

ORCHESTRATION AND ORCHESTRAL PRACTICE IN PARIS, 1789 TO 1810

by

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was at one time to have covered the music of Germany and Italy as well as of France. As work began, two facts became evident. The two or three decades from 1789 which saw the creation of world-renowned German music were given short shrift in histories where other countries were concerned; and orchestration, a musical constituent of which the least pretentious music-lover is often highly aware, was the subject of next to no recent serious historical treatment. More surprisingly, general ignorance and misinformation about this period in France was widespread in the work of musical historians, even in detailed questions pertaining to music itself. 1)

Once the choice devolved on Paris it was clear that there was much to be done in the preparatory fields of bibliography and history of instruments. The results of work done in these areas appears in the first two parts of the dissertation. This is the reason for the bulk of the whole, which may hopefully prove the steadier stepping-stone to those coming after.

Naturally, I have learned much from preceding studies of orchestration and performance practice. Earlier writers (Lavoix, Coerne and Pierné and Woollett in Lavignac's Encyclopédie du Conservatoire) chose to treat composers individually, covering a wide historical span but looking only at more superficial features. Forsyth's perennial work pointed to the future by building on the traditional structure of orchestration treatises, that is, categorising by instrument, but linking illustrations of their use with an historical view of their development. Bartenstein's book is a sensitive account, with a welcome defence of Grétry's orchestral writing, but it founders through over-reliance on *secondary* information, examination of too wide a field (starting with Gluck) and a resulting lack of adequate discussion of non-operatic music or indeed the operatic work of the generation of Berlioz's teachers. It contains no real theoretical basis for the study of orchestration.

Carse's studies are remarkable and will not easily be replaced. Their

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1) For example, see the crass statement published in 1969 by a well-known musicologist in the field, "Classical subject matter virtually vanished from the French operatic stage during the Revolutionary decade".

method is convincing because, whether dealing ostensibly with orchestration or performance practice, they strove to take account of all historical detail and documentation possible in order to form a coherent picture. Although he dealt with orchestration proper only in the 1925 History, filling out practical information in later studies, Carse gave each book a sense of historical responsibility and a conviction that I have found irresistible.

Borrel's all too brief documentary work on French performance practice can be compared with the exemplary achievement of Constant Pierre; the latter's work revealed innumerable and unsuspected sources for the music and the performance of wind ensemble pieces and Republican hymns. I have freely drawn from his work, the more so since few scholars appear to have used it thoroughly since it appeared. Barry Brook's recent published thesis on the French symphony also exists more as a documentary source than as a stylistic or technical study, but it is so comprehensive in its approach that it is invaluable to any student of French music of the later eighteenth century.

My own efforts have been directed at securing the fullest picture feasible for an interpretation of the written notes, and then to discuss orchestration from defined theoretical points of view. An early object was to examine all the orchestral music performed, in the belief that orchestration, like English law, must be studied according to precedent and the minute circumstances of each case. This ideal has not been realised, because there were too many foreign works given than could be studied, because very many lesser and manuscript stage works have disappeared, and because time did not allow instrumental parts of more than a few concert pieces to be made up into score. In spite of this, more pieces of music have been consulted than I would care to add together, and I have in the course of the dissertation stated in detail the nature of selections made.

The original aim I still think was valid in principle; the daunting size of the task implied perhaps explains the general lack of orchestration studies to date; I believe there may be a general realisation that something like this scope is necessary to do the topic justice. In the 1970 S.I.M. conference on nineteenth-century music the discussion, "A propos du développement de l'instrumentation au début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle", painfully revealed the lack of common ground among speakers and concluded gloomily:

"We need an inventory of everything happening in a limited period... We must think of details configurationally in terms of their functional position in the whole", and so on. <sup>1)</sup>

