

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MUSICAL ENSEMBLES WITH BRASS INSTRUMENTS IN EUROPEAN FESTIVALS OF STATE

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And there was music performed. Historical literature is chock full of annoyingly vague references such as this to musical instruments. Indeed, one soon becomes both frustrated and discouraged in attempting to ferret out really meaningful eyewitness accounts in hopes of discovering something that adds substantially to our knowledge of instruments and performance practices. Fortunately, there is one extremely fruitful corpus in this regard that helps fill this gap in a substantial way, with the additional bonus of cogent and reliable engravings depicting the scenes described: the specialized genre known as festival books. Part of a 300-year-old tradition of commemorating and preserving historically significant but otherwise ephemeral events of state by means of permanent written and visual records, these often sumptuous volumes, more often than not large and elegantly conceived, were produced upon command in limited quantities for a discriminating and elite audience of peers in order to broadcast and perpetuate for all times the festivities celebrating important political affairs, such as coronations, marriages, births and baptisms of progeny, official entries and state visits, peace treaties, oaths of allegiance and fidelity and state funerals.¹

Fortunately, many of these books describe in detail the musical performances that took place at these festivals. Some present us with both text and pictures, while others offer brief, tantalizing references without any illustrations of musical ensembles. Conversely, some volumes contain engravings of musicians without any significant references in the text to their performances. In the main, however, festival books can with provide us with important written and visual clues concerning the role of music in these events of state, the instrumental and vocal ensembles that provided this key ingredient, sometimes even organological details, and information on contemporary performance practices as well. Let's look at a few of these festivals from the perspective of the brass instruments that participated in the music-making.

1. There are no standard or complete bibliographies devoted exclusively to festival books; one must consult a variety of sources, the principal ones being: Jenaro Alenda y Mira, *Relaciones de solemnidades y fiestas publicas de españa* (Madrid, 1903); Jacques-Charles Brunet, *Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur du livres*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1921); *Catalogue des livres rares et précieux composant la bibliothèque de M. E.-F.-D. Ruggieri. Sacres des rois et des empereurs, entrées triomphales, mariages, tournois, joutes, carrousels, fêtes populaires et feux d'artifices* (Paris, 1873); Jean G. T. Graesse, *Trésor de livres rares et précieux, ou nouveau dictionnaire bibliographique*, 7 vols. and suppl. (Geneva/London/Paris, 1859-69); *Katalog der Lipperheideschen Kostümbibliothek*, 2nd ed., ed. Eva Hienholdt and Gretel Wagner-Neumann, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1965); and Ernest Vinet, *Bibliographie méthodique et raisonné des beaux-arts* (Paris, 1874).

The carnival season was traditionally the occasion for lavish celebrations before the proscriptions of Lent put a temporary damper on merry-making. The festival for 1574 at the court of the Elector August of Saxony was held in Dresden on Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 23. The events included a series of colorful processions, each led by an important visiting noble, taking place in the castle courtyard. They represented a rich thematic mixture of classical mythology, the Old Testament, animal fables, legends about exotic foreign lands, and folk tales. The festival book commemorating this event describes how, "with manifold inventions [i.e., scenic or pageant devices], each party gets on the [race] course and performs there in a knightly fashion, decorously and beautifully," with both grace and splendor.² A group of judges ruled on the equestrian skills involved in running the race, which required threading the tip of a lance through a small ring suspended from a pole while riding at full gallop.

A kettledrummer and 12 trumpeters led off the processions, followed by marchers in Turkish costume. One of the several musical ensembles segmented in the long line of march included eight instrumentalists in three rows playing cornetts, shawms and sackbuts (Fig. 1). Further on was a group of wild men playing lute, fiddle, flute, sackbut, cornett, a mandora or cittern, and shawm. Other ensembles included participants dressed as monks and nuns along with the figure of the Archangel Michael and a mounted figure playing a bombard. A sled, drawn by a "bear" riding a horse, featured a musician dressed as a wolf and playing a clavichord. The rich mixture of instrumental ensembles through the processions to the ring-race reflected the Renaissance penchant for blocks, or consorts, of sounds as well as contrasting textures of sonority.³ The effects, for a spectator glued to one spot as the cavalcade passed by, was a lavish and colorful tapestry of sight and sound.

After Duke Charles III of Lorraine died, his body lay in state suitably embalmed and in full view. The liturgical observances were appropriately lavish, culminating in a funeral mass on July 19, 1608, that employed both vocal and instrumental forces from the court musical ensemble. As was customary, the loud and soft instruments were installed on separate platforms, more like balconies, constructed especially for the

2. *Contrafactur des Ringrennens* (Dresden, 1574), unnumbered text page following title. See Irmgard Becker-Glauch, *Die Bedeutung der Musik für die Dresdener Hoffeste bis in die Zeit Augusts des Starken* (Kassel/Basel, 1951), pp. 32-38, esp. p. 36ff. on performance practices based upon solo and ensemble instruments; also Jean Sponel, *Der Zwinger, die Hoffeste und die Schlossbaupläne zu Dresden* (Dresden, 1924), p. 14f.

