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Annegret Fauser and Mark Everist eds., *Music, Theater, and Cultural Transfer: Paris, 1830-1914*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009. x + 439 pp. Appendix, bibliography, discography and filmography, contributors, index. \$55.00 U.S. (cl.) ISBN 978-0-226-23926-2

Review by Clair Rowden, Cardiff University.

For those of us that work on French music during the nineteenth century, this book is a collection of essays that exemplifies what we do and yet it is far from banal. We ‘insiders’ tend to forget the honest and engaging nature of such work, studying and examining not only musical artefacts, but the aesthetic, cultural and institutional history which shaped those artworks and in turn forged the nature of our discipline. Annegret Fauser and Mark Everist, both at the height of their games, have given us a book which those in many other fields of musicological study may envy in its scope and integrity. Indeed, this book has already won the coveted Solie prize, awarded by the American Musicological Society, and I would not be surprised if it went on to win more. But as the editors-authors are quick to point out, this volume grew out of the international symposium, “The Institutions of Opera in Paris from the July Revolution to the Dreyfus Affair”, co-organised by Annegret Fauser and the late and much regretted Elizabeth C. Bartlett, and the book is both a tribute to the current discipline and to Beth Bartlett’s place within its development.

Whilst the importance of institutional history in Paris in the nineteenth century has long been recognised—due to the regulation of the theaters put in place by Napoléon Bonaparte—yet “that institutional history can be pushed beyond the boundaries of the institution as a fixed context for cultural production and consumption. Instead, what becomes increasingly clear is the fluidity and complexity of artistic and administrative agency, aesthetic meaning, and legal frameworks” (p. 3). The complexities and reciprocal influences between institutions, agents, geographical locations and historical periods explored within the volume leads to a focus on cultural transfer, and an understanding that identity and difference are complementary, rather than contradictory. Such sensitivity to the research materials produces increasingly sophisticated interpretations, as this volume attests, and those readings at once illuminate and clarify the picture of artistic production and consumption, and yet further entangle and enmesh our understanding of the fabric of everyday life for theater and opera professionals in nineteenth-century Paris.

The volume is divided into three sections: “Institutions,” “Cultural Transfer” and “The Midi and Spain, or *Autour de Carmen*.” The first is indeed remarkable in its inter-linked diversity of subject, and a tribute to the editors’ vision. Chapters deal with singers (particularly Jean-Baptist Chollet) and their influence on the repertory and thus musical genres (Bara), a composer’s place within performing institutions (Hallman), institutional failure (Ellis), and directors of opera houses. Lesley Wright’s article on Léon Carvalho, successively director of the Théâtre-Lyrique and the Opéra-Comique, cites the librettist Louis Gallet’s prediction of opera directors’ names disappearing into the oblivion of history, but her own article proves just the opposite. And Mark Everist gives us a welcome article on Offenbach (hooray!), who only recently seems to have been given his rightful slice of serious musical scholarship, and thus his rightful place in the history of opera in Paris in the second half of the nineteenth century. The reading of the appendix by Alicia Levin which explains the Napoleonic licensing system of theatres (*cahiers des charges*) and provides useful tables including dates, locations and directors for all the main musical theatres, may also be justified from the start as it helps contextualise the other essays in the volume. Those readers unfamiliar with the Parisian scene would do well indeed to begin with this appendix, which complements the first chapter of Mark Everist’s *Giacomo Meyerbeer and Music Drama in Nineteenth-Century Paris* which also gives a helpful prose appraisal of the different theatres and their contractual licenses. [1]

Olivier Bara argues for the inclusion of singers and actors as agents of creativity. He reminds us how voice/dramatic types were named after individual artists—Falcon, Dugazon, Martin—and demonstrates how conservative tendencies within the troupe, repertoire and performance conditions of the Opéra-

Comique nevertheless provided a flexible and fertile terrain for a musical and dramatic *métissage* of the old and the new. Diana Hallman documents the career of Fromental Halévy as an employee at the Opéra, the impact of this position on his composition, his artistic standing and the Opéra's willingness to perform his works. As he increasingly shouldered administrative responsibility under the directorship of Edmond Duponchel, professional jealousies and personal difficulties (fuelled by anti-Semitism) made his position untenable, and yet after ten years of loyal service to the Opéra, Halévy had learned much about dramaturgy, the musical and technical ability of the house's solos singers, chorus and the orchestra, collaborative working procedures and, indeed, contributed to their development.

