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interesting narratives that surround them and shares observations on contemporary music and on playing the baroque flute.

Blakeman's chapter on Wibb's recordings includes the author's list of Top 20 recordings, including a special note about Wibb's 1978 recording of the Mozart flute concertos with the English Chamber Orchestra, George Malcolm conducting. The final chapters, "Teaching" and "Playing," offer specific guidance to the flutist, focusing on resonance and the value of singing, note bends and harmonics, articulation, shaping a phrase, and the importance of body alignment and holding the flute properly: "The body and flute resonate together" (p. 160). Wibb reveals one of his most exciting breakthroughs, following a performance of Haydn's *Creation* with soprano April Cantelo in the 1960s. "I'd always thought of the sound of the flute coming from where the air comes out from the lips, but I felt the flute wasn't outside me at the moment, it wasn't perched on my lip. . . . the air came from inside my body, as when you sing" (p. 164). He offers thoughts on difference tones and whistle tones, on the use of sensitive fingerings and, always woven into each discussion, on his lifelong quest for playing in tune. An interesting further dimension might have consisted of Wibb's most successful students' reflections on the important concepts of his teaching. And an index would be helpful: while Blakeman separates topics by chapter, there is inevitable overlap, and an index would assist the reader in finding information and connections more easily.

Growing up with artists who saw the world in terms of color, Wibb was fascinated by beauty of sound, variety of tone color, and accurate intonation. His lifelong cultivation of them in his playing, teaching, conversation, and practice led him to the top of his profession. A reading of this book about him will reward those seeking the insights of one of the masters of the flute.

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Robert Adelson, Alain Roudier, Jenny Nex, Laure Barthel, and Michel Foussard, eds. *The History of the Erard Piano and Harp in Letters and Documents, 1785–1959*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 2 Volumes (hardback), 1134 pages, 40 illustrations. English text with an appendix in French. ISBN: 9781107092914. €155.00 (US \$258.00).

Among the various figures that left a permanent impression in the development of musical instruments during the last three centuries, the name

of Erard holds a prominent position. The firm that was founded by Sébastien Erard (1752–1831), one of the most prolific inventors and manufacturers of musical instruments of his time, had a long-lasting influence in the shaping of the modern piano and harp, introducing new manufacture and marketing standards, and producing thousands of instruments in London and Paris between the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries. The pianos and harps bearing Erard's signature were, above all, powerful symbols of status that found a place both in the fashionable homes of contemporary celebrities and in the hands of famous virtuosi at concert halls across Europe.

This new publication, a team effort of five acknowledged scholars and Erard experts, brings together in a compact form and in an attractive layout a substantial amount of the extant Erard archives. Several files that had appeared previously in diverse sources, along with fresh, unpublished material and, most importantly, with new contextualization resulting from the latest research on Erard, are unified in this two-volume set, thus allowing for a creative revision of these records and illuminating many unknown sides of this ground-breaking firm. The outline and size of the two volumes has been largely determined by the archival material under discussion. The first volume is divided in four parts, namely inventions, business, composers, and performers connected to Erard, whereas the second volume contains the surviving Erard correspondence. In both volumes the main texts are in English, while the original French texts from the Erard archives are given in the appendix. Although adding nothing new to the content, the inclusion of the French texts is helpful for those wanting to investigate these documents more deeply, since sometimes the meaning of certain words, terms, or expressions can be changed or lost in translation.

Apart from the meticulous transcriptions and translations of the original archives, which form the lion's share of this publication, the two volumes include brief introductory texts that will be valuable especially for those not familiar with Erard and the firm's output. After the necessary acknowledgments and some useful editorial notes at the beginning, the first volume starts with an introduction describing the history of the Gaveau-Erard-Pleyel archives and providing a short biography of Erard with details about his family origins, his close relatives, and the company he established. Additionally, it presents the evolution of the Erard piano and harp, as well as Erard's lesser known experiments with expressive organs. On the other hand, the introduction in the second volume focuses on Erard's two most oft-cited inventions, the double-action pedal

mechanism for the harp (1810), and the double-escapement action for the piano (1822). This introduction also includes an interesting analysis of Erard's customer profiles based on the sales of his first 100 double-action harps in London between 1811 and 1812, as well as details about the promotion of Erard's new piano through Liszt's performances in 1824. One of the most important features of this publication concerns the plentiful explanatory comments in footnotes, providing noteworthy information about people, locations, firms, institutions, or instruments mentioned in the Erard documents and letters. The text is accompanied by forty black and white illustrations, including surviving instruments, portraits, drawings, photographs, and archival material relating to the Erard firm. Finally, the end of the second volume includes an extensive bibliography along with indexes for names and places which will satisfy those wishing to systematically examine Erard's wide international network.

