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James B. Hartman. *The Organ in Manitoba: A History of the Instruments, the Builders, and the Players*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1997. xii, 292 pp. ISBN 0-88755-644-2 (paperback)

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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begins with a highly personal account of the author's own hearing loss, followed by a discussion of contextualizing sounds and yet another plea to stamp out Muzak. Beckwith concludes by underscoring the need for stronger emphasis on acoustics courses in the university music curriculum.

Music Papers is an important addition to the field of Canadian music and a rare opportunity to read a wide-ranging set of articles by Beckwith within a single volume. The fact that some of the articles are more than thirty years old need not be viewed as a detriment, although it would be interesting to read updated versions of several of the papers in a future volume. "Composing in the Eighties" and "Notes on My Collaborations with James Reaney," for example, are two articles which demand 1990s sequels. The decades spanned by the articles, on the other hand, presents readers with an opportunity to witness period commentary on aspects of music in Canada from one of its most distinguished commentators. The author's modernist, nationalist, and distinctly Canadian perspective underscores what is perhaps the book's most valuable attribute: its insightful glimpse into one of Canada's foremost musical minds.

Glenn D. Colton

James B. Hartman. *The Organ in Manitoba: A History of the Instruments, the Builders, and the Players*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1997. xii, 292 pp. ISBN 0-88755-644-2 (paperback).

Unlike the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and other countries,¹ Canada has seen only sporadic attempts to trace the history of its church, concert, and theatre organs. The literature in both official languages is sparse, and becomes even more limited if one seeks a scholarly account.² Precisely why this should be the case is unclear, especially when one considers national contributions to organ building and playing. For more than a century Canada has been home to a thriving community of organ builders with a reputation for quality and innovation that extends well beyond the country's borders. Though their principal markets remain North American, Canadian firms export organs as far afield as Asia and Australia in the face of strong international competition. Canadian organists, too, have enjoyed recognition at home and abroad: one need only cite the names of Healey Willan, Lynnwood Farnam, Bernard

¹ See, for example, Orpha Ochse's *The History of the Organ in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), Stephen Bicknell's *The History of the English Organ* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and Norbert Dufourcq's *Livre de l'orgue français* (Paris: Picard, 1969).

² One might cite Stephen C. Willis's brief overview, *Pipes and Pedals: Chronicles of Canadian Organs and Organists* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1983), Karl J. Raudsepp's *Organs of Montréal* (Pointe Claire, Québec: Orel, 1993), and Élisabeth Gallat-Morin's *Jean Girard: musicien en Nouvelle-France* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1993) as being among the few relevant works. The venerable age of Canada's largest organ building firm, Casavant Frères Ltée of Saint-Hyacinthe, Québec, has stimulated several historical accounts including Laurent Lapointe, *Casavant Frères, 1879-1979* (Saint-Hyacinthe: Société d'Histoire régionale, 1979) and, fascinatingly, Mathieu-Robert Sauvé, *Joseph Casavant, le facteur d'orgues romantique* (Montréal: XYZ, 1995), a historical fiction for young readers.

Lagacé, and Raymond Daveluy, among others, to demonstrate a significant Canadian presence in the world of organ performance.

Other than invoking national reticence about cultural accomplishments, therefore, it is difficult to account for such sparse historical treatment of Canadian organs, organ builders, and organists. James Hartman's volume addresses the problem in part by supplying a thorough, well-documented account of the organ in Manitoba extending from the mid-nineteenth-century introduction into St. Boniface Cathedral of a reed organ to the uncertainties of the present day, when the future of the organ is, for many observers, difficult to discern. Hartman begins by surveying early manifestations of musical life in the area, including singers and instrumentalists who were part of the Red River Settlement, and provides a brief account of the establishment of various churches and their divergent approaches to the issue of music in worship. Overviews of the nature and construction of reed and pipe organs are provided for non-specialist readers.

With this background set out, Hartman begins his historical account by admitting that, given settlement patterns and the subsequent gradual shrinkage of rural population, "the history of organs in Manitoba is largely a chronicle of events in Winnipeg" (p. 29). Organs in the capital city outnumber those in smaller centres and rural areas of the province by a ratio of more than four to one; all but a few significant Manitoba organs are to be found in Winnipeg. Hartman identifies the period from 1875 to 1919, when more than forty per cent of the province's organs were installed, as a "golden age" for the instrument. Though the pace of installations slowed in the 1920s, the decade witnessed the arrival of several important instruments as well as the formation of the Winnipeg centre of the Canadian College of Organists.

The coming of the Great Depression halved the number of organs built for Manitoba churches, and introduced a period of relative inactivity that lasted well beyond the end of World War II. Not until the 1950s would the Manitoba organ community experience a "dramatic resurgence of activity" (p. 169) during which the purchase and installation of new instruments occurred at a rate close to that of the pre-1920 golden age. This mid-century boom has been followed by a period of relative stasis wherein relatively few new organs have been installed. Hartman's account concludes with a brief chapter on the future of the organ. Appendices provide a list of all known Manitoba organs from 1875 to the present and specifications of their tonal resources.

