

## REVIEWS

David M. Guion, *The Trombone: Its History and Music, 1697-1811*. (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1988), 333 pp., bibliography, illustrations.

**T**he 18th century is a poorly understood era in the history of the trombone. David Guion demonstrates that while the instrument was less conspicuous during this century than in either the preceding or following one, it nonetheless appears occasionally in the works of most of the important composers—Bach, Handel, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, to name but the most prominent. This was a transitional age, one that saw critical changes in the form, function and repertoire of the instrument.

Guion's chronological limits derive from the dates of two important treatises. Daniel Speer's *Grundrichtiger Unterricht* (1697) represents the 17th-century approach, rooted in the tradition of the *Stadtpfeifer*. Joseph Fröhlich's *Musikschule* (1811), on the other hand, is the earliest extant "modern" trombone tutor. Comparison of the latter book with Speer's reveals important changes, among them the transition from four diatonic to seven chromatic positions and the change in the basic pitch of the instrument from A to B $\flat$ . In Chapter Two, Guion provides original text and English translations for relevant portions of both treatises, and for 24 additional 18th- and early 19th-century sources pertaining to the trombone. This is perhaps the strongest chapter in the book. The translations, though mostly not by Guion himself, are excellent, and the coverage is exhaustive—perhaps overly so. Guion devotes approximately one-third of the book to this material, yet many of the sources are redundant, and only a handful are based on first-hand knowledge of the instrument.

Equally thorough is Guion's coverage of French music from the years immediately preceding and following the Revolution. Sections of the book devoted to this repertoire amply demonstrate the author's command of primary source material, although the quality of the music does not justify the space devoted to it. Particularly unnecessary are the detailed synopses of obscure French operas whose trombone parts are of negligible interest.

If Guion overemphasizes French music, he conversely slights Austrian music. For the latter repertoire, he relies too heavily on modern editions of the music, and on the work of Robert Wigness. Since Wigness' book, *The Soloistic Use of the Trombone in Eighteenth-Century Vienna* (Nashville, 1978), is itself based almost exclusively on works available in modern editions, Guion has left virtually untouched the immense body of Austrian sacred music that remains in manuscript. Richard Raum's article "Extending the Solo and Chamber Repertoire for the Alto Trombone" (*ITA Journal*, vol. xvi, no. 2, summer, 1988), offers a glimpse of the scope and quality of this repertoire, though it appeared too late to be considered by Guion. But Guion should have known Bruce MacIntyre's *The Viennese Concerted Mass of the Early Classic Period* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986), which was available in dissertation form as early as 1984. Of the 72 masses in MacIntyre's thematic catalogue (Appendix C), nearly half contain trombone parts, many of them virtuosic in style. Moreover, MacIntyre offers valuable

comments on the function of the trombone within the mass. My own unpublished research on Viennese oratorios and *sepoleri* reveals a sizable body of solo arias with florid obbligato parts for one and two trombones, yet Guion barely mentions this repertoire.

Regarding the instrument's construction, Guion's rather cursory account is again heavily indebted to secondary sources. He acknowledges that important changes occurred, but confines his discussion to generalities: the change from flat to tubular stays, the advent of the flared bell and the disappearance of crooks. Several 18th-century instruments survive, yet the author seems not to have examined any of them closely; he offers no measurements or detailed drawings.

Guion's book has an extensive bibliography and a detailed index. Illustrative plates are numerous, well chosen, and for the most part, nicely reproduced. Musical examples are consistent in format and generally easy to read, though most were copied by hand, with instrument designations in typescript. Surprisingly, Guion provides no examples for the important instrumental works of Wagenseil, Albrechtsberger or Michael Haydn; yet he devotes nearly a full page to one full-score excerpt from a Salieri opera, showing but a single chord and one unison note for the three trombones.

Typographical errors are frequent enough to be disturbing: Fröhlich's name, for example, appears in three different forms. And consider the following sentence: "Beethoven's use of trombones as a doubling instrument is interesting chiefly for the deviations." One wonders about the quality of the editorial assistance provided by Gordon and Breach.

This book falls short of being the definitive study of the trombone in the 18th century. The prospective author who would improve on Guion's efforts faces a formidable task: a veritable mountain of music in manuscript awaits examination, particularly in Austria and Czechoslovakia; surviving instruments must be carefully scrutinized, and court, church and civic records and other original documents must be examined. Guion's study is a useful beginning, however. Performers and scholars alike will find a wealth of information here, and every reader will gain a greater appreciation for the trombone's importance in this critical period.