Erard's documents and letters presented in these two volumes provide the opportunity to discover the personalities and everyday activities not only of those at the head of the firm but also of those involved in the actual production of instruments or those undertaking administrative tasks and other duties in Erard's workshop. Moreover, they contain a wealth of information on Erard's clientele, on the family's friends and associates, as well as on their critics and competitors. These archives reveal, for instance, Erard's close personal and professional relationship to renowned musicians and musical instrument manufacturers, such as Clementi or Broadwood, but also to leading craftsmen and entrepreneurs outside the music business, such as Abraham Louis Breguet, the famous watchmaker (see, for example, letter 7.131, p. 95). Indeed, the impact of Erard's acquaintance with artisans from other trades who were at the forefront of technical innovation, and who may have played a major role in Erard's own inventions and improvements for the harp and piano, is a topic that deserves further analysis. Erard's commercial success was not least due to the strong links he had to European royalty and nobility, as evidenced, for example, by the exclusive privilege that was granted for his pianos in 1785 by Louis XVI (p. 49). In addition, the numerous celebrated individuals, predominantly from the higher strata of society, which often appear in these archives, confirm on one hand the appeal of Erard's instruments to fashionable circles and on the other hand the firm's effective advertising and marketing methods (see, for instance, letter 169, pp. 623–624, or letter 297, pp. 763–767). In particular, the correspondence

between Sébastien Erard and his nephew Pierre brings to light countless fascinating details about the structure and operation of the firm. We witness, for example, how in the letters between the two men around 1819, the attention shifts from the harp to the piano (letter 245, pp. 702–704, or letter 257, pp. 715–717), with Pierre eagerly anticipating the patent for this instrument and advising his uncle on the setup of a manufactory in London, while referring to the workforces and production numbers of his contemporaries. Likewise, we observe how the occasional hiring or firing of personnel (letter 99, pp. 549–550 or letter 142, pp. 594–595), some of whom would seek employment at Erard's rivals (letter 263, pp. 722–723), seems to have been a common measure in order to increase production in times of high demand or to spare costs when money was scarce. Apart from offering an unparalleled insight into Erard's oeuvre, this material can also be viewed from a variety of historical, geopolitical, socioeconomic, and cultural angles. One can explore, for instance, aspects of engineering and industrial manufacture, the function of financial transactions and legal procedures, the complexities of the patent system, the evolution of certain musical styles or performance practices, class and gender issues, the development of popular leisure and entertainment events, eating and drinking habits, or methods of communication, transport and travel during the firm's era, to name but a few.

For a publication of this depth and breadth, the authors have efficiently managed to maintain a well-defined structure and consistency on all levels. There are, however, some minor points for constructive criticism. To begin with, the title is somewhat misleading, since what is contained in these two volumes is actually a presentation of the Gaveau-Erard-Pleyel archives, now the property of the AXA insurance group, rather than of all the existing archival documents pertaining to the history of the Erard firm. For example, the part listing Erard's inventions is quite limited, as it does not include the Erard patents issued in England, while there is no mention of the patent texts and drawings preserved at the British Intellectual Property Office (prior to 2007 known as the Patent Office). Secondly, in a work of such scope, addressed mainly to a specialist audience, it is sometimes inevitable to overlook details that may be crucial for the average reader. As an example, for the reader's convenience the note on contemporary currency on p. xxiv could describe the situation in both France and in Britain, additionally listing equivalent prices for the costs of the same instrument (e.g., a piano or harp), so that one could easily understand any differences between the two

countries. Unfortunately, information on British currency is first mentioned in the second volume and only in footnote 6, p. 529. Thirdly, a large number of the images as well as parts of the introductory texts already have been presented in earlier publications, such as in the exhibition catalogue by Adelson et al, *Erard and the Invention of the Modern Harp, 1811-2011* (Nice: Musée du Palais Lascaris, 2011). Here, some new images and details of extant instruments by Erard, numerous of which have survived in public and private collections (apart from those owned by AXA), which could illustrate the chronological development of the different designs, would have been particularly welcome. Moreover, in some cases it is not clear how the pictorial material was selected and arranged. For instance, one wonders why the authors chose to show the French patent for the double-action harp issued in 1811 (illus. 22, p. 524) instead of the earlier British patent, which was enrolled in 1810. In contrast, the authors include images of two early Erard harps made in Paris, both labelled as prototypes without further clarification in the second volume (illus. 33 and 34, on pp. 732 and 733 respectively), though one would expect to find such images in the introductory text on the development of the harp in the first volume, where the reader actually sees one of the last harps made by the Erard firm (illus. 6, p. 33). It seems that the authors' emphasis was evidently on presenting experimental models or rarities (e.g., labelled as "the earliest model"), since few of the standard types of harp and piano that Erard produced, and his customers would have used, are described or depicted in the two volumes.

In conclusion, although far from being the comprehensive book on the history of Erard, these two volumes can open new windows for the future study of this important firm, providing a rich material for further research and interpretation from different perspectives. This publication is, therefore, a significant contribution to musicological and organological literature and will certainly become a necessary reference source not only for those interested in the history of the piano and harp, but also in musical instrument manufacture and musical life in general from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

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