3. Cf. a ring race celebrating the marriage in Dresden of Duke Christian I of Saxony on April 25, 1582. In the introductory parade was an *alta* quartet of musicians playing cornett, tenor shawm or bombard and two trombones at the head of a group of marchers representing Bacchus. *Contrafactur des Ringrennens. So uff des Durchlauchtigen Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn, Herrn Christiani, Hertzogen zu Sachsen in dem Churfürstlichen Schloss zu Dresden gehalten worden ...* (Dresden, 1582), unnumbered plate in Part IX of illustrations.

occasion: cornetts, bombards and trombones forming one ensemble (Fig. 2) and viols, lute and guitar (?) another.⁴

The interment of the body of this great prince was carried out on the nineteenth of July in [the Cathedral of Nancy], with [both] religious and secular ceremonies, honors and funereal pomp of supreme magnificence; and for which observances it lasted at least eight hours, starting at five o'clock in the morning. The last [of three] high masses was performed by singers from the ducal chapel [along with] cornetts, dulzians [*gros haultbois*] and sackbuts.⁵

In early November, 1609, there took place a series of lavish and lengthy festivities celebrating the marriage of Duke Johann Friedrich of Württemberg and the Markgräfin Barbara Sophia of Brandenburg. For example, on the day after the welcoming reception, a colorful procession wound its way from the ducal castle in Stuttgart to the small chapel where the wedding ceremony took place.

When they arrived at the court chapel the organ played first, and after that the noble bridegroom led his exalted, beloved spouse to the altar, where the court preacher, Herr Erasmus Gröniger, read the customary [banns]. ... After this, there was a completely glorious musical performance, with 20 voices and five ensembles with all sorts of instruments, such as lutes, fiddles, bassoons, dulzians, cornetts, trombones and others.⁶

On Nov. 7, the third major event took place: a parade to a field where mounted games of skill were held. Divided into 10 parts, each "event" incorporated thematic devices and quasi-theatrical performances. There was a dramatic procession preceding each game,

4. *Cérémonies des obsèques de Charles III, Duc de Lorraine et de Bar* (Nancy, 1609).

5. Claude de la Ruelle, *Discours des cérémonies, honneurs et pompe funèbre ...* (Paris, 1609), p. 68f. Additional information on the ducal chapel is provided on p. 49f.: "The music[al] ensemble of his late Highness's chapel was made up of 30 people, that is, 20 singers and 10 players of cornetts, dulzians and sackbuts, by whom the music for high masses, vespers and vigils was performed."

6. Johann Oettinger, *Warhafftige historische Beschreibung der fürstliche Hochzeit und dess hochansehnlichen Beylagers, so der ... Herr Johann Friderich, Hertzog zu Württemberg und Teckh ... mit der ... Fürstin ... Barbara Sophia ... in der fürstlichen Haubstatt Stuttgarten ... celebriert und gehalten hat ...* (Stuttgart, 1610), from the printed version in modern German by Josef Sittard in his *Zur Geschichte der Musik und des Theaters am Württembergischen Hofe* (Stuttgart, 1890), p. 80. Cf. the wedding of Count Wolfgang von Neuberg and Magdalena of Bavaria, described by eyewitness Philip Hainhofer, *Schriftliche Relation*, printed in the *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben*, VIII (1881), 221ff.: "As soon as the noble personages arrived at the chapel, there could be heard trombones, trumpets and kettledrums [along] with two choruses placed opposite each other." The Württemberg ducal musical ensemble at this time included 31 singers, 2 organists, 2 lutenists, harpist, 2 bassoonists, cornettist, trombonist, 15 trumpeters (some players doubled on strings) and a timpanist. See Gustav Bossert, "Die Stuttgarter Hofkantorei," *Württembergische Vierteljahrshäfte für Landesgeschichte*, new series, VII (1911), 152ff.



Figure 1
Loud Consort in procession during the carnival season at the electoral court in Dresden (1574)