Katharine Ellis describes the creation of the Théâtre-Lyrique and demonstrates its novelty and potential to reform operatic provision and composition in the French capital. She explores the tensions between expectation and reality, protectionism and international competition, supply and demand, the love of novelty and the embedding of stable repertoire, perceptions of art and commercial entertainment, between state control and the free market that were central to the Théâtre-Lyrique's success and eventual failure. Ellis describes the anomaly of three different houses competing for the same repertoire (such as *Don Giovanni* in the Spring of 1866, shown in three different versions in theatres with very different *cahiers des charges*), and here, as elsewhere, how theatre deregulation was only beneficial to popular entertainment, to operetta, opera bouffe and vaudeville which consequently found a plethora of new homes.[2]

And yet Mark Everist sets out to show how Offenbach had two serious objectives with the creation of the Théâtre des Bouffes-Parisiens: to support young composers, but moreover, to squarely position operetta in the tradition of eighteenth-century *opéra comique*, thus ennobling the genre and clearing elbow room for his own efforts to elaborate the genre. Everist examines Offenbach's ambiguous writing and ultimately unsustainable arguments in the press where he simultaneously curries favour with all the successful and influential composers of the day—Meyerbeer, Auber, Thomas, Halévy—and yet at the same condemns their own efforts in *opéra comique* as overblown and embodying the worst excesses of the genre. Everist's article clearly demonstrates how savvy composer-directors such as Offenbach could push beyond the constraints of the *cahier des charges* without incurring retribution from the press or government by proposing works of artistic value, but which could later stand as legal precedents when Offenbach mounted larger-scale modern works, generally of the lighter repertoire.

Lesley Wright presents a biographical account of a period of Léon Carvalho's career, his first term as director of the Opéra-Comique (1876 until the fire of 1887 which closed the Salle Favart), plugging to some extent a hole in the literature, for no extended study focussing on "Carvalho the director" exists, despite this figure's intelligent management of the repertory and personnel, his indefatigable dedication and commitment to artistry, and his transformation of the fortunes of the Opéra-Comique from the time of his appointment into the 1880s. Wright demonstrates how Carvalho both drove and accompanied the developments in *opéra comique* composition, applying for modifications to his *cahier des charges* in the wake of the closure of the Théâtre-Lyrique which allowed the Opéra-Comique to adopt much of the Théâtre-Lyrique's former repertoire, and ultimately led to the creation of French *drame lyrique*.

David Grayson's article scrutinizes the composer and music journalist Victorin Joncières's 1881 article, surveying the opportunities for young composers to have their operatic works staged in the capital.[3] Whilst Joncières had his own axes to grind, his unfavourable assessment of the situation was nevertheless backed up by cold, hard facts, and yet Joncières did not condemn outright the Opéra and Opéra-Comique for not fulfilling the terms of their respective *cahiers des charges* in relation to the creation of new works. Grayson's article, rather over-reliant on Noël's and Stoullig's excellent *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique* rather than on actual archival material, demonstrates that being a winner of a composition competition, whether the Prix de Rome, the Concours Cressent, or those launched by individual theatres, was no guarantee of performance or success. He briefly mentions how popular operatic excerpts and arrangements, as well as regional stagings, could draw the public's attention to a new work, but the latter were more problematic, for once a work had been staged elsewhere, could it still be classed as a "new" work?[4] Grayson demonstrates how the Opéra directors Eugène Bertrand and Pedro Gailhard even instigated concerts during two seasons (1895-1897), supposedly to promote operatic works by young composers. Yet the (excerpts of) works performed rarely made it to the Opéra stage, Bertrand and Gailhard effectively silencing their critics with their 'laudable' concerts whilst doing little to produce new operas. On more familiar territory, Grayson shows how Debussy, post-*Pelléas*, was in the enviable position of having the Metropolitan Opera, New York commissioning and paying him advances for operas that were never completed. Yet, when surveyed in 1911, by Georges Linor for *Comœdia*, Debussy was the only composer to

