

*Aesthetics of  
Baroque Music  
in England*

Second Edition

AESTHETICS OF MUSIC

VOLUME 8

David Whitwell



# Aesthetics of Music

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DAVID WHITWELL

# Aesthetics of Music

VOLUME 8  
AESTHETICS OF BAROQUE MUSIC IN ENGLAND

EDITED BY CRAIG LABELSTEIN

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# FOREWORD

WE DEFINE MUSIC to be that form of music performed live before listeners. We define Aesthetics in Music to be a study of the nature of the perception of music by the listener.

We believe the performance of music in actual practice falls naturally into four classes. These are Art Music, Educational Music, Functional Music and Entertainment Music.

## I. ART MUSIC

Art Music we believe is defined by four conditions, *all* of which *must always be present*. These are:

1. *Art music is inspired.* Art music is music in which it seems evident that the composer has made an honest attempt to communicate genuine feelings. Feelings, which may range from lofty and noble to superficial and vulgar, must be presumed to be generally recognizable in music, as they are in any other art form, including painting, sculpture, dance, and architecture. In Art Music, lofty and noble feelings are paramount.

Due to the common genetically understood nature of emotions, it must also be understood that in music emotions or feelings cannot be 'faked.' They will always be recognized as such by any contemplative listener.

2. *Art Music has no purpose other than the communication of its own aesthetic content.* Art Music is free of any purpose or function, save the spiritual communication of pure beauty.
3. *Art Music is that which enjoys a performance faithful to the intent of the composer.*
4. *Art Music must have a listener capable of contemplation.*

If any of these conditions are missing, the performance must result in a lesser aesthetic experience. For example, the *Ninth Symphony* of Beethoven played in a stadium, during the half-time of a professional football game, would fail for the lack of the presence

of Condition Number Four. The same Symphony heard in a concert hall, but in a poor performance, not faithful to the intent of the composer, would fail for the lack of the presence of Condition Number Three.

## II. EDUCATIONAL MUSIC

Educational Music may or may not have the same conditions as Art Music, excepting Condition Number Two; it may or may not occur within an educational institution. Educational Music is didactic music, music which has the specific and *additional* aim to educate. In the strictest sense, if the *primary purpose* of Music is to educate, it cannot be Art Music—for Art Music has no purpose.

## III. FUNCTIONAL MUSIC

Functional Music is music put at the service of something else. We include here, for example, all kinds of religious music, music for weddings, music for the military, and occupational music. Functional Music may share the same conditions as Art Music, excepting Condition Number Two.

One may ask, How can a Mozart Mass be called Functional Music, and not Art Music? If the observer were not contemplatively listening to the music, but were rather contemplating religious thoughts, then the Mozart Mass becomes merely a very high level of Functional Music. If, on the other hand, the observer is a contemplative listener of music, forgetting about religion, then the Mozart Mass is Art Music, but has failed in its purpose as church music.

Military and wedding music are examples of music in which the contemplative listener is missing entirely. How about airport, supermarket and elevator music where there is no listener at all? According to the definition we have given above, recorded music without listeners is not to be considered music at all.

#### IV. ENTERTAINMENT MUSIC

Entertainment Music is music with no object other than to please. It will always be missing Condition Four, the contemplative listener. For this reason, Entertainment Music may be inspired music, but the composer is unlikely to be inspired by lofty and noble emotions, knowing there will be no contemplative listener. Entertainment Music and Art Music can never be the same thing because of Condition Number Two: Art Music has no purpose other than the communication of its own aesthetic content. It is inconsistent with the nature of great art to have any extrinsic purpose, including the purpose to entertain.

The first philosopher to address the impact which Art has on an observer was Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, as part of a discussion of Tragedy, which like music has both a material, written form and a live performance form. In this treatise, Aristotle first considers the nature and contribution of each of the specific components of the written form of the Tragedy in his typically methodical style. His great contribution, however, comes when he has completed this discussion, for he then goes beyond the material form of the play itself to discuss the observer. He makes it clear that not only is the end purpose of the elements of the play to produce a specific experience in the observer, but that the nature of this experience is what distinguishes Tragedy from other dramatic forms, such as Spectacle. It was in this moment that he created a new branch of Philosophy which we call 'Aesthetics.'