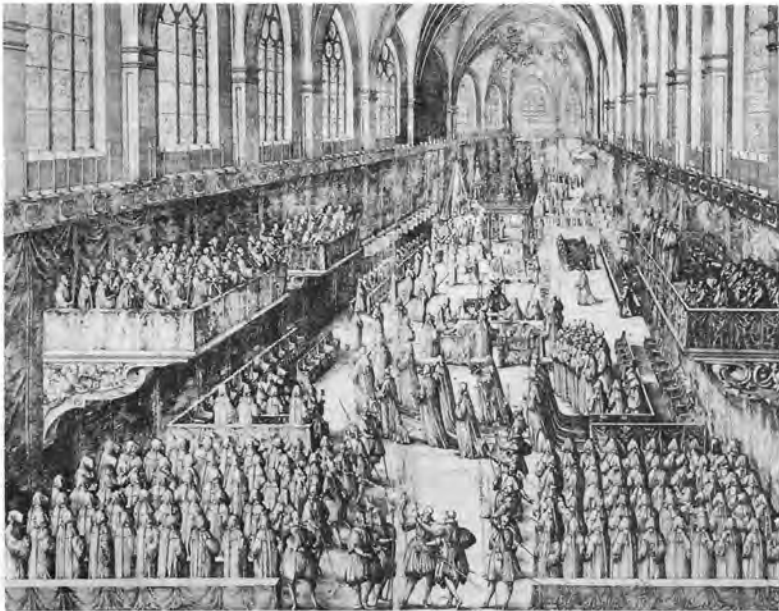


Figure 2
Instrumental ensembles at the funeral of Duke Charles III of Lorraine in Nancy (1608)

and each noble participant at its head vied with his peers in providing a large entourage including musicians. For instance, Markgraf Christian of Brandenburg brought along 10 instrumentalists and singers, all of whom marched in his procession (Fig. 3). Markgraf Joachim Ernst of Brandenburg had in his entourage "three Hungarian trumpeters in green vests and yellow hose," as well as "three naked sirens, or mermaids, who rode on the waves" in a scene mounted on a pageant-wagon.⁷

For the baptism of the duke's son and heir, Prince Friedrich, on March 10, 1616, an eight-day celebration took place in Stuttgart. There were banquets, tourneys, games of skill and dancing.⁸ Each noble participant led a procession, programmatic in context, replete with pageant-wagons and musical ensembles. All the events staged provided occasions for demonstrating the skill of the Württemberg court musical ensemble, as well as the prowess of the many foreign musicians in attendance.⁹ The festivities began with a parade to the baptism on the first day, led to the church by the "knightly sound of all the Württemberg trumpeters and kettledrummers." Then both principals and their guests entered to witness the ceremonies.

For their entrance there was [provided] a complete and extensive musical performance, namely, [Kapellmeister] Ludwig Daser's [mass] *Ecce nunc benedictie Domino &c* for eight voices, with four and four bombards. Afterwards, the organ responded with a particularly artful fugue. [Then] the charming piece by Gregor Aichinger, *Laudate Dominum &c*, for eight voices, with two cornetts, four trombones and two bassoons was executed by the most select vocalists, ending most appropriately.

Following the young prince's baptism, a *Te Deum* was sung, with music by Tobias Salomon, a court musical director, performed by three ensembles.

The first, with a positive organ, four fiddles, two lutes, a small pipe and large contrabass viols, in addition to four singers. The next, with regal, one cornett, two trombones, a bassoon and four vocal soloists. The third also with a regal, three trombones, a serpent, plus four musicians [singers?].

7. Oettinger, *Warrhafft historische Beschreibung*, p. 171f. The plates illustrating this festival are found separately in Balthasar Kuchler, *Repraesentatio der fürstlichen Auffzug und Ritterspil, so bei des Durchleuchtigen ... Herrn Johann Friderichen Hertzogen zu Württemberg und Teckh ... Hochzeil. Ehrnfest ... gehalten worden* (Stuttgart, 1611).

8. The illustrations are found in Esaias van Hulslen, *Repraesentatio der fürstlichen Auffzug und Ritterspil, so der Durchleuchtig Hochgebornen Fürst und Herr, Herr Johann Friedrich Hertzog zu Württemberg und Teckh by Ihr Fl. Gn. Newgebornen Son, Friderick Fürslicher Kundtaufen ... mit grosser Solennitet gehalten* (Stuttgart, 1616).

9. See Paul Giuomar, "La Musique dans trois fêtes à la cour ducale de Wurtemberg en 1609, 1616, 1617" in *Les Fêtes de la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Jacquot, I (Paris, 1956), pp. 393-410.

Whenever the three ensembles played together [there was added] the great organ, a cornett and a contrabassoon [*Pommerten Vagoten*].¹⁰

And at a banquet after the baptism there was staged a Ballet of the Twelve Nations, with huge papier-mâché heads, through the mouths of which exited the dancers and musicians who performed. Each ethnic dance was accompanied by an appropriate musical ensemble; for example:

The second head (a dwelling place of three Northerlie nations) gave issue to a Frenchman ... dancing a currantoe [to the accompaniment of a fiddle]. After him hopped a High-Dutchman. ... The third that came forth of the second head was a Laponian, covered with the skin of a beare, and trampling about at the sound ... [of] a sackbotte.¹¹

Two days later, seven mounted games were held, each with its own procession and dramatic floats (Fig. 4).