*Reviewed by Stewart Carter, professor of music at Wake Forest University.*

**Don L. Smithers, *The Music and History of the Baroque Trumpet before 1721*, Second Edition, Southern Illinois University Press, 1988, 352 pages, 19 plates, \$60.00.**

**I**t is a pleasure to be reviewing a second edition of the single most complete book on the Baroque trumpet in the English language. That it has remained so after a quarter of a century is especially noteworthy. But the pleasure is also alloyed with a little resignation that in the generation since this key work was produced, the true and complete revival of the Baroque trumpet remains almost entirely in the future. In the Preface to this Second Edition, Smithers discusses the lack of success in this endeavor in the no-nonsense terms which we have come to expect of him.

It would be pointless at this late stage to review what constitutes the original materi-

al of the book—this was done (with varying degrees of competence) some 25 years ago and nothing need be added. This review concentrates on the primary changes to the book, which are twofold: the 77 addenda, which elucidate and expand upon certain perceived weaknesses in the original text, or areas in which considerable new material has come to light; and the provision of several new illustrations and the dropping of some of those in the first edition.

The illustrations are generally a great improvement. Almost all the photographs of trumpets in the first edition were of elaborate silver instruments, quite obviously special orders for state occasions. Although they are exceedingly handsome, and illustrate the capability of the patriarchs of the great trumpet-making families, they are hardly typical. It is therefore good to see examples in the second edition of run-of-the-mill work, particularly in Plates 14 and 15, which show some very earth-bound, but far more typical, workmanship. The illustrations of coiled trumpets, especially the modern reproduction built to the author's own specifications, provide added documentation that the first edition lacked (particularly in view of the new material on coiled trumpets in the addenda). Some dimensions of components accompanying the photographs would have been welcome.

It is in the addenda that the lapse of 25 years between editions is felt most strongly, especially when the subject of bogus instrumentation and "musicological flimflam" comes up. The result is vintage Smithers. For example, in Addendum 13 the author states most emphatically that the use of fingerholes in instruments touted to be authentic, far from being a step on the road to good performance practice, has in fact retarded the true revival. While this short cut may once have been expedient, it has now become a hard habit to shake, particularly when a perfection beyond the means of the players is clearly required. That Smithers' adage, "if it is worth doing, it is worth doing badly," no longer has any currency is a sobering reflection on Baroque music's loss of innocence. Addendum 16 expands upon authenticity in tools and techniques: "That there are few trumpeters playing Baroque music today who can produce non-harmonic tones on a truly historical trumpet of eight-foot diapason pitch is less an indictment of their abilities than a sad commentary on their motivation for putting aside bogus instruments and learning the kind of techniques needed for a truly historical performance." This says it all, but it is the upcoming generation of trumpet players to whom it should be directed.

It is impossible to do justice to all the addenda in so short a space, but a few highlights that caught this reviewer's attention would not go amiss. On the technical side, the further explanation in Addendum 3 of the somewhat simplistic earlier statement that the trumpet bell flares exponentially is most welcome, as are the elucidations of theories of mouthpiece acoustics in Addenda 4, 5 and 6, especially in light of Smithers' own co-authored paper in *Scientific American* (April, 1986). The statement in Addendum 9 that the first harmonic is by no means a theoretical note, while not surprising now, makes one realize how far things have progressed since 1973. The oft-quoted contention that trumpet-makers "invented" the technique of bending tubes seems to have acquired the status of fact. However, no metalworker with a historical bent would accept such a statement at face value. As Smithers says in Addendum 26, "there is no doubt that the Romans were capable of bending metal tubes," which supports the growing contention that trumpets of the twice-folded variety have, in all probability,

an unbroken lineage from Classical times. It would have been satisfying to see some further comment on the early slide trumpet, particularly as it has been shown in an article in *Early Music* (by Peter Downey, in February, 1984) that "there is no need to propose the existence of a slide trumpet in the Renaissance . . ." Perhaps this will be dealt with in a later work?

Several of the addenda are bound to be controversial; they contain material that absolutely begs to be answered by the scholars cited therein. While thrust and parry are an essential feature of constructive scholarship, they must surely be conducted in a medium like a newsletter or journal that allows for rapid riposte. A book does not. Regarding reviews of the first edition, one gets more than a whiff in Addendum 63 of a controversy presumed dead these 25 years. "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised . . ." but, alas, not entirely incorruptible. These are mere bones; let them rest.