invoke the need for private sponsorship, particularly in the provinces, in order that new works might receive decent performances which could enhance a composer's reputation.[5]

The second section of the book deals more broadly with cultural transfer, how works were adapted for performance and how they were and can be understood in varying cultural, political and aesthetic contexts. Sarah Hibberd presents the Act V ball scene from Auber's *Gustave III* (1833) as a cathartic moment for contemporary audiences, whatever their political persuasions, as the spectacular not merely outweighed the political implications of the story, but represented an aestheticised version of past and present historical events as "opera made history triumphantly in its own image" (p. 175).[6] Arnold Jacobshagen takes to task previous scholars of the staging of Halévy's *La Juive*, identifying the staging manual published by Louis Palianti—previously identified as dating from the time of the première in 1835—as dating from the late 1860s, following the revival mounted at the Salle Le Peletier between 1866 and 1873. He convincingly argues how Palianti's manual contains detailed description of mimetic expression and cues for footlight changes which serve to emphasise psychological change in the drama, both techniques rare during the 1830s. Indeed, he challenges our ideas of the immutability of staging that the *livrets de mise-en-scène* have traditionally been taken to represent.

Rebecca Harris-Warrick traces through the press the fortunes of three different versions of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* on Parisian stages during the 1830s and 1840s. Her large documentation base not only sheds light on the shifting institutional and aesthetic politics of the July Monarchy but also on attitudes towards ballet, Italian versus French operas and libretti, operatic translations, and Italian imports versus Italian operas written for Paris. For the French who frequented the Théâtre-Italien did so because they enjoyed Italian opera, but they were not entertaining the same operatic and musical experience as the Italians in Italy. The subtle changes to musical idiom made by Italian composers writing or adapting for the Parisian Théâtre-Italien, often incited by Rossini to write specifically for French audiences, creates a subset of works whose critical receptions open a highly interesting window on national difference and French and Italian perceptions of each other's cultures. Harris-Warrick expresses the wish to make her collection of press data available to scholars and, indeed, this sounds like an excellent project for the research network, "Francophone Music Criticism 1789-1914," set up by Mark Everist and Katharine Ellis in 2007. Among other valuable activities, the network (of which I am a founding member) has created (and is still creating) a significant repository of digitized, fully searchable reviews relating to French music and ballet.[7] Until now, collections devoted to individual works have not included documents relating to performances after the première, but the possibility of including reception materials over a lapse of time and distance (with regard to regional/international premières) is one that has been frequently discussed, and one that can reveal exactly the cultural transfer of and the mediation carried out by a work in different performing contexts.

Annegret Fauser revisits the master narrative of the flop of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* at the Opéra in 1861. Careful reading of Wagner's critics, whose opinions were still being influenced by François-Joseph Fétis's largely negative reception of Wagner's prose works—published as a series of articles in the *Revue et Gazette musicale* between 1852 and 1854—shows a deep-seated concern for the future of opera, its institutional context, its musical and poetic language. As at other points during the century (such as 1900 onwards and the Parisian reception of the operas of Richard Strauss), the internal, Parisian artistic conflict is couched as a debate over national difference, the "enemy within" is disguised as the "enemy without," and thus convention may be upheld over innovation and progress in the name of national stability and Paris' international role in opera composition, production and performance.[8] At the same time, critics—writing self-consciously and performatively as a way to validate criticism as an arbiter of national culture—provided themselves with a weapon for the future, as deviation from French tradition could thus be celebrated as either an elegant French form of progress, or alternatively criticised as pernicious foreign infiltration. In the end, Fauser reads the press cabal as a last-ditch attempt to preserve an operatic tradition which was quickly becoming obsolete, and the generally unmeasured reactions of the French public and press discredited their own aesthetic position.