As the art historian Rosenblum has said, "Beginning around 1760, Western art becomes so hydra-headed that the historian who attacks it from a single approach is sure to be defeated". In music, the examination of orchestral 'colour' also benefits from a diverse approach, and the present study has adopted different kinds of method. The first part is concerned with the things that cannot be straightforwardly deduced from the full score, in other words, ensemble performance practice. Here literary evidence and manuscript musical evidence play a large and complementary part. Contemporary notions of orchestral music are also examined. The second part deals with the nature and practice of individual instruments other than the strings; the latter, being at a more fixed state of technical development, are only briefly dealt with from this point of view in chapter 9 and, as a group, in chapters 2 and 3. The studies of wind and percussion instruments make detailed use of contemporary tutors and occasionally that of contemporary iconography. <sup>2)</sup> For clarinet practice, in chapter 6, the method is primarily statistical. Discussion of music in detail commences in chapter 7, which is concerned with the techniques and expression of muted instruments in the orchestra. The last three chapters, forming the final part, deal with orchestration in the context of a proposed 'colour-theory' of orchestral sound, which is from time to time related to, though not based upon, critical writings on the orchestra set out in chapter 1.

In the last four chapters much use is made of musical examples to elucidate the argument. In this way a comprehensive picture is built up within which comparisons are made, both between examples illustrating one category, and between these and music discussed in the first two parts of the dissertation. The last chapter, dealing with fixed orchestral patterns, relates the changing position of orchestration in the art of composing to wider practical and artistic issues.

The majority of examples are taken from stage works. The reasons are

- 
- 1) Printed in AM, Vol. XLIII (1971) fasc.III-IV pp.236-248. My own work began in 1967.
  - 2) This section and chapter 1 section 3 were written before the publication of Bartenstein/LEHREN in 1971.

practical and theoretical; French opera full scores are accessible and dateable, whereas the printed music of other genres is generally in parts and difficult to date. But the stage orchestra witnessed rapid technical and expressive developments not experienced in the symphony, concerto, Republican or religious music. The best French composers wrote primarily opera. I have taken account of as many works performed on the Paris stage as possible, including some Italian imports, and including one or two unperformed works. However, there are examples and discussions of all genres except liturgical music. Moreover, there are many references to and examples from music composed from the 1760's onward, in order to try and render an accurate perspective.

Since this dissertation is not a conventional history, no single section is devoted to charting general events chronologically. Instead, chapters 1 and 3 give essential information in the course of their exposition, music is dated when it is mentioned, and the examples are individually labelled. No systematic work is included on orchestration and stage dramas. Many opéra-comique scores omit the dialogue, and ballet scenarios were issued separately from the printed music. Worthwhile research into instrumental means connected with dramatic situations would lead to a study in itself. In the following, information on the drama linked with a particular music has been used (with a few exceptions) only where the former was readily available.

#### MATERIAL AND ORGANISATION

Required declaration. This dissertation is in no part the result of work done in collaboration.

Examples volume. The index to the examples, placed at the beginning of the volume after the graphs, gives the date of each work at its first mention; this index can therefore be used as a ready check on dates. The quality of some Xeroxes has been improved in their salient parts by blocking in with ink, and system labels have been added in all cases. In cases where a tempo instruction is lacking, this means that none was found in the original piece.

Editing: MS material. Many music MSS and some archival MSS were consulted in Paris and London, and their library and shelf-mark are presented where appropriate. In the case of literary material I have usually edited only the names and punctuation in the belief that older forms of spelling can be

useful for their 'feel' and dating. With musical transcriptions I have sometimes silently altered a C clef to a G or F clef, and occasionally altered the order of staves. Original phrasing and dynamics have been retained but not added to. Square brackets are reserved for any editorial insertion.

Editing: printed material. The same principles have been used as for MS material. Proper names have sometimes been silently edited to conform to the version used throughout the dissertation.

Inaccessible material. The recently-discovered collection of the Tuileries chapel could not be consulted owing to cataloguing, and this has meant a considerable imbalance in the discussion of religious music, especially since Le Sueur's religious music in its printed version, issued late in his life, is likely to have been adapted or amended for publication, and so was not used. A full account of Le Sueur's oeuvre is pending in M. Jean Mongrédien's doctoral dissertation for the university of Paris.

The music department of the Bibliothèque Nationale appears to have mislaid certain items mentioned in C. Pierre's published work, namely the MS score of Gossec's Marche lugubre (P.2270), the MS parts of his Marche funèbre (P.2280) and those of Lefèvre's Ouverture (P.2323). The most important extant items not seen were Cherubini's MS operas in Berlin: L'hôtellerie portugaise (1798), La punition (1799), Epicure (1800) and Le crescendo (1810).