Our purpose is to provide a source book of representative descriptions of actual performances, observations by philosophers, poets and other commentators which contribute insights to our understanding of what music meant to listeners during the early Renaissance. It is for this reason that when discussing contemporary treatises on music that we concentrate on those passages which offer insights relative to the aesthetics of music and musical performance rather than the usual technical subjects such as scales, modes and counterpoint which fill most books on Renaissance music.

Since traditional musicology has focused almost exclusively on sacred and secular vocal music of the Renaissance, we have also

included numerous references which we hope will reveal a much wider world of music during this period.

We are also interested in contemporary views on the physiology of knowing, especially with regard to the relationship of the senses and Reason, and related psychological ideas, such as Pleasure and Pain and the Emotions, which might offer a frame of reference for their perspective on the perception of music.

This is the final volume in a series of eight, ranging from the music of the ancient civilizations through the Baroque Period.

David Whitwell  
Austin, Texas

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This new edition would not have been possible without the encouragement and help of Craig Dabelstein of Brisbane, Australia. His experience as a musician and educator himself has contributed greatly to his expertise as editor of this volume.

David Whitwell  
Austin, 2013



# 1 THE MUSICAL SCENE IN ENGLAND

## MUSIC OF THE COURT

One is inclined to feel sympathy for James I (1603–1625),<sup>1</sup> the first of the Stuarts, for not only was it his unhappy destiny to follow the great Elizabeth, but he was a poor physical specimen.<sup>2</sup> Among his many failings was a distinctly divine self-image which contributed to the civil unrest and regicide which followed. His persecution of Puritans and Catholics led to the famous departure of the American colonists. This and his sponsorship of a famous bible made it impossible for history to forget him.

Although he maintained a significant musical establishment,<sup>3</sup> nothing about his court could inspire further aesthetic growth. His tastes extended little beyond entertainment, as is perhaps best symbolized by the accounts centering on the visit of the King of Denmark in 1606.<sup>4</sup> In the principal entertainment, an allegorical arrival of the Queen of Sheba at the court of Solomon, the ‘Queen of Sheba’ was drunk and spilled a tray of goodies in the lap of the Danish king. Three other actresses, Faith, Hope and Charity were also drunk and,

Hope did assay to speak, but wine rendered her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew ... Faith was then all alone, for I am certain she was not joined with good works, and left the court in a staggering condition; Charity came to the king’s feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sisters had committed ... She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick and spewing in the lower hall.<sup>5</sup>

---

1 Our purpose here is not an attempt to summarize the development of Baroque music itself in England, and its composers, but rather to present a brief overview of the environment in which the music was performed and its general aesthetic nature. At the same time, we take the opportunity to include important material not found in general music history texts.

2 Christopher Hibbert, *Charles I* (New York: Harper, 1968), 17ff., quotes a contemporary description of a large body over weak, thin legs; eyes watery and too large; and,

with a large tongue, over a small jaw, which caused him to make a distasteful splashing noise when drinking and to dribble gravy into his beard and wine down the side of his cup.

3 Centering on consorts of flutes, oboes and trombones, some of whom doubled on cornett, in addition to the usual trumpets and drums. See Thurston Dart, ‘The Repertory of the Royal Wind Music,’ *The Galpin Society Journal* 11 (May, 1958): 75, and Walter Woodfill, *Musicians in English Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 179, 296ff.

4 John Nichols, *The Progresses of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1805), III, quotes an eyewitness, Henry Robart, who was especially taken by the appearance of the Danish king with his timpani players riding horses while playing. It was, he said, ‘a thing verie admirable to the common sort, and much admired.’

5 Robert Ashton, *James I* (London: Hutchinson, 1969), 242ff.

Sir John Harington, who was present for these celebrations, confirms the general climate.