Marian Smith, once again providing the "token" article on ballet—it would be nice if these sorts of collections on French music and cultural history could provide a larger, more representative platform for what made up a large part of the Opéra's activity—describes how the sylph was transferred from one balletic culture to another, between the *La Sylphide* (Opéra 1832) and *Les Sylphides* (Ballets russes, Théâtre du Châtelet 1909). Smith demonstrates how the narrative *ballet blanc* which showcased the talents of Marie Taglioni in the 1830s became Michel Fokine's abstract ballet in which movement was projected from

absolute music, which was a prime factor of the ballet, rather than a propulsive accompaniment. Indeed, Smith affirms that Fokine's ballet explored the pure "white" scene, without all the earlier trappings of plot, scenery and props, in a self-consciously modern way, "performing" a symbol of Parisian Romantic ballet as a way of ushering in the modern age of ballet in the same city. Peter Lamothe rounds off this section of the book with a discussion of the genre of incidental music, particularly Massenet's extended version of his music for Leconte de Lisle's *Tragédie antique Les Érinnyes*, given at Albert Vizentini's short-lived Théâtre-National-Lyrique in 1876. Lamothe convincingly argues that the fashion for such extensive incidental scores may be read as a French initiative to find alternative solutions to the marriage of music and drama proposed by Wagner. While Lesley Wright makes reference to the genre of French *drame lyrique*—commonly understood as innovative French opera of the mid-1880s onwards which synthesised techniques from *opéra comique*, *grand opéra*, Wagnerian drama and Italian influences with a new concern for the libretto and dramatic realism—Lamothe's study of the critical reception of *Les Érinnyes* reveals that these incidental scores were also defined as *dramas lyriques*, as a way of reclaiming the genre label from its Wagnerian connotations.

The third section of the book deals with realism on the operatic stage, whether musical or dramatic. Kerry Murphy identifies what "Spanish" might have meant for the French collective imagination during the second half of the nineteenth century. Spanish song, particularly as composed and performed by the famous tenor Manuel Garcia (and his daughters, Maria Malibran and Pauline Viardot) and Sebastien Iradier became extremely popular, and character dance became a marker of "Spanishness".[9] As with Italian opera, however, the idea of an "authentic style" in music is problematic as Spaniards composed for the French audience as well as the home one, and French composers produced many works in picturesque Spanish style. Indeed, these complex issues of cultural exchange are highlighted by the fact that the *Habañera* and *Seguidille* from Bizet's *Carmen* became the most frequently arranged and popular excerpts in Spain. Ralph Locke gets to grips with Spanish musical sources for parts of Bizet's score, especially the aria "Cuerpo bueno, alma divina," from Manuel Garcia's 1804 light opera *El criado fingido*. From the many different versions of this song identified as possible sources for Bizet, Locke pins it down to the version published in a volume of Spanish songs, *Echos d'Espagne*, in 1872. In laudable detail, Locke demonstrates how Bizet magisterially composed the prelude to Act IV of *Carmen* from many elements contained within Garcia's song and the *Echos d'Espagne* collection, creating gripping musical drama from Romance stereotypes.

