



OXFORD JOURNALS
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Performance: Revealing the Orpheus within by Anthony Rooley

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Source: *Early Music*, Aug., 1991, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Aug., 1991), pp. 451-453

Published by: Oxford University Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/3127785>

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revisions of the curial liturgy and the later revisions that began with Haymo. This is probably true in a sense, but I think it would have been wiser not to have exaggerated the importance of the Franciscans for these reforms, particularly as the manuscript in question was not intended for their use. It now seems unlikely that the curial liturgy was practised widely outside Rome and the Franciscan order, and some of the apparently Franciscan elements in the reformed liturgies may well have been adopted from elsewhere—as for example from Lucca, as Pierre-Marie Gy suggested some years ago.

The larger part of Bezuidenhout's book consists of parallel transcriptions of the melodies in Grey 6 b 4 and their counterparts in other sources, nearly all of them of curial or Franciscan origin. Some antiphons are published here for the first time to my knowledge. None of them is unique in Grey 6 b 4 since all but two appear in René-Jean Hesbert's *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, and even these are present in some of Bezuidenhout's controls. As is often the case, some antiphons vary slightly from the texts published by Hesbert, sometimes with an additional phrase or two of music: these may be significant when there is a chance of finding chants that are rare, perhaps even from the famous 'Old Roman' chant, but this is unlikely to have happened here.

Bezuidenhout covers a surprising amount of ground in his book and makes a good case for the importance of his manuscript. At times he is a little too even-handed: some of the questions he raises are less pertinent to the 13th century than others, and those that are most pertinent deserve more detailed consideration.

Performance: Revealing the Orpheus Within

ANTHONY ROOLEY *Element Books, Shaftesbury*, 1990, £7.99

Angela Voss

Element Books are currently cornering the market for books on all aspects of 'perennial wisdom' in practice, from

astrology to Zen Buddhism, with the aim, as their catalogue puts it, of meeting 'the needs of a rapidly developing worldwide movement towards spiritual harmony, understanding and growth'. Through appealing to personal experience, committed and enthusiastic practitioners aim to guide us towards greater self-awareness through their particular disciplines. Anthony Rooley's book offers an insight into the potential of performance as a key to self-knowledge.

It is a personal testimony to Rooley's experience as a teacher and performer, with emphasis on the living moment of performer-audience contact. He writes from firmly within a Neoplatonic model of spiritual hierarchies; but his conviction that Renaissance attitudes towards the performing arts have much to teach us today is infectious and undoubtedly justified. It raises issues which need to be voiced.

Rooley has the courage to address the deeper significance of an experience we may take for granted, as performers or listeners. With the aid of simple, clear diagrams he suggests that the true role of the performer is that of a channel for higher creative energy, and that the act of performance is essentially a ritual which creates the conditions for the refined awareness of the contemplative state. The idea of performer and audience being drawn together and merging (as Orpheus desires to unite with the longing of Eurydice) in what might be called a 'peak experience' is powerful; Rooley goads the reader into considering his whole life in terms of participation in a great performance, where the personality, like a mask, serves to enhance the part played at any one time. Rooley explains how Orpheus can be such a powerful symbol for the individual's creative potential: in the act of performance not only the audience may be profoundly moved, but the performer's own being may be tempered and his unruly elements harnessed.

Rooley calls for a new approach to music education which would embrace the spiritual significance of artistic enterprise and encourage true 'religious' awareness in the performer—an urgent

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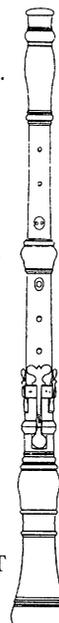
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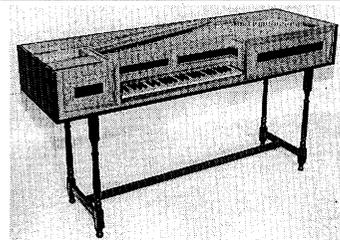
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need indeed in today's commercial world, where the role of the patron as an embodiment of the noblest human values has become debased into mere sponsorship. Perhaps the most profound point of the book is the recognition that 'In creating the arts we imitate what God does' (p.109). In other words, in the human act of creative contemplation our level of awareness is raised beyond that of everyday consciousness, into connection or alignment with a realm which in religious traditions is regarded as divine.

Rooley's personal approach, however, will probably raise a few eyebrows. He acknowledges the inspiration of many performers in many different musical traditions, and stresses (p.87) that first-hand experience is necessary to balance 'myth-making'. It would be refreshing therefore to hear from at least a few other recognized performers about *their* attitudes towards performance. Rooley's experience is necessarily limited to the lute-song repertoire and his own subjective insights whilst performing. Not all performers would regard their art in his terms. Although the lute-song undoubtedly serves as a powerful medium for the union of words and music (and Rooley's love for and knowledge of the repertoire springs from every page), if he is to reach the average musician some attention could have been drawn to the similar potential of other types of chamber music.