Printed music editions. Page numbers generally refer to the original editions, which were almost always paginated consecutively and whose plates, to my knowledge, were not usually revised. The only important instance of mixed pagination and revision of plates is Boieldieu's Beniowsky. In the dissertation I have given the library and shelf-mark of the edition consulted where page references were essential. In the cases of Gluck and Grétry I have used both original editions and the (most recent) complete editions, distinguishing where necessary.

Translations. Shortage of space precluded the English translation of the quotations from the French, but German quotations are always given in English, with the original in whole or in part. Though I received help with these translations, responsibility for their final form is naturally my own.

Dating. For concertos and symphonies a source for the dating is frequently given in detail. For Republican music I have followed Pierre's dating except where otherwise stated. All woodwind instruction books have been checked against Warner's bibliography; my only disagreements with Warner are in the cases of Garnier's Méthode raisonnée pour le haut-bois and Vandembroeck's Traité général. The dates of stage works given are those of the first performance, over which there is rarely any general contention. Where there is known to have been a significant delay between composition and performance allowance is usually made in the discussion.

The most important cases are:

- Le Sueur: Télémaque, composed ?1785-6, performed 1796  
Ossian, composed before 1800, performed 1804  
La mort d'Adam, composed before 1800, performed 1809
- Méhul: Cora, composed ca.1786, performed 1791  
Adrien, composed 1792, performed 1799  
Henri-Quatre, composed 1790, revised and performed 1797
- Spontini: La Vestale, perhaps ready by March 1806, performed December 1807 1)

All dates in the dissertation are corrected to the Gregorian calendar. References to the Republican calendar may be elucidated by reference to Appendix 3.

#### Names and titles.

- i) Kreutzer signifies Rodolphe Kreutzer
- ii) Le Sueur: this form, used by the composer (see the facsimile of the letter reproduced opposite p.116 in Lamy's monograph) has been preferred to the alternative Lesueur.
- iii) Martini signifies J.P.E. Martini
- iv) Some opera titles have commonly been shortened for convenience to a single proper name, e.g. Adam for La mort d'Adam.
- v) The term "Académie" has been used for what is often simply called the "Opéra" to avoid confusion with "opera", "opéra-comique" and the Opéra-Comique. "Académie" also serves to cover the seven changes of title the theatre underwent between 1791 and 1805, and to underline its cultural and administrative separation from the other Parisian opera-houses.

#### Conventions.

- i) The word "orchestration" has been preferred to "instrumentation" when the art of writing for an orchestra is meant. "Instrumentation"

1) Sources: Le Sueur, Jean Mongrédien; Méhul, Pougin's monograph; Spontini, Castil-Blaze/ACADEMIE, Vol.II p.103

has been used only to refer to the physical constitution of an ensemble, e.g. "The instrumentation is for strings and oboes with optional horns".

- ii) Common Italian terms like "tutti" have not been italicised; speeds such as "Adagio" are capitalised when they denote a particular section of music.
- iii) The term "cross-crooking" means using two or more natural horns with different kinds of crook simultaneously.
- iv) As the older French "tambour" as an instrument has no exact present equivalent, I have referred to it in English as "drum".

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with pleasure that I may now acknowledge the generosity of many people who have helped me in the preparation of this thesis. Above all, my supervisor, Dr. Hugh Macdonald, has given unfailing help and support, and his high standards have constantly provided inspiration. For their help both in conversation and in practical matters I should like to thank personally Mme Renée Minet, M. Yves Gérard, M. Jean Mongrédien, M. Frédéric Robert, Mr A.C. Baines, Mr C. Cudworth and Professor A.R. Oliver. For assistance in written enquiries acknowledgement is gratefully made to Mr P. Bate, the late H.R. Beard, Prof. Dr. H. Becker, Mr J. Elades, Duke Filippo Caffarelli, Mr E. Croft-Murray, M. Georges Favre, Dr. H. Fitzpatrick, Prof. A.S. Garlington Jr, Mr H. Honour, Mr M. Kemp, Herr Walter Lebermann, Prof. R.M. Longyear, Mr A. Macdonald, Mr J.P.S. Montagu, Prof. A.L. Ringer, Major T.L. Sharpe, Dr. M. Térey-Smith, Prof. Dr. Albert Vander Linden, and Dr. M. Whaples.