The princes of Savoy, such as Duke Charles Emanuel I and his successor, Victor Amadeus, along with his wife, Christine of France, were widely known for their elaborate court festivals. Thus, it is not surprising that the ducal seat in Turin attracted artists of all kinds: poets, musicians, painters and architects alike. One such person was the theatrical inventor Filippo d'Agliè who, between 1629 and 1660 devised and supervised more than 30 festivals for the court, all of which included thematic processions, equestrian games of skill, banquets, foot tourneys, water fêtes and ballets.¹² A typical example is provided by the festivities celebrating the marriage of Princess Adelaide of Savoy, the third daughter of Victor's and Christine's, and Ferdinand Maria, heir to the Elector Maximilian of Bavaria.

The nuptials themselves were celebrated in the cathedral of San Giovanni in Turin on Dec. 11, 1650. Preceding the large retinue that crowded into the church were Swiss guards, arquebusiers, trumpeters, trombonists, oboists and drummers. After the ceremony a public announcement of the event was made by signals from trumpets and trombones. At the wedding feast that followed, more music was performed by 24 strings, then a *Te Deum* celebrated in the Church of the Gesù. The evening concluded with a grand ball,

10. Johann Assum, *Warhaffte Relation und historischer, politischer, höfflicher Discours über dess Durchleughtigen, Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn, Herrn Johann Friedrichen ... jungen Sohns Prinz Friedrichen angesteller und gehaltener ... Kind Tauff* ... (Stuttgart, 1616), pp.23-26.

11. Georg Rudolf Weckherlin, *Triumphall Shews Set Forth Lately at Stuttgart. Written First in German and Now in English by G. Rodolfe Weckherlin, Secretarie to the Duke of Würtemberg* (Stuttgart, 1616), printed in Ludwig Krapf and Christian Wagenknecht, eds., *Stuttgarter Hoffeste. Texte und Materialien zur höfische Repräsentation im frühen 17. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1979), pp. 20-24.

12. On the background of the Savoyard musical establishment, see Stanislao Cordero di Pamperato, "I Musici alla corte di Carlo Emanuele I di Savoia," *Biblioteca della Società Storica Subalpina*, CXXI (1930), 102-42; also Margaret M. McGowan, "Les Fêtes de cour en Savoie. L'Oeuvre de Philippe d'Agliè," *Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre*, xxii (1970), 183-241.



Figure 3
Musicians in procession to a ring-race at the ducal court of Württemberg (1609)



Figure 4
An instrumental trio in one segment of a procession to games of skill at the court of Württemberg (1616)

the entire court taking part.

One of the first staged events was a series of races taking place in the palace courtyard, which had been transformed for the occasion into a stage with temporary structures as backdrops, against which the actors performed, and in front of which the several pageant-wagons progressed. In what seems to have become a custom, the races themselves alternated with musical performances sandwiched in-between.

From ... above the gallery, among the various events alternating with the races was the reverberation of the sounds of an ensemble of instruments; that is, trumpets which, animated by the virtue of such glorious love [of the newlyweds] became the voice of Fame; trombones which, with harmonious notes echoed the praises of everyone, rousing the affections more ardently by the hour; martial drums which, with raucous din, inspired the majesty of love in such a high union [of state]; of violins which, with gentle sounds, emulated the plectrum with their bows, the quiver of a bowman; while the harmony of numerous voices was the hour of grace, the act of falling in love, like the sounds of [music] of the spheres of the celestial gods.¹³

On the afternoon of Dec. 15, a tourney, or feat-of-arms, took place, celebrating the old chivalric ideals of honor and virtue, but transformed into political theater emphasizing the power and magnificence of the House of Savoy. It was fused with a horse-ballet, inspired by stories from Classical Antiquity and harking back to the golden age of Greece and reflecting the virtues of both arms and letters. The Piazza Reale facing the ducal palace had been transformed by stage sets into a mythological land. The court instrumental ensemble performed from the loggia of a specially constructed Castle of Love as four pageant-wagons entered the arena (Fig. 5). Among the musicians were players of cornetts, trumpets and trombone. The participants in the tourney itself, costumed and properly rehearsed, took part in a mock combat between heroes and monsters, culminating in an equestrian ballet performed by 16 participants who exited from the Castle of Love and represented the various attributes of true love. The festival closed with everyone parading around the square, ending up in front of Christine and her daughter, Adelaide. While all participants rendered homage to the two ladies, a chorus sang madrigals in praise of love.¹⁴

In February, 1685, King Charles II died. His brother, James II (King James VII of Scotland), succeeded him, and was formally crowned on April 14 in Westminster Abbey.