There is a fine line between infectious enthusiasm and evangelical zeal, and Rooley sometimes hovers dangerously on the border. Rooley's enthusiasm to convince sometimes results in interposing himself between us and the material with an unnecessary tone of apology, as if he assumes an innate resistance on the part of the reader to the ideas he is advocating. This often manifests in a sudden descent from pithy, rhetorical language to the banal and colloquial, which not only underestimates the intellectual capacity of the reader but dangerously undermines the import of the point in question. For example, the fundamental requirement for the performer as mediator of creative energy to move away

from an ego-centred position is made to sound like a child's game: 'The performer's practice is to learn to flick from side one to side two the instant you realize you have flipped back' (p.27). And why reduce the subtle complexities of numerology to 'A wonderful Renaissance concept of having your cake and eating it!' (p.37). Rooley suggests that the 'neo-platonic working model . . . may take some swallowing' (p.87). Surely one should not be asked to swallow it, but rather to hold it vividly in mind as one possible framework for finding order in chaos and creating a meaningful pattern for evaluating human experience.

There is also a condescension in Rooley's writing which may serve only to alienate the reader unfamiliar with Neoplatonic cosmic hierarchies. The diagrams speak for themselves and need no apology—it is unnecessary to emphasize that 'The beauty and simplicity of the concepts presented in these diagrams are such that only the most die-hard anti-elitist will find it difficult. Even for them the effort will be worthwhile' (p.28). Criticism of 'carping critics' as an anonymous herd is fine, but again Rooley treads dangerously in his naming particular critics (probably unknown to most readers), who, one can only assume, have given him bad reviews. No doubt he is right—but one feels the spirit of Orpheus would rise above such a desire to single out, and see hostile opinion for what it is worth.

The use of more qualifying phrases would greatly ease a certain tendency towards statements which often beg many questions. To read, for example, of a dot on the page 'Here is the Divine Mind' (p.35), that 'Harmony is intoxication' (p.118) and that '[pulse and rhythm] dance together, and together express love, which is harmony' (p.117) leads to a barrage of question marks and the need for some disciplined elaboration. Frequent reference to 'the Divine' or 'things Divine' might well prove problematic for a non-spiritual reader, for whom more clarification in simple psychological terms might be an advantage. For example, 'perceived through the soul' (p.107) may mean a lot less

than, say, 'intuitively grasped'.

In the sections dealing with historical/philosophical material on Orpheus and Neoplatonism, so much information is densely presented for digestion that the reader may find the sparsity of footnotes and bibliographical references annoying (was there a fear that the book would appear too 'scholarly?'). There is a real danger of over-simplification through eagerness to convey a lot in a few words; a sentence such as 'The [lyre] represented the harmony of the spheres ("as above, so below" with Hermes the mediator) and its seven strings represented the law of number governing the structure of the universe, which knowledge was made available by Pythagoras, proving he was in line with a divine plan' (p.80) leaves one gasping for breath and deserves a book in itself. In particular, the Renaissance philosopher Marsilio Ficino, frequently quoted by Rooley, deserves a short paragraph of introduction.

In the appendices Rooley includes texts of lute-songs which, although fine poetry, are perhaps rather meaningless without their music in a book on performance. Not all readers will find 17th-century poetry edifying (and Rooley does not fully explain his purpose in including them). Fewer of them printed in their entirety, or perhaps an accompanying cassette, would surely entice those unfamiliar with this repertoire.

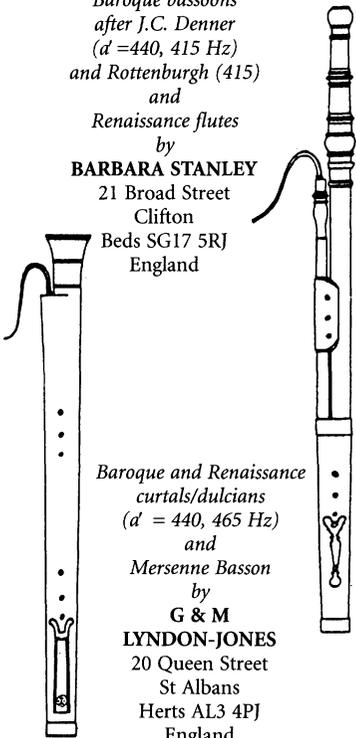
The cover-note suggests that everyone needs to be reminded that 'all the world's a stage' and that life may be enhanced by attention to one's quality of performance. The seasoned performer may well find this book rather too idiosyncratic for practical use. But for those inexperienced in the performing arts, eager to step beyond humdrum reality, it could offer new insights into the significance of everyday encounters and activities, and encourage an exploration of the richness and relevance of Classical and Renaissance attitudes towards the arts.

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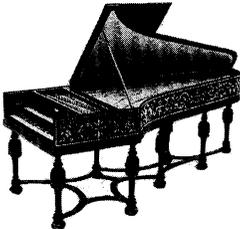
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