses wisely to focus on the primary innovators only through the 1960s. He discusses the lineage regarding tone quality and improvising style, connecting the “family tree” of jazz saxophonists in convincing fashion. His portrayal of classical saxophone is also excellent, highlighting the innovators in the field but also suggesting several reasons the instrument never really caught on in this area. His comparison of saxophone and string quartets is instructive, although many would question the conservative ranges he assigns to professional saxophonists. The chapter on “Modernism and post-modernism” can feel a bit like a volume of “Who’s Who,” but considering the impressive amount of ground needing to be covered—technology, extended techniques, and pedagogy, as well as contemporary classical, jazz, rock, pop, and world music—this format was necessary and was successfully presented.

The final chapter, “The Saxophone as Symbol and Icon,” covers the rich history of the saxophone in the contexts of modernity, the making of America, so-called “degeneracy,” racial stereotypes and discrimination, politics, gender roles, and sexuality. The author writes in persuasive fashion about how the saxophone, more than any other instrument, is woven into the fabric of nearly every aspect of our modern world. It is an inescapable presence, and for this, and for Stephen Cottrell’s new book, *The Saxophone*, I am grateful.

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