About twelve of the clock, the procession began to move in [the following] form: the Dean's Beadle of Westminster, with his staff, ... the High Constable of the City [of London]; a fife-player, ... four drums. ... The

13. See Mercedes Viale Ferrero, *Feste delle Madame Reali di Savoia* (Turin, 1965), esp. p. 53f.

14. Tomasso Borgonio, *Gli Ercoli domatori di mostri et Amore domatore degli Ercoli* (Turin, 1650), pp. 8-24.



Figure 5

Ducal instrumental ensemble at the court of Savoy performing for a wedding (1650)

Drum Major, ... eight trumpeters, all in rich liveries of crimson velvet laced with gold and silver, with silver trumpets, ... the kettledrums with their banners [i.e., skirts] of crimson damask, ... followed by the timpanist.

In this order did this glorious procession move from Westminster Hall through the New Palace Yard into Kings Street, and so through the Great Sanctuary, unto the Westminster door to the Collegiate Church of St. Peter.¹⁵

It is interesting to note the two forms of trumpets featured in the coronation procession: the ordinary straight trumpet behind the kettledrums, and the larger instrument—a folded double, or tenor, trumpet—along with a cornett further on (Fig. 6).

Both the singers and other musicians (except for the fife- and drum-players who remained outside) were stationed on scaffolds erected on both sides of the crossing, near the altar. The coronation service for the Catholic James had to be altered; the king did not receive Holy Communion, and the liturgy was also revised accordingly. Music for the occasion included works by John Blow, Henry Lawes, Henry Purcell, William Child (one of the organists) and William Turner (whose two anthems have been lost). After the first anthem, the archbishop of Canterbury addressed each of the four cardinal compass points in succession, saying, "Sirs! I here present unto you King James, the rightful inheritor of the crown of this realm; wherefore all ye that are come this day to do homage, service and bounded duty, are ye willing to do the same?" The people replied by crying, "God save the King!" The actual moment of crowning was accompanied by fanfares from trumpets and timpani.

One of the major political and social events of state at the Dresden court in the 18th century was the marriage of Friedrich August II and Princess Maria Josepha, which linked the Saxon ruling family with the imperial Austrian house. An elaborate cycle of festivities took place between the winter of 1718 and late September, 1719, to demonstrate symbolically, visually and aurally the power, magnificence and culture at the court of Elector August "the Strong." The broad motif tying all the various events together was the influence of the seven planets and their representative deities on the fate of mankind.¹⁶

The marriage ceremony itself took place on Aug. 20, 1719, in the Favoriten Chapel in Vienna. However, the real celebrations commenced in Dresden on Sept. 3 with a *Te Deum* celebrated in the electoral chapel after the couple's return. On the next day, there

15. Francis Sandford, *The History of the Coronation of the Most High, Most Mighty and Most Excellent Monarch, James II, by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. ...* (London, 1687), pp. 65-94.

16. The illustrations of this festival are contained in a volume entitled *Recueil des dessins et gravures représentant les solennités du mariage de L.L.A.A.R.R. Mgr. le prince Frédéric August, Prince royal de Pologne Elect. de Saxe...* (Dresden, 1720).

was a grand ball, introduced by the "sounds of trumpets and timpani."¹⁷ The festivities for Sunday, Sept. 10, were under the patronage of the sun god, Apollo. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon was a performance of Johann Heinichen's serenade *La Gara degli Dei*, sung by musicians dressed as Mercury, Apollo, Diana, Mars, Venus, Jupiter and Saturn. The work was introduced by a sonata for two horns, solo violin, oboe and strings, followed by a coda for strings and hunting horns. The evening's entertainment featured a serenade performed by 64 trumpets and eight kettledrums, signaling the beginning of a fireworks display. Two days later, there was a series of tournaments, both on foot and on horseback, held in the Old Market.

A main feature of the long celebrations was the performance of Antonio Lotti's opera *Teofane* the next day, supported by an "orchestra manned by the best instrumentalists," some imported from abroad.¹⁸ Three days later came the festival of Diana, goddess of the moon and the hunt, highlighted by music in the form of a cantata, *Serenata fatta sulla Elba*, composed especially for the occasion by court *Kapellmeister* Heinichen. A second major highlight, the festival of Venus, goddess of love, was celebrated on Sept. 13. It featured a parade with dramatic floats and the performance of another opera, *Die vier Jahreszeiten*, in the new theater built in the Grossen Garten. Among the processional wagons was one featuring the court woodwind and brass musicians playing oboes, bassoons and hunting horns (Fig. 7). The opera, or *divertissement de musique*, was sung in French, and included interpolated ballets in which both actors and dancers, recruited from persons of noble rank, participated. "The vocal and instrumental music was executed by more than 100 individuals. ..."¹⁹

An extremely important kind of celebration took place when a ruler or his deputy, such as a son and heir, was installed as duke of a province or similar administrative entity, functioning officially as viceroy (such as in the Netherlands, for example), or when a ruler himself assumed a dukedom, such as when Emperor Charles VI was installed as duke of Steyer. An official welcome and banquet was held on July 6, 1728, as part of the important ceremony of swearing oaths of allegiance and fidelity to the new incumbent by the local officials, titled lords and men of property from the dukedom.

