

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-66319-9 - The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Music
Edited by Simon P. Keefe
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• PRELUDE •

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· 1 ·

The musical map of Europe c. 1700

STEPHEN ROSE

At the start of the eighteenth century, Europe displayed a panorama of musical styles and an array of performing opportunities. When Wolfgang Caspar Printz described a musical tour through central Europe in his *Phrynis Mytilenaeus* (1696), his account consisted of the names of leading musicians in each place. Certainly the achievements of individuals were important; but equally significant were the environments in which they worked. As Charles Burney wrote: ‘Music, indeed like vegetation, flourishes differently in different climates; and in proportion to the culture and encouragement it receives.’¹ This chapter outlines some of the ‘different climates’ encountered by early eighteenth-century musicians, ranging from courtly patronage to the entrepreneurial possibilities in large towns. The connection between music and place is also seen in the national styles of composition and performance that were central to musicians’ vocabulary in the period.

A crucial factor in the awareness of music’s geography was the growth in international travel by the eighteenth century. Increasing numbers of musicians went abroad to work or to learn foreign styles. Aristocrats and connoisseurs also journeyed, particularly on the Grand Tour that English and German tourists took to France and Italy. For Johann David Heinichen, travel was a way to gain musical experience and nurture that ‘rarest jewel’, good taste. ‘Why do we go through effort, danger and expense to travel around from nation to nation ...? ... Simply and solely to develop our good taste.’² International exchange also occurred in the trade in sheet music, particularly as the main music-publishing centres (Amsterdam and London) specialized in music from France and Italy.

Full consideration of two important aspects of this musical panorama, however, are beyond the scope of the present chapter. First, everywhere in Europe there was popular or traditional music, heard on the street, in the

1 Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present* (London, 1776–89), 4 vols., vol. 1, Preface.

2 Johann David Heinichen, *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (Dresden, 1728), p. 23. English trans. in George J. Buelow, *Thorough-Bass Accompaniment According to Johann David Heinichen*, 2nd edn. (Lincoln, NB, 1992), p. 325.

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[More information](#)

tavern and in the countryside. Much of this popular music circulated orally and was documented only when it intersected with the literate tradition; for this reason it is often overlooked by historians. Yet it was a constant aural backdrop to life, noted by travellers and irking or stimulating elite musicians. Elite and popular musicians sometimes quarrelled for reasons of economic rivalry; but other musicians found inspiration in the popular traditions. Franz Benda learned many new ideas about violin-playing from a Jewish tavern musician in Prague,³ and Georg Philipp Telemann's fascination with the traditional music of Poland will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

A second topic largely absent from this chapter is the dissemination of Western musical culture beyond Europe. An array of missionaries, merchants, diplomats and colonists with musical talents took Western music to the New World and the Far East, often along routes established in previous centuries.⁴ Domenico Zipoli (1688–1726) was an Italian organist recruited by the Jesuits to work in South America, where his compositions circulated widely; Roque Ceruti (c. 1683–1760; born in Milan) served a viceroy in Peru, writing dramatic works for the court, and later acted as *maestro de capilla* at cathedrals in Trujillo and Lima; Teodorico Pedrini (1671–1746) was a Lazarist missionary who became court musician to Emperor Kangxi of China. Such individuals added a cross-cultural dimension to the international exchange described in this chapter.

Types of musical environment

European musicians worked in a variety of environments, including churches, courts, theatres and charitable institutions such as orphanages. Some were employed as municipal musicians and some freelanced in major cities. Of these various places, the most significant in the eighteenth century were the courts and the emergent 'public sphere' in large towns and cities; both will be examined in the following section.

Courts, the personal households of aristocrats and rulers, remained among the most important centres for music throughout the eighteenth century, particularly in German-speaking lands. The musical lives of courts varied as much as the personalities and tastes of individual rulers. Although some courts were provincial backwaters, others were internationally famous for their music and hired performers from across Europe. The young Johann Joachim Quantz,

³ Douglas A. Lee, *A Musician at Court: An Autobiography of Franz Benda* (Warren, MI, 1998), p. 15.

⁴ Victor A. Coehlo, 'Music in New Worlds', in Tim Carter and John Butt (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 88–110.

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[More information](#)

as a trainee municipal musician, wanted to go to a court such as Dresden or Berlin, because he believed he ‘could hear much more beautiful music there and learn much more’ than in a town.⁵ The Dresden court employed French and Italian as well as German musicians, and its orchestra pioneered the practice of each member performing exclusively on a single instrument, raising the standard of the playing.⁶ Courts were also centres for opera, which by the early eighteenth century was prized by aristocrats as a way to show their education and status.

The life of a court musician – often hectic, dictated entirely by their relationship with their patron – is portrayed in the diary and other writings of the Weissenfels concertmaster Johann Beer (1655–1700). In his posthumously published *Musicalische Discurse*, he recounts: ‘Today one must go with the court there, tomorrow somewhere else. There is no difference between day and night. Come storm, rain or sunshine it is all the same. Today one must be at church, tomorrow at table, the next day at the theatre.’⁷ His diary records the swirl of events, night and day, with his young patron, Johann Georg of Saxony-Weissenfels (reigned 1698–1712). On 23 August 1698 Beer supplied a serenade for the princess and was rewarded with a silver watch. That night at 3 a.m. he went riding with his prince, resting under a tree in an oat-field. On 10 February 1699 the prince came to Beer’s house at 5 a.m. after a gala, presumably expecting entertainment, and stayed for two hours with the oboists.⁸ Beer had a strong personal relationship with his patron and consequently enjoyed many rewards such as the aforementioned silver watch. Indeed, it may have been with such gifts in mind that Beer wrote a chapter in his *Musicalische Discurse* on whether musicians could be ennobled.⁹

Despite all its advantages, court employment could also be very unpredictable. Musicians were at the whim of their patron, liable to be sacked when tastes changed or when their overlord died. As Beer explained: ‘there are not a few courts which at the least disruption reduce their establishment, or merely dismiss their servants so that the court structure is dissolved by itself. Hence there are many court musicians who would like to move to the cities, and who would go there immediately if the cities paid as well as court. For what is more splendid in anything than constancy? ... I say: constant poverty could be more

5 Autobiography in Friedrich Wilhelm Marburg, *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, 1 (1754–5), p. 202; trans. with some inaccuracies in Paul Nettl, *Forgotten Musicians* (New York, 1951), p. 284.

6 Ortrun Landmann, ‘The Dresden Hofkapelle During the Lifetime of Johann Sebastian Bach’, *Early Music*, 17 (1989), pp. 19–20.

7 ‘Heute muß man mit dem Hof da/morgen dorthin. Tag und Nacht leiden da keinen Unterschied. Sturmwind/Regen und Sonnenschein/gilt da eines wie das andere. Heute muß man in die Kirche/morgen zu der Tafel/übermorgen aufs *