

Dance Rhythms Of The French Baroque: A Handbook For Performance

sciences the regularities of the physiological and mechanical functioning of his art. With his remarkable drive for objectivation he lays the first fundamental basis for the science of dance. Ralph tracks down probable sources of information and fascinating pictorial documents for this impressive work.

In all, one might wish that Ralph had placed Weaver's work more clearly within the context of dance treatises which appeared from the turn of the Renaissance up to his time; that he had offered more detailed comparison with the works of Ménestrier and De Pure, or with the writings of the equally empirical and English-influenced Dubos, but also with the contemporaneous appearance on the continent of Gregorio Lambranzi's *Neue und Curieuse Theatralische Tantz-Schul* (New and Curious School of Theatrical Dancing, 1716), a work on theatrical practices. It seems that Weaver was not always entirely candid about his sources, so there is still room for further investigation, which may yield surprising results. Thus, for example, Arbeau's *Orchesographie*, which he criticizes in some of his writings, could have left traces in his work—not just in the title *Orchesographie*, which he used for his translation of Feuillet's *Chorégraphie*. Moreover, the sword dance *Les Bouffons*, for four dancers armed with swords and little shields, and for which Arbeau provided exact choreographic instructions (steps, gestures, floor patterns, and accompanying music), is conspicuously similar to the opening dance of Weaver's *The Loves of Mars and Venus*. In both choreographies, reference is made to the tradition of pyrrhic dances.

Carol Marsh has demonstrated what interesting results can emerge from a comparison of contemporary treatises in her analysis of the translations of Feuillet's *Chorégraphie* by Weaver and Siris, which both appeared in the same year (1706). While this is not the place to explore her work more deeply, suffice it to say that she points out a shortcoming in Weaver's translation of data concerning the relation between musical timing and dance notation, which could cause problems for the reconstruction of French dances from Weaver's notations. In this connection, too, a correction is required for musical misreadings that find their way into Ralph's work: Weaver had not

transposed Feuillet's musical examples higher (cf. pp. 273-4: "Weaver slightly raises the musical pitch of Feuillet's examples"); rather, he substituted the normal G-clef for the French violin clef found in Feuillet's work.

To conclude, then, despite Ralph's comprehensive research accomplishment, a whole range of questions still remains; of course this is to be expected in a discipline as young as dance scholarship. Why, one well might ask, did Weaver, the illustrious notator of dances, leave not a single example of one of his own dances, while contemporaries within his circle have left some eighty choreographies, among them Le Roussau's attempts at notating pantomimic action? And, how extensive was Noverre's knowledge of Weaver's work? Dupré, Weaver's principal male dancer, was after all to become his teacher. Weaver's work was to be found in David Garrick's library—as Joan Lawson has been able to show (8)—where Noverre, as he states in his writings, carried out studies. And lastly, the future dance reformer, Noverre, would have had (at least theoretically) the opportunity to get to know his important predecessor personally during his sojourns to England (1755/56 and 1756/57). Ralph's somewhat brief and haphazard chapter on Weaver's contribution to European ballet could certainly have been extended, considering these, and probably also various other aspects related to this topic.

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Notes

1. The annotated facsimiles of Weaver's works include: Notations—*Orchesographie* (translation of Feuillet's *Chorégraphie*), *A Small Treatise of Time and Cadence in Dancing* (translation of Feuillet's *Traité de la Cadence*), a Collection of Ball-Dances by Isaac; Historical Writings—*An Essay towards an History of Dancing*, *The History of the Mimes and Pantomimes*, articles for *The Spectator*; Anatomical Writings—*Anatomical and Mechanical Lectures upon Dancing*; and Libretti—for *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Perseus and Andromeda*, and *Judgement of Paris*. 2. S. J. Cohen, "Theory and Practice of Theatrical Dancing," in *Famed for*

- Dance: Essays on the Theory and Practice of Theatrical Dancing in England, 1600-1740*, ed. L. K. Fletcher, S. J. Cohen, R. Lonsdale (New York: 1960).
3. F. Derra de Moroda, "The Ballet-Masters before, at the time of, and after Noverre," *Chigiana* 29/30 (1975): 473-485.
4. M. H. Winter, *The Pre-Romantic Ballet* (London: 1974).
5. G. Dorris, "Music for the Ballets of John Weaver," *Dance Chronicle* 3:1 (1979): 46-60.
6. S. Wynne, "The Charms of Compaissance: The Dance in England in the Early Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1967).
7. New York: City University of New York, 1985.
8. See *Dancing Times*, 1960: 244.

DANCE RHYTHMS OF THE FRENCH BAROQUE: A HANDBOOK FOR PERFORMANCE, by Betty Bang Mather, with the assistance of Dean M. Karns. *Music: Scholarship and Performance*. Thomas Binkley, general editor. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987. xiv + 334 pp., musical examples, appendix, bibliography, index. \$37.50.

Betty Bang Mather is well-known to musicians for her books and articles on the performance of Baroque music. Now, with the assistance of Dean Karns, she has turned her attention to the dance rhythms in French music of the *grand siècle* (1651-1715, the reign of Louis XIV) with the goal of helping today's performers "give life and soul to French Baroque dance music."

Dance Rhythms is directed chiefly towards musicians and dancers, but the authors are also mindful of the needs of musicologists and dance scholars; information is well documented—sources are cited within the text using a parenthetical reference system, and original texts of translated passages are included in endnotes. The book contains a profusion of examples; extensive musical excerpts, many drawn from works which might not otherwise be readily accessible; frequent rhythmic patterns which illustrate such issues as bowings, step timings, guitar strumming patterns, and *rhythmopoeia* or poetic rhythms; and detailed analyses of French poetic texts. Dance notation is less well represented—there are only

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