17. See David Fassman, *Des glorwürdigst Leben und Thaten Friedrich August, des Grossen, Königs in Pohlen und Chur. Fürstens zu Sachsen* (Frankfurt/Main, 1723), pp. 774ff. See also the *Relation des festes de Saxe* (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS germ. 304), *passim*.

18. Eyewitness account cited in Gerhard Pietzsch, *Sachsen als Musikland* (Dresden, 1938), p. 52. See also Charlotte Spitz, *Antonio Lotti in seiner Bedeutung als Opernkomponist* (Leipzig, 1918), pp. 19-21 and 68f.; Becker-Glauch, *op. cit.*, p. 103f.; and Helmuth C. Wolff, *Oper: Szene und Darstellung von 1600 bis 1900* (Leipzig, 1980), p. 106f.

19. *Relation des festes de Saxe*, p. 42. See also the *Kurtze doch ausführliche Beschreibung des ... Venus-Fests* (Dresden, 1719), fol. 1; and D. Hartung, "Schmidt," in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, XI, col. 1858.



Figure 6
Cornett and trumpet ensemble in the coronation procession for
King Charles II (1685)



Figure 7
Pageant-wagon with musicians in a parade during the Festival of Venus at
the Saxonian court (1719)

...His Imperial Majesty rode [into Steyer] under a baldachin of gold cloth with a golden fringe, which was carried by eight relatives of the magistrates. On each side were the imperial messengers, lifeguards and personal lackeys. After them rode eight regional trumpeters and a kettledrummer, [all of whom] played a steady march during the procession.²⁰

The banquet accompanying the oaths of allegiance was held in the ceremonial chambers of the city hall. An instrumental quartet of two trumpets and two horns played, appropriately, in front of the table at which was seated the court's chief hunting master (Fig. 8). In an adjoining room another ensemble of "imperial court musicians were heard [playing] banquet music continuously."²¹

Following a formal alliance concluded by the kingdoms of France and Spain, the 13-year-old Princess Louise-Elisabeth married Don Felipe, heir apparent, on Aug. 26, 1739. Celebrations of this important political event lasted a full week, commencing three days before the actual wedding. After the ceremony and a nuptial mass, the king and queen, dauphin, princesses, bride and groom witnessed a display of fireworks set off along the terrace facing the Hall of Mirrors in the palace at Versailles.²² The next day, Louise-Elisabeth rode in a splendid procession back to Paris in order to receive the city's joyous welcome. "The festivities began with one of the best-performed concerts, after which the orchestra continued to play throughout the celebrations."²³

The most spectacular edifice (in effect, a giant bandstand) was an octagonal pavilion built over two barges lashed together in the middle of the Seine, between the Pont Neuf and the Pont Royale, representing the Temple of Hymen. Ninety feet high, this edifice was painted to resemble marble, with monochrome figures in plaster of the Nine Muses rendered on the supporting columns. The temple itself was festooned with colored lanterns and thousands of ornaments reflecting the light. Surrounding this dramatic architectural set-piece floated eight huge marine monsters, their fins extended and mouths open, with flames issuing from their eyes. The entire stretch of riverbank

20. Georg von Deyersperg, *Erb-Huldigung, welche dem allerdurchleuchtigsten, grossmächstigten und unüberwindlichen römischen Keyser Carolo dem Sechsten ... also Hertzogen in Steyer von denen gesamten Steyerischen Land-Ständen ... in allerunterthänigster Submission abgelegt, und auf Hoch. derenselben Verordnung zusammengetragen worden* (Graz, 1740), p. 49.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 87. Cf. Bernhard Rohr, *Einleitung zur Ceremoniel-Wissenschaft der grossen Herren...* (Berlin, 1729), p. 120: "Occasionally, trumpets and timpani are played for each course as it is being served. At the foot of the table during solemn occasions beautiful musical performances are heard. Sometimes they consist only of trumpets and drums, but occasionally include the most beautiful vocal and instrumental music."

22. For a description of this event, see esp. the *Mercure de France*. X (1739), 2043f.

23. Cited by Claude Ruggieri, *Précis historique sur les fêtes, les spectacles et les réjouissances publiques...* (Paris, 1830), p. 267.

between the two bridges was lined with benches to accommodate 500,000 spectators. Thrones for the king and queen had been placed on a platform directly facing the pavilion.

At 6 o'clock in the evening, the royal couple, followed by the entire court, entered their boxes to the loud cheers of the spectators, in order to witness an orchestra performing from the pavilion. The ensemble included oboes, trumpets, horns, kettle-drums and strings. (Fig. 9).

Scarcely had Their Majesties appeared than the acclamations and indistinct noises of the vast crowds who were running up and down the embankments and shoreline gave way to a deep and respectful silence, and the concert began.