Though his focus is on a single province, Hartman's discussion has wider applicability. The prominence of the organ in Canadian cultural life prior to the Depression is perhaps difficult for us now to grasp. Hartman makes clear how significant that role was by quoting from more than one hundred press accounts of Manitoba organ installations and recitals from the 1870s to the 1920s. Newly founded city churches built impressive edifices and vied with one another for large instruments and distinguished musicians to play them. (Hartman notes that these musicians were often, at least by several Protestant denominations, imported from England—a pattern that remained a part of English-speaking Canada's musical life inside and outside the churches well

past mid-century.) Church organs were not merely instruments for the accompaniment of worship but imposing visual statements of congregational wealth and aspirations. Before the advent of “talkies,” cinemas, too, competed for the distinction of having a large or notable organ. Hartman cites a *Manitoba Free Press* article from November 1915 that describes a newly arrived instrument as “The Ninth Wonder of the World, The Musical Masterpiece that Expresses the Grievs, Joys, and Triumphs of the Artists; that Supplies the Unspoken Words in the Pictures” (p. 115).

All of this points, however, to the organ’s tendency to dominate or impress rather than touch the emotions of the listener, to be treated as a “wondrous machine” rather than a musical instrument. With the advent of sound in motion pictures, the theatre organ faded entirely from public consciousness. Manitoba church organs, like their counterparts throughout North America, are often placed in acoustical environments that impede the creation of balanced and cohesive organ sound. In the resonant vessel of a large European stone church even a carelessly voiced organ can produce beautiful music. In the carpeted, draped, and padded confines of small North American churches, by contrast, well-designed and skillfully voiced organs can sound lifeless, oppressive, and unlovely. Under such conditions, the organ inspires little affection among listeners.

In this context it is remarkable not only that the organ retains a following but that it attracts the talents of estimable musicians. Some of the most valuable parts of Hartman’s account are those narrating the 1920s formation of a vigorous cadre of Winnipeg organists, several of whom played a major role in the city’s musical life for decades. Among these were Fred Gee, Ronald Gibson, Hugh Bancroft, and Herbert Sadler, all British-born. Through their activities as church organists, private teachers, festival adjudicators, and concert players, this group ensured that the art of organ playing was transmitted to younger musicians such as Hugh McLean, Douglas Bodle, and Donald Hadfield. These organists have also been responsible over the years for bringing to Winnipeg concert musicians of international stature, including Marcel Dupré, Joseph Bonnet, Marie-Madeleine Duruflé, and Marilyn Mason.

The short closing chapter on the future of the organ is perhaps the weakest part of the book, in that Hartman’s love of the organ leads him to express a less than convincing optimism about its future. The cinema organ is a relic of a bygone age; concert hall organs are rare; cash-strapped Canadian university schools of music are generally unwilling to contemplate the considerable cost of a new pipe organ.³ Given these factors, only the mainline churches—the largest traditional market for pipe organs—remain a viable possibility. Yet

³Only two sizable concert organs have been built for civic auditoria in the last twenty years (the Kney organ for Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto, and the Casavant organ in the Calgary Centre for Performing Arts). A planned organ for Edmonton’s new Winspear Hall awaits funding. Despite notable exceptions such as the Wolff organ in McGill University’s Redpath Hall and the Létourneau organ at Mount Royal College in Calgary, few substantial organs have been built for Canadian colleges and universities in the last generation. Indeed, several institutions have allowed their organs to fall into disrepair or to be sold and removed.

these same churches are in the grip of demographic and cultural changes that few 1920s-era pioneers could have imagined. Dwindling membership and finances, radical revisions of liturgical ideals, and a desire on the part of some to bring church music more closely into accord with the popular music of the day have “produce[d] a generation of worshippers unfamiliar with the organ, its musical heritage, and its literature” (p. 213). To these factors we must add the ready availability of comparatively inexpensive electronic substitutes, which have developed to a point at which many (if not most) untrained listeners have difficulty distinguishing their sound from that of a pipe organ. This, Hartman concedes, “further diminishes the probability of even a small number of pipe organ installations in future years” (p. 211).

To argue, therefore, that “[i]nterest in the organ music [*sic*] is still relatively strong ... [t]here is no reason to suppose that this trend will be reversed in the coming years” (p. 215) is perhaps to indulge in a species of wishful thinking. A more dispassionate evaluation of the organ’s prospects, however, whether in Manitoba or in Canada as a whole, suggests an increasing marginalization of the instrument as mainline churches change almost beyond recognition. The organ’s future, despite Hartman’s optimism, is very uncertain. One feels almost churlish suggesting it—given the quality of this book—but his history of the Manitoba organ might turn out to be more complete than he would wish.

Those at the University of Manitoba Press responsible for the production of this volume are to be commended. The book is well-designed, illustrations are appropriate and clearly reproduced, and the typography is clean and readable. Few misprints have escaped the proofreader’s eye, and those that remain are for the most part minor (e.g., in the St. Boniface Cathedral specification on p. 257, the *Pédale Quinte* 2 2/3 should be *Quinte* 10 2/3). James Hartman and his publishers have provided a balanced, thorough, and needed account of organs and organists in Manitoba; one hopes that their counterparts elsewhere in the country follow suit.

Thomas Chase

Dietrich Bartel. *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in the German Baroque*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. xv, 471 pp. ISBN 0-8032-1276-3 (hardcover).

When scholarship in the field of English literature began to take an interest in historically informed methodologies, Lee A. Sonnino published *A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric*.¹ With its alphabetical compilation of textual-rhetorical figures as defined in various primary sources, coupled with its appendices that aid in the finding of particular figures, this work has since become a standard resource tool. A similar undertaking by Dietrich Bartel in the field of musical rhetoric resulted in his *Handbuch der musikalischen Figurenlehre* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1985), a work which has also become a

¹ Lee A. Sonnino, *A Handbook to Sixteenth Century Rhetoric* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968).