We had women, and indeed wine too, of such plenty, as would have astonished each sober beholder ... Those, whom I never could get to taste good liquor, now follow the fashion, and wallow in beastly delights. The ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication.

The highest form of Jacobean musical entertainment was the masque, allegorical theater pieces whose nature might be characterized by the titles of three of Ben Johnson's masques, 'Masque of Beauty' (1607), 'Pan's Anniversary' (1624) and 'The Fortunate Isles' (1624). A typical masque usually began with a prologue in verse, with songs and changes of scenery, followed by a dance, actors, and then a main dance in which the maskers invited the royal spectators to dance with them. Instrumental music for the overture or for changes of scenery were often played by one of the wind consorts, but sometimes by string consorts as well.

One of the most interesting eyewitness accounts we have of one of these performances is by the Venetian ambassador in London, Horatio Busino, describing a performance of Ben Johnson's 'Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue,' performed 6 January 1618.<sup>6</sup> He describes the hall and the ladies present in the audience, regarding whose clothes he found had 'no folds so that any deformity, however monstrous, remains hidden.' More interesting is his description of the king's entrance.

On entering the house, the cornets and trumpets to the number of fifteen or twenty began to play very well a sort of recitative.

No one knows what kind of music this was, which substituted for the usual fanfares. Although Jonson also uses the term 'Stylo recitativo' in his 'Of Lovers made Men' (1617), there is little extant information on English musical practice this early in the century to allow the obvious association with the new Italian movement we call opera.<sup>7</sup>

This masque, according to Busino, began with a 'very chubby Bacchus' who sang in an undertone before the king, followed by another stout, drunken figure, 'Bacchus's cupbearer.' The first principal dance was by twelve figures dressed in barrels and wicker-baskets with an accompaniment of cornetts and trumpets. Next came a gigantic man representing Hercules and twelve boys in the 'guise of frogs,' who danced and were then driven off by Hercules. A scene change brought dawn at Mount Atlas, where high priests and goddesses 'sang some jigs.' Busino was not impressed.

It is true that, spoiled as we are by the graceful and harmonious music of Italy, the composition did not strike us as very fine.

<sup>6</sup> *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts existing in the Archives of Venice, 1617–1619*, 110ff.

<sup>7</sup> See Gustave Reese, *Music in the Renaissance* (New York: Norton, 1959), 883.



After a final dance by twelve masked cavaliers, our ambassador, ‘half disgusted and weary,’ left for home at half-past two o’clock in the morning, after having been at court for eleven hours!

We may assume the lesser lords imitated the practice of the court of James. If they did not maintain a musical establishment, they could always hire musicians for special occasions—as when the Earl of Cumberland hired the York civic wind band to perform for a masque he gave in 1636.<sup>8</sup> Richard Braithwaite, in his *Some Rules and Orders for the Government of the House of an Earle* (1621) details the music required for special banquets.

At great feasts, or in time of great strangers, when it is time for the Ewer to cover the table for the Earle; [the Trumpeter] ... is to sounde to give warning, and the drumme to play till the Ewer is readie to goe up with the service, and then to give place to the Musitians, who are to play ... upon Shagbutte, Cornetts, Shalmes, and other instruments going with winde. In meale times to play upon Violls, Violins, or other broken musicke.<sup>9</sup>

Braithwaite also gives us a glimpse of the highly organized use of music for travel.