Steven Huebner's contribution to the volume shares its origins with the international conference organised by Jean-Christophe Branger and Alban Ramaut in Saint-Étienne in 2003 entitled "Le Naturalisme sur la scène lyrique," and the subsequent publication of the papers.[10] Here Huebner takes a closer look at the life and work of the singer Emma Calvé and her success in *verismo* roles, linking her success in the role of Carmen to her international successes in the 1890s as Santuzza in Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*, Anita in Massenet's *La Navarraise*, and Fanny Legrand in Massenet's *Sapho*. [11] Huebner affirms, like Olivier Bara at the start of the book, that not only institutions shaped operatic genres (and vice versa), but particular performers also. Thus the volume comes full circle, across the span of the nineteenth century, demonstrating that while political and aesthetic preoccupations may change, mediating factors in cultural production often remain relatively constant. This volume then, despite minor quibbles, is of inestimable value, not only to our own discipline, but to musicology in general and to the wider audience of cultural historians of France during the nineteenth century. For musicology, it is a beacon in its depth and breadth of conception, perception and inspiration, contributing hugely to our increasing, yet ever patchy understanding of artistic production and mediation in the Parisian theatrical milieu.

#### LIST OF ESSAYS

Olivier Bara, « The Company at the Heart of the Operatic Institution: Chollet and the Changing Nature of Comic-Opera Role Types during the July Monarchy »

Diana R. Hallman, « Fromenthal Halévy within the Paris Opéra: Composition and Control »

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Steven Huebner, « *La princesse paysanne du Midi* »

Alicia C. Levin, « Appendix : A Documentary Overview of Music Theaters in Paris, 1830-1900 »

#### NOTES

[1] Mark Everist, *Giacomo Meyerbeer and Music Drama in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Aldershot UK: Ashgate, 2005).

[2] Katharine Ellis, "Funding Grand Opera in Regional France: Ideologies of the Mid-Nineteenth Century," in Rachel Cowgill, David Cooper and Clive Brown eds., *Art and Ideology in European Opera: Essays in Honour of Julian Rushton* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 67-84.

[3] "La question du Théâtre Lyrique," in Edouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, eds., *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique* 6(Paris, 1881): i-xviii.

[4] For discussion of this issue, particularly in relation to Camille Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* and Ernest Reyer's *Salammô*, both given at Rouen's Théâtre des Arts before being mounted in Paris, see my "Decentralisation and Regeneration at the Théâtre des Arts, Rouen, 1889-1891," *Revue de musicologie* 94(2008): 139-180. For a thorough discussion of the Parisian popularisation of *Samson et Dalila* through excerpts and arrangements see Jann Pasler, "Contingencies of Meaning in Transcriptions and Excerpts: Popularizing *Samson et Dalila*," in Byron Almén and Edward Pearsall eds., *Approaches to Meaning in Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), pp. 170-213.

[5] Georges Linor, "Pour la décentralisation musicale: L'Opinion des Compositeurs," *Comœdia*, 26(January 1911).

[6] Hibberd's chapter presented here becomes a longer discussion of similar issues in her *French Grand Opera and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[7] Available at <http://music.sas.ac.uk/fmc>.

[8] See my forthcoming article, "Salome versus Salomé: The Parisian Reception of Strauss's and Mariotte's Operas", in *Richard Strauss im europäischen Kontext: Richard Strauss-Jahrbuch* (Vienna: Richard Strauss-Gesellschaft, Autumn 2011).

[9] This is borne out in the operatic scores of Jules Massenet who, each time composing on a Spanish

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subject (particularly *Chérubin*, *Don Quichotte* and *La Navarraise*), underpins much of the recurrent musical material of his score with dance rhythms (jota, sicilienne, etc.).

[10] Jean-Christophe Branger and Alban Ramaut eds., *Le Naturalisme sur la scène lyrique* (Saint-Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 2004).

[11] Dossiers of the Parisian reception of Massenet's *La Navarraise* and Mascagni's *La Chevalerie rustique* form two of the collections available from "Francophone Music Criticism 1789-1914," edited by me at the time of writing the article "Paris – Londres : *La Navarraise* face à la presse" (in Branger and Ramaut, *Le Naturalisme sur la scène lyrique*, pp. 106-128). It deals with the press receptions of Massenet's *La Navarraise* in London (in tandem with *Werther*) and in Paris (in tandem with *La Chevalerie rustique*). My article appears immediately before Huebner's article in that volume.

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