The different orchestral pieces that were performed were interspersed with fanfares by hunting horns and airs from trumpets and timpani, [which] blended from time to time with the other instruments, making the concert extremely varied.²⁴

It was from this temple of Hymen in the middle of the river that fireworks were set off in the evening, consisting of 12 set-pieces featuring hundreds of every kind of pyrotechnic device. As soon as Princess Louise-Elisabeth had arrived on the scene, "a huge noise was heard from kettledrums, trumpets and other instruments placed in an illuminated barge..."²⁵

The dauphin's second marriage, to Maria Josepha of Saxony, on Feb. 13, 1747, represented a political merger of the French monarchy and the House of Saxony. For this auspicious occasion the city of Paris again hosted a sumptuous festival lasting for several days. Modeled on ancient Greco-Roman triumphs, it celebrated the renewed alliance between the two great powers. And as for the prince's first marriage two years before, a Temple of Hymen, god of marriage, was constructed, this time in front of the Hôtel de Ville, the focal point of the celebrations. Conspicuous among the elements were the several pageant-wagons that made up part of the initial procession, each one related to the subject-matter of the wedding pageants.

The chariots themselves were each 27 feet long and 11 feet wide at their mid-sections, their heights varying according to the individual design. Two of them included

24. *Description des fêtes données par la ville de Paris à l'occasion du mariage de Madame Louise-Elisabeth de France & de Dom Philippe, Infant et grand amiral d'Espagne...* (Paris, 1740), p. 10f. See also August Rondel, *Fêtes de cour et cérémonies publiques* (Florence, 1927), p. 10f.; and Gabriel Mourey, *Le Livre des fêtes françaises* (Paris, 1930), pp. 210-22. Cf. the festivities celebrating the birth of the dauphin on Jan. 17, 1730. At one of the four spectacles, two military bands performed from a Temple of Pleasure and Joy on a barge anchored in the Seine, each one of the groups made up of oboes, trumpets, clarions, horns and timpani, "answering each other [antiphonally] before the fireworks began." *Description de la feste et du feu d'artifice...* (Paris, 1730), p. 12.

25. *Mercur de France*, I (1739), 236-46.



Figure 8
Trumpets and horns performing at a banquet following oaths of
allegiance to Charles VI (1728)

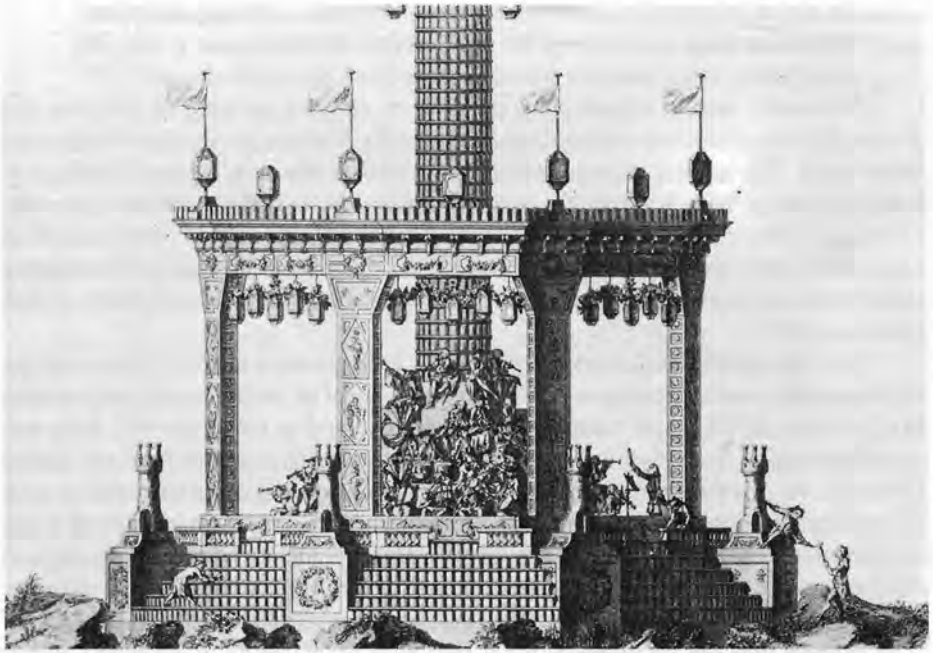


Figure 9
Orchestra performing from a pavillion in the Seine for the marriage of Princess
Louise-Elisabeth of France (1739)

an instrumental ensemble. The first, dedicated to the god Mars, featured oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets, timpani and strings (Fig. 10).

The elegant construction of the [pageant-]wagons, the choice and variety of their subject-matter, the richness of their equipage, the splendor of the costumes, the arrangements of the procession, the noise of the instruments, excited the cheers of the public for a long time.