When the Earle is to ride a journey, [the trumpet] is early every morning to sound, to give warning, that the Officers may have time to make all things ready for breakfast, and the grooms of the stable to dress and feed the horses. When it is breakfast time, he is to make his second sounding: breakfast ended, and things in a readiness, he is to sound the third time, to call to horse. He is to ride foremost, both out and into any town, sounding his trumpet. Upon the way he may sound for pleasure. But if he see the day so spent that they are like to bring late to their lodging, he is to sound the ‘Tantara,’ to move them to hasten their pace.<sup>10</sup>

But since there was some danger that all this trumpet playing might frighten the horses, the trumpeter had an even earlier duty. In what was surely the lowest moment for the proud trumpeter, he had,

to goe often into the Stable, to acquainte the horses with the sound of the trumpet, and the noise of the drumme.<sup>11</sup>

Walls, in a book on Baroque music,<sup>12</sup> leaves the impression that the noble class in England in the seventeenth century modeled themselves after Castiglione, *The Courtier*, and were therefore practicing musicians. He points to William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, as one who indulged in poetry and music ‘the greater part of his time.’ We believe it is incorrect

8 Woodfill, *Musicians in English Society*, 260.

9 Quoted in Paul Jones, *The Household of a Tudor Nobleman* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1918), 175. This is one of the earliest references to violins in art music in England. *The Diary of Anthony Wood* maintains in 1658, in describing a violin virtuoso, that ‘nor any in England saw the like before.’ See Robert Donnington, *The Interpretation of Early Music* (New York: Faber, 1964), 535.

10 *Ibid.*, 229.

11 *Ibid.*

12 Peter Walls, ‘London, 1603–49,’ in *The Early Baroque Era* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1994), 285.

to leave the impression that Cavendish was typical of his class. As we have pointed out in a previous volume, there is considerable evidence that in the latter part of the sixteenth century manners were changing and the English noble no longer considered the ability to actually perform music as appropriate to his status. The performance of music was being relegated to the servant class and this is stated again quite directly in James Cleland's *The Institution of a Young Nobleman* (1607).

Delight not also to be in your own person a player upon instruments, especially upon such as commonly men get their living with.<sup>13</sup>

A contributing reason for this was an attitude that the noble should never be expected to exert himself to the degree required to achieve an expert level at any skill. This would certainly be required to be proficient as a performer of music, as Robert Dowland, in his *Varietie of Lute-lessons* of 1610 points out.

Perfection in any skill cannot be attained unto without the waste of many years, much cost, and excessive labor and industry.<sup>14</sup>

This attitude in no way prevented the noble from enjoying music as a listener. Roger North, in his various essays, frequently wrote of the tradition of private music in the great households during the early part of the seventeenth century. In one passage, in particular, he recalls the music in the home of his grandfather, Lord North.

He kept an organist in the house, which was seldom without a professional music master. And the servants of parade, such as gentlemen ushers, and the steward, and clerk of the kitchen also played; which with the young ladies my sisters singing, made a society of music, such as was well esteemed in those times. And the course of the family was to have solemn music three days in the week, and often every day, as masters supplied novelties for the entertainment of the old lord.<sup>15</sup>

Charles I was also weak in physique, and suffered from a speech impediment, but he was a much stronger personality than his father. Had he chosen as a model Elizabeth I he might have been a great king. But he followed the model of his father and lost the monarchy and was beheaded. After becoming king in 1625, after only four years he found so many of his subjects in opposition that he dissolved Parliament and ruled alone for eleven years. During this period when political lines were drawn between his followers (Cavaliers) and the Puritans (Roundheads), war broke out with the Scotch Presbyterians. Charles reconvened Parliament to raise funds, it refused and he dismissed it again. The next Parliament, called the Long Parliament, supported the Scottish position. Civil War followed and the new Parliament, entirely Puritan, beheaded Charles.

<sup>13</sup> James Cleland, *The Institution of a Young Nobleman* (Oxford, 1607), V, xxv.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Donnington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 118.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in John Wilson, *Roger North on Music* (London: Novello, 1959), 10.