To conclude, promises of the forthcoming treatise on the Classical trumpet are scattered throughout, suggesting that, while this book will suffice, there's more and better on the way. Don't fill up on soup and bread, the main course is still a-cooking. Addendum 37 promises much-needed discussion on the techniques of the Baroque trumpet; Addendum 77 promises "comprehensive inventories of 18th-century trumpet music" to complement the as-yet-unsurpassed listing in the Appendix; and in the Preface to the Second Edition reference is made to a "far more comprehensive treatise on the subject." All of which leaves this reviewer (although supposedly writing on the welcome Second Edition of *The Music and History of the Baroque Trumpet before 1721*) licking his chops in anticipation of the coming banquet.

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Jener Donnerworte Kraft." Aria from Part I of the opera *Die Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebotes*, KV 35. Edited by Ken Shifrin. For tenor, trombone and strings. Virgo Music Publishers, P.O. Box 1068, Knowle, Solihull, West Midlands B94 6DT, England. 1986. Score and parts, \$14.50, piano reduction \$8.50.

Any trombonist who has played the famous solo from Mozart's Requiem will be pleased to learn of the existence of "Jener Donnerworte Kraft." This aria comes from the first act of a religious opera (or "sacred Singspiel"), *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebotes*, written by Mozart at the tender age of 11, on commission from his father's patron, the archbishop of Salzburg. The work was a collaborative one, the remaining acts having been commissioned from Michael Haydn and Cajetan Adlgasser.

This edition is from Virgo Music, a British firm. The music is not engraved, yet it is easy to read, with large notes on high-quality paper. Page turns are not always carefully planned: the second violin must turn a page during a tied note, even though a four-measure rest appears just two measures earlier.

Except for one brief passage in another number, "Jener Donnerworte Kraft" is the only aria with a trombone part in *Schuldigkeit*. The part is florid and melodic, with several trills. It should present an interesting—though not extremely difficult—challenge for the alto trombone or sackbut player, though the part, which reaches  $bb^1$ , is certainly within the range of a good tenor player.

Virgo advertises its edition as: "Not a transcription, not an arrangement. An authentic work by Mozart *uncovered by VIRGO MUSIC*" (italics mine). This statement is misleading; *Schuldigkeit* is listed in the first edition of the *Köchel Verzeichnis* (c. 1867), and it was published in its entirety in the first collected edition, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Werke* (hereafter called MW), series V, vol. 1, in 1880.

According to the most recent edition of the *Köchel Verzeichnis*, the autograph of *Schuldigkeit* is in Windsor Castle, but Shifrin's brief introduction offers no indication whether he consulted it. In fact, his edition appears to have been based on MW. Similarities in dynamic markings, notation of appoggiaturas, and certain other performance indications (such as the "con sord." in violin I and II, not found in the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* (NMA), lead to this conclusion. Shifrin should have identified his source.

If his source was MW, he would have been well advised to follow it more closely. To be sure, though it is inferior to NMA (ser. I, Werkgruppe 4, Bd. 1), it is in the main accurate as far as notes are concerned, with just a few incorrect slurs and dynamic markings. Shifrin apparently felt the need to re-edit—and in some cases, *over-edit*—MW. Dynamic markings occasionally are incorrect and unstylistic. In measure 2, for example, the trombone part in Shifrin's edition has the dynamic marking *mf*. The old Mozart edition has no marking at all here, and the new Mozart edition has *p!* Both the old and new Mozart editions have many dynamic markings, but only one crescendo (m. 119) and no diminuendos; Shifrin, however, has added many such indications.

Articulation markings are also problematic. Here again, had the editor merely followed the old Mozart edition, he would have provided a fairly accurate reading. For some reason, Shifrin felt constrained to add a few short slurs under longer slurs, as in the trombone part, mm. 17-18. In two instances these slurs oddly connect the fourth of one group of four 16th notes to the first of the following group. Furthermore, Shifrin's edition makes frequent use of the tenuto mark (horizontal dash), sometimes combined with a staccato mark; neither form appears in either MW or NMA.

Shifrin's handling of the text is similarly problematic. There is no English translation, and since the text is not a standard one, it is unavailable elsewhere. Moreover, the text, though carefully underlaid, is poorly edited. Spelling and word division are so inconsistent as to suggest that the editor has little knowledge of the German language. Most annoyingly, Shifrin does not even offer a translation of the title.

If you want to perform this work, you will probably want to buy the Virgo edition, in spite of its numerous flaws, since it is the only one with parts. A reasonable course of action would be to obtain the score from NMA, using this to make corrections in the Virgo parts. The piece is worth doing, and anyone with even a passing interest in historically informed performance will want to try to do it as Mozart—not Shifrin—conceived it.

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