At home in the Rowe Library my work was forwarded by the courtesies of the late Jill Vlasto, of Susan Bain and of Lydia Smallwood. The staffs of the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra have given very great assistance, the first to the extent of accomodating the odd frantic telephone enquiry.



The following libraries and institutions provided help in various ways:

Austria: Vienna, Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek

Belgium: Brussels, Bibliothèque du Conservatoire Royale de Musique

Czechoslovakia: Cesky Krumlov library

France: Bordeaux, Bibliothèque Municipale

Paris, Musée du Conservatoire

\_\_\_\_\_, Musée du Louvre (documentation)

\_\_\_\_\_, University Institut de Musicologie

Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale

Germany: E. Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek

W. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek

Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek

G.B.: London, Courtauld Institute of Art

Italy: Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale

Florence, Conservatorio "L. Cherubini"

Milan, Conservatorio "G. Verdi"

Pesaro, Conservatorio "G. Rossini"

Rome, Académie de France

\_\_\_\_\_, Conservatorio "S. Cecilia"

Turin, Conservatorio "G. Verdi"

U.S.A.: Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University (Milton S. Eisenhower library)

New York, Columbia University (Butler library)

Washington, D.C., Library of Congress (Music Division)

U.S.S.R.: Leningrad, M.E. Saltykov-Schedrin State Public Library

Tasks of translation were undertaken by my mother and by Dr. C.E. Williams; material was loaned or given by Mr W. Dean, Prof. Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaume, Dr. J.G. Rushton and Dr. W. Sherwood Dudley; and sundry assistance was received from Dr. D. Champeney, Mr J. Drake, Dr. J. Gage, Mr I. Kemp, Dr. R. Orledge, Margaret Pugh and Dr. N. Shackleton, to all of whom I extend my thanks.

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Without doubt my greatest debt is to Rosalind Musman, who enabled the work to be completed.

NORWICH, September 1973

ILLUSTRATIONS, STATISTICS, DIAGRAMS

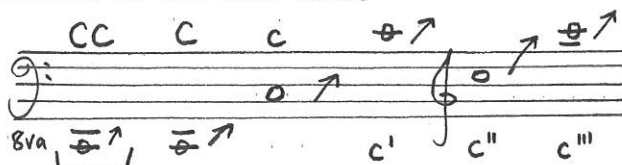
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ABBREVIATIONS

- 1) Footnotes. The bibliographical references must be sought in the Bibliography, at the end of the present volume. This is at once a straightforward bibliography in alphabetical order of author, and a source for abbreviations given to periodicals past and present. Anonymous publications are listed under title.
- 2) Pierre numbers. Works described in C. Pierre's Les Hymnes et Chansons de la Révolution are given Pierre's own number thus: (P.3) to facilitate identification, reference to Pierre's source lists and so on.
- 3) Roman capitals have been used for volume numbers and the scenes of an opera, but also the movements of an instrumental piece: thus, Haydn, symphony 86/I to indicate the opening movement.

- 4) Pitches are indicated in the text thus:



- 5) Instruments (plural in brackets)

vn(s)	violin	fl(s)	flute	cor(s)	horn
vla(e)	viola	ob(s)	oboe	tp(s)	trumpet
vc and v/c	cello	cl(s)	clarinet	tb(i)	trombone
CB and DB	double-bass	fg(s)	bassoon	timp	timpani
		picc	piccolo	B.D.	bass drum
		C.A.	cor anglais	cymb	cymbal
		WW	woodwind		

- 6) Other

B. de l'Op.	Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra
B.M.	London, British Museum
B.N.	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale
C.E.	Complete Edition
<u>Ex.</u>	Example in the second volume of this thesis
f. (ff.)	folio(s)
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
N.B.E.	New Berlioz Edition
no.	number
O.E.D.	Oxford English Dictionary
Op.	opus
p. (pp.)	page(s)
P.	See (2) above

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