Charles combined his musical establishment with that of his father to create a body of some sixty-five musicians.<sup>16</sup> A surviving contract for one of them in 1640 reveals that they were exempt from some taxes, were free from arrest and another document records they were provided with both printed music and manuscript paper ('Italian musique cards').<sup>17</sup>

According to John Playford, writing in 1674, Charles was particularly interested in his private church music, 'which with much zeal he would hear reverently performed, and often appointed the Service and anthems himself, being by his knowledge in music a competent judge therein.'<sup>18</sup> While there were some masques and other larger entertainments under Charles I, the accounts center mostly on the provision of musicians for meals.<sup>19</sup> Fortunately, the musicians were able to work out a rotation system so the same men did not have to play for every meal.<sup>20</sup>

Roger North recalls that during the period of the Civil War, during the reign of Charles I, music making flourished on a private basis, even though public productions were of necessity curtailed.

Among other arts, music flourished, and exceedingly improved, for the King, being a virtuous prince, loved an entertainment so commendable as that was, and the Fantasia manner held through his reign, and during the troubles; and when most other good arts languished music held up her head, not at Court nor in profane Theaters, but in private society, for many chose rather to fiddle at home, than to go out and be knocked on the head abroad; and the entertainment was very much courted and made use of, not only in country but city families, in which many of the ladies were good consortiers; and in this state was music daily improving more or less till the time of the happy Restoration.<sup>21</sup>

The trumpeters seem to have been paid more than most musicians, not only because of their constant use for giving signals but because they had to serve as ambassadors when the nobles traveled. The trumpeter was considered the equivalent of a passport, or a 'white flag,' and was supposed to be allowed to cross enemy lines unharmed. Thus, the diary of one who accompanied the Earl of Arundel on a journey through Germany in 1636 mentions,

whilst our trumpeter was allowed to visit ... the castle in order to ask French permission for our further passage.<sup>22</sup>

16 For the funeral of James I, payments were made to 21 trumpets, 21 'Musicians for the windy Instruments,' and 13 'Musitions for Violins.'

17 London, Lord Chamberlains Accounts, vol. 738, p. 75, for January 10, 1629.

18 John Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Music* [1674] (Ridgewood: Gregg Press, 1966), preface.

19 The meals themselves must have been rather amazing. Every year, at Whitehall Palace alone, Charles and his company consumed 3,000 carcasses of beef, 14,000 sheep and lambs, 24,000 birds, together with vast quantities of pigs, fish, boars and bacon. See Hibbert, *Charles I*, 112.

20 Henry Lafontaine, *The King's Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 72ff.

21 Quoted in Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, 294.

22 Francis Springell, *Connoisseur & Diplomat* (London: Maggs Bros., 1936), 89.

Sad to say, this particular trumpeter was murdered when the party was near Nürnberg.<sup>23</sup>

His Excellency's Gentleman of the Horse and his Trumpeter, together with the corpse of their guide, the Postmaster, were found ... It appeared that each must have witnessed the death agonies of his companions. The head of the Gentleman of the Horse had been shattered by a pistol shot, the Trumpeter's head had been cut off and the guide's head had been split open.<sup>24</sup>

After the death of Charles I, the Puritan extremists tried to create a democratic government, but it soon developed into a Protectorate under Cromwell. Religious toleration was established and Jews were readmitted after having been banished for centuries. After Cromwell's death anarchy returned and now even the Puritans were in disarray. After much dissension the public finally was willing for a return of the Stuarts.

The Restoration Period in England begins with the return of Charles II in 1660. Some called him the 'happy king,' and well he might have been, having spent fourteen years enjoying France with no cares of government. An Italian diplomat said of him,

His fiercest enemies are diligence and business. He worships comforts, pleasures, and practical jokes, hates implacably all sort of work, and loves with the greatest enthusiasm every kind of play and diversion.<sup>25</sup>

As a collector of mistresses he was without equal for his generation, thus setting the example for both his court and Restoration theater. One of the most memorable lines of the seventeenth century was spoken by one of his ladies when the crowd mistook her for a newly arrived French (and Catholic) mistress. From her coach window she exclaimed, 'Be silent, good people, I am the *Protestant* whore!'<sup>26</sup> This young lady was Nell Gwynn (1650–1687), who was born in a coalyard garret in Drury Lane and developed her singing and acting ability in the lowest barrooms. She was fortunate to live at the time when female parts on the stage were first allowed to be played by women and her success on the stage first brought her to the attention of the king. She collected considerable funds from the king's purse, but it must be noted that she gave much of this money to private charities, including Chelsea Hospital. A letter by Mme de Sévigné in Paris records the character of this girl, and also mentions a child who is usually overlooked in the literature on Charles II.

