

Abstracts

“Soit hom u feme” New Evidence for Women Musicians and the Search for the “Women Trouvères”

► *Brianne Dolce*

Whether women were trouvères, medieval poets who operated in the region that is now Northern France, has long been debated, despite their appearance as judges of jeux-partis, and a few chansons in the voice of a woman. This article presents new evidence for women’s participation in and contribution to medieval music making in the city of Arras, perhaps the most significant center of Francophone song in the thirteenth century. In particular, a document belonging to the Confraternity of Jongleurs and Bourgeois of Arras (F-Pn, ms. fr. 8541) bears witness to women who were named as musicians, demonstrating the variety of musical professions and titles with which the city’s women were associated. They were named not only as professional vernacular musicians, but also as liturgical and civic musicians. Further, the document contextualizes the lives of other Arrageois women whose religious, economic, and social opportunities have gone overlooked. In appreciating the range of fora to which Arrageois women had access, their possible contributions to musical and cultural life take new form. Finally, I suggest that the poetry of thirteenth-century Brabantine mystic Hadewijch offers insights into women’s engagement with cultural life in the Southern Low Countries; Hadewijch’s knowledge of Arrageois poets, and her likely reworking of their materials, exhibits one way in which women participated in the creation of culture.

Aquitanian Notation in Iberia:

Plainchant Fragments in Braga and Guimarães (11th–15th century)

► *Elsa De Luca*

Solange Corbin was the first scholar to regard the lozenge punctum employed as mi-sign (“special punctum”) as the main characteristic of a “Portuguese notation” derived from Aquitanian notation. Even though Corbin’s findings were later partially revised, the special punctum is still regarded as a graphical feature mostly peculiar to Portuguese manuscripts. This palaeographical study investigates the use of the special punctum and the changes that occurred to Aquitanian notation in 104 fragments dated from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries in the archives of Braga and Guimarães. This research demonstrates that the special punctum was the preferred scribal device employed to convey semitonal information, but that it was not systematically employed. Over the course of four centuries Portugal witnessed the coexistence of two parallel systems for notating plainchant. While both systems employed the typical elements of Aquitanian notation on a single line without clefs, one was perfectly diastematic while the other conveyed no indications of semitones.

Le jeu du chanteur dans la cantate française

► *Laura Naudeix*

The French cantata is a poetic and musical form that enjoyed a phenomenal success in the first decades of the eighteenth century. While often considered as a “miniature opera,” the popularity of this genre can be explained by the fact that it was primarily a sort of parlour game, providing the performers with a playful and enjoyable pretext for putting themselves on stage in front of their entourage, whether an intimate circle or one barely enlarged to include members of a chosen society. When reconceived as a tool of communication and even seduction, the French cantata is here envisioned in the context of musical salons, where it dethroned the airs sérieux, but also in the context of contemporary stage practices, for both spoken theatre and opera, which cultivated the same strategies for enhancing the figure of the actor-orator. It is within this framework that we may propose hypotheses for the interpreter’s performance, supposed to represent the different actants of the poetic allegory that serves as a basis for the French cantata. Between theatricality and bienséance, the cantata thus proves to be a pertinent point of entry for reflecting on the aesthetics of lyrical performance, and even of dramatic performance in general in the first half of the century.

Les bibliothèques de musique privées au miroir des catalogues de vente (France, 1700-1790)

► *Laurent Guillo*

This article lists and studies 200 sales catalogs published in France between 1710 and 1790, in which at least 5 references concerning music (treatises, sacred, spiritual, dramatic, secular or instrumental music) are offered. They are used to describe the French private music libraries of the eighteenth century (without considering institutional libraries). In addition to statistical elements on the size and content of the collections, detailed by genre, some aspects are studied, as the position of music within libraries, the social origin of the owners and the traces of a domestic musical practice. The corpus is also used to trace the appearance and disappearance of Rameau’s editions, taken as an example of composer. Two additional points are studied which arise from the use of these sales catalogs: the classification of musical references and the evolution of the price of used music. To illustrate the diversity of these collections, three of them are described: the music library of the scientist Jean Gallois, the music collection of Louis-Denis Seguin and the two musical collections of the wealthy Crozat family. The 200 sale catalogs are listed in the appendix.