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The Med and Ren abroad

The Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference has a long tradition. For many years, it took place in the United Kingdom, where it was attended by a relatively small group of scholars. Around the beginning of the new millennium, however, when it was decided that the conference would be hosted on the Continent in alternate years, the 'MedRen' has gradually changed into a large-scale conference, a prestigious but relaxing meeting place for musicologists in all possible career stages.

This year's host was the Music Department of the University of Vienna (7–11 August 2007). Thanks to the sublime organization by Birgit Lodes and Stefan Gasch, we enjoyed five highly stimulating days, during which more than 100 speakers from about 20 countries dealt with all aspects of music between the 9th and 16th centuries. On the first evening, Reinhard Strohm set the tone with a very rich keynote lecture on 'Nähe und Ferne der frühen europäischen Musik', that was framed by a small concert with students from the institute. A couple of days later, Strohm also gave a paper on his most recent findings about the Lucca Choirbook, with special attention to some newly discovered parchment leaves that contain music by Pullois, Domarto and Peragulfus. In the same session, Benjamin Brand shed light on some exercises in mensural counterpoint that reflect John Hothby's teaching programme at the Cathedral of Lucca from 1467 to 1486.

Three panel sessions were devoted to the music of a single composer. The speakers of the session on Johannes Tourout/Touront (Jaap van Benthem, Paweł Gancarczyk and Lenka Mrackova) focused on aspects of style and

transmission of his work—especially in Central European sources—in order to formulate tentative guidelines for further investigation. Research on the life and music of Jacobus Handl/Gallus has benefited from the recent expansion of the EU into Eastern Europe, which has allowed scholars to revisit many of the archives and libraries. This session approached Handl's oeuvre from a religious, humanist and methodological perspective. For the session on Gioseffo Zarlino, Cristle Collins Judd and I concentrated on the interaction between theory and practice through a closer look at some of his motets (mainly published in collections from 1549 and 1566); and Wolfgang Horn studied Zarlino's use of the term 'invention' in relation to Antico's *Motetti novi e chanzoni francese a quatro sopra doi* (Venice, 1520).

The scope of the discussion panel on music and rhetoric was deliberately divergent. Whereas Wolfgang Fuhrmann questioned the analysis of music in terms of rhetorical figures in favour of a new approach to musical expressivity, Anne Smith demonstrated Joachim Burmeister's analysis of Orlando di Lasso's five-voice *In me transierunt* (cf. *Musica poetica*, Rostock, 1606) via a step-by-step live performance by singers and instrumentalists from the the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. Between these papers, Inga Mai Grootte literally steered a middle course by commenting upon the use of rhetorical concepts in music prints from 16th-century Reformation Germany. Further panel sessions were devoted to the reception of early music by the Austrian medievalist Rudolf von Ficker—which raised interesting issues of 20th-century historiography—and to 16th-century Spanish music by Cristóbal de Morales and Ginés Pérez.

Several individual papers offered a fresh look at well-known pieces, sources and collections. Continuing a discussion that had started in the first decades of the 19th century with Gottlieb von Tucher, Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl proposed yet another solution of Ludwig Senfl's riddle canon *Salve sancta parens*, which appears at the end of the *Liber selectarum cantionum* (Augsburg, 1520). Bernhold Schmid tackled the editorial problems of Lasso's five-voice *Beati omnes, qui timent Dominum*, which resulted in a complex stemma of French, Italian and German prints. Ruth DeFord suggested that some of the complex proportional signs in Heinrich Isaac's *Choralis Constantinus* (published in 1550–5) were devised by Sebald Heyden, who might have edited the composer's notation for his own theoretical purposes; indeed, many of these signs appear nowhere else in Isaac's output, and some exist nowhere else outside theoretical treatises. By analysing the specific use of the 6th, Fabrice

Fitch took an important step towards a taxonomy of the Eton style. In his contribution on Adrian Willaert's *Musica nova* (1559), Raz Binyamini reconsidered this major 16th-century edition in the light of the Venetian political and artistic scene, taking into account different aspects such as the myth of Venice, Bembism and Titian's Venus paintings. Tim Shephard also focused on Willaert, and formulated the hypothesis that the composer might have been involved as editor of Antico's *Motetti novi*.

Rob Wegman presented the outcome of his recent research in the Archives départementales de l'Aube at Troyes. From various documents it not only appears that Josquin and Brumel visited Troyes (the former on at least two occasions), but also that Ockeghem held a canonry *in absentia* at Troyes Cathedral from 1458 to 1467. The historian Martine Clouzot studied the political, moral and social role of music for the courtly life in 14th- and 15th-century France and Burgundy. Furthermore, theoretical issues were raised by Luminita Florea, who showed how the discourse about music in general and consonances and dissonances in particular was occasionally sprinkled with references to palatal and odiferous stimuli, and by Simon Van Damme, who commented upon a remarkable contradiction between theoretical statements and practical experience about the perception of dissonances.

The success of a conference not only depends on the level of the papers, but is also measured by the choice and variety of extra activities. The Viennese MedRen lived up to these expectations as well. Two concerts took place in the heart of the city: the ensemble La Morra and musicians from the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis performed songs from the court of Maximilian I in the richly decorated 'Prälatsaal' of the Schottenstift; for their programme 'Musica Invictissima: Harmonic Invention for a Habsburg Empire' the ensemble Cinquecento sang music by Vaet, De Monte, Regnart and others in the beautiful church of Maria am Gestade. Particularly congenial was the lavish conference dinner at Weingut Wolff, to which the MedRen participants had been invited by the Mayor of Vienna. Above all, the conference team managed to arrange an impressive exhibition of books, scores, facsimiles and recordings.

The next Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference will take place on 24–27 July 2008 at the University of Wales, Bangor under the direction of Thomas Schmidt-Beste and Christian Leitmeir.

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