The actress is as haughty as the Duchess of Portsmouth [another mistress of the king]; she insults her, makes faces at her, attacks her, frequently steals the King from her, and boasts of his prefer-

23 When another royal trumpeter was killed while on a diplomatic mission to Poland, the court documents seem more concerned with the loss of the king's silver trumpet. See Richard McGrady, 'The Court Trumpeters of Charles I and Charles II,' *The Music Review* 35 (1974), 227.

24 *Ibid.*, 80.

25 Lorenzo Magalotti, *Relazione d'Inghilterra* [1668] (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980).

26 Sir Arthur Bryant, *King Charles II* (London: Collins, 1955), 238.



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DR. DAVID WHITWELL is a graduate ('with distinction') of the University of Michigan and the Catholic University of America, Washington DC (PhD, Musicology, Distinguished Alumni Award, 2000) and has studied conducting with Eugene Ormandy and at the Akademie fur Musik, Vienna. Prior to coming to Northridge, Dr. Whitwell participated in concerts throughout the United States and Asia as Associate First Horn in the USAF Band and Orchestra in Washington DC, and in recitals throughout South America in cooperation with the United States State Department.

At the California State University, Northridge, which is in Los Angeles, Dr. Whitwell developed the CSUN Wind Ensemble into an ensemble of international reputation, with international tours to Europe in 1981 and 1989 and to Japan in 1984. The CSUN Wind Ensemble has made professional studio recordings for BBC (London), the Koln Westdeutscher Rundfunk (Germany), NOS National Radio (The Netherlands), Zurich Radio (Switzerland), the Television Broadcasting System (Japan) as well as for the United States State Department for broadcast on its 'Voice of America' program. The CSUN Wind Ensemble's recording with the Mirecourt Trio in 1982 was named the 'Record of the Year' by The Village Voice. Composers who have guest conducted Whitwell's ensembles include Aaron Copland, Ernest Krenek, Alan Hovhaness, Morton Gould, Karel Husa, Frank Erickson and Vaclav Nelhybel.

Dr. Whitwell has been a guest professor in 100 different universities and conservatories throughout the United States and in 23 foreign countries (most recently in China, in an elite school housed in the Forbidden City). Guest conducting experiences have included the Philadelphia Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Czech Radio Orchestras of Brno and Bratislava, The National Youth Orchestra of Israel, as well as resident wind ensembles in Russia, Israel, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, England, Wales, The Netherlands, Portugal, Peru, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Canada and the United States.

He is a past president of the College Band Directors National Association, a member of the Prasadium of the International Society for the Promotion of Band Music, and was a member of the found-



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Dr. Whitwell's publications include more than 127 articles on wind literature including publications in *Music and Letters* (London), the *London Musical Times*, the *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (Salzburg), and 52 books, among which is his 13-volume *History and Literature of the Wind Band and Wind Ensemble* and an 8-volume series on *Aesthetics in Music*. In addition to numerous modern editions of early wind band music his original compositions include 5 symphonies.

David Whitwell was named as one of six men who have determined the course of American bands during the second half of the 20th century, in the definitive history, *The Twentieth Century American Wind Band* (Meredith Music).

A doctoral dissertation by German Gonzales (2007, Arizona State University) is dedicated to the life and conducting career of David Whitwell through the year 1977. David Whitwell is one of nine men described by Paula A. Crider in *The Conductor's Legacy* (Chicago: GIA, 2010) as 'the legendary conductors' of the 20th century.

'I can't imagine the 2nd half of the 20th century—without David Whitwell and what he has given to all of the rest of us.' Frederick Fennell (1993)

# ABOUT THE EDITOR

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