The chariot of Mars, the largest and tallest [of them], was [like] an amphitheater [on wheels], with many ranks of steps enclosed in the form of a boat, a curved base around its circumference. ... Twenty musicians seated on these tiers formed by the selection of instruments a war-like symphony; their costumes were of scarlet cloth braided with gold. ...²⁶

The second wagon, featuring the god Hymen, carrying portraits of the bride and groom, included 16 instrumentalists, all dressed in sky-blue livery trimmed with lace and silver braid. The milling throngs greeted the entire parade with evident satisfaction, being impressed with not only the visual feast but the varied sonorities of the two orchestras. The public entertainment went on far into the night, with troupes of entertainers and open-air concerts in the principal squares of Paris, as well as dancing in the streets and the distribution of food and wine. The evening concluded with a large fireworks display.

While it is outside the scope of this article, a few words are in order concerning the instrumental ensembles that have been mentioned. First of all, their frequent participation in accompanying liturgical music at these festivals should be noted. Second, there was a gradual change, an evolution, really, in the make-up of these groups from the typical late-medieval divisions of loud and soft consorts into categories of like instruments, such as bowed strings, double-reeds and brass. This is perhaps most evident in the breakdown of musical ensembles featuring a variety of different instruments offering interesting and contrasting mixes of sonority and tone color. During the 18th century, influenced by the flourishing court and operatic orchestras, the instrumental participation in festivals of state evolved into true orchestras. This is seen most dramatically in those performing from huge pageant-wagons which became more and more frequent in such events.

The few accounts described above represent but a cursory glimpse at the fascinating world of court festivals and their music. All told, roughly 400 of these events permanently memorialized in official accounts have survived. And while a vast majority of these volumes are textual in nature, one cannot ignore the numerous engravings that depict brass instruments in scenes representing musical performances at these celebrations. Indeed, this wealth of descriptive and iconographical material represents more than the

26. *Fête publique donnée par la ville de Paris à l'occasion du mariage de Monseigneur le Dauphin avec la princesse Marie-Josèphe de Saxe* (Paris, 1747), p. 3f. See also Mourey, *Le Livre des fêtes françaises*, pp. 236-46.

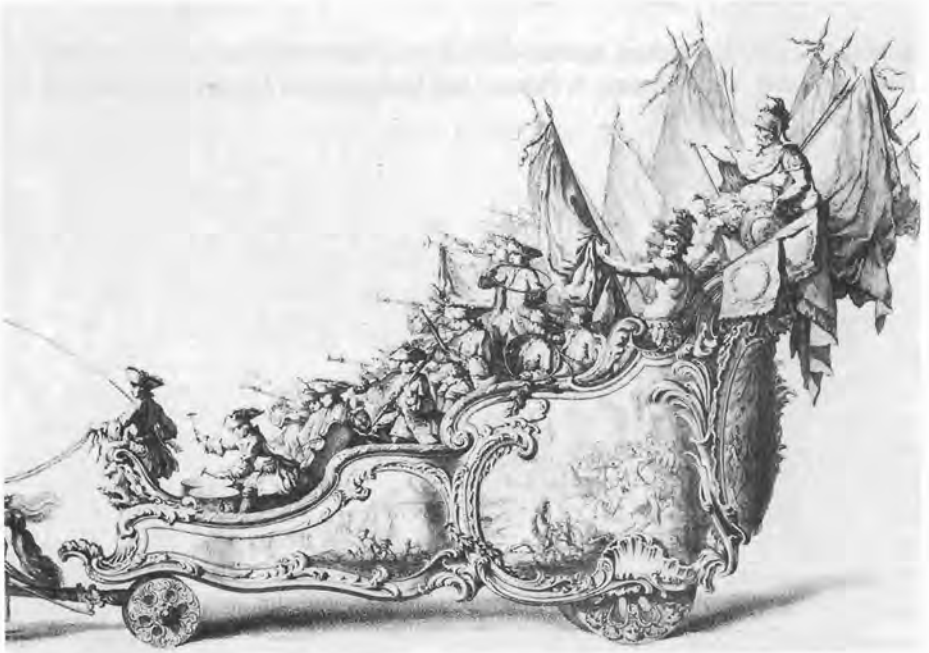


Figure 10
Pageant-wagon of Mars with an orchestra performing in wedding
festivities for the Dauphin (1747)

mere sum of its parts. By virtue of their almost single-minded aim and content, festival books offer a unique opportunity to survey the written and pictorial chronicles of these events of state, demonstrating the value of a hitherto neglected genre. But more important for us, these precious, often elegant, books can substantially enhance our knowledge of the role of musical instruments and performance practices.

Edmund Bowles has written extensively on iconography and musical instruments. His latest book, The Timpani: A Pictorial and Documentary History, is soon to be published by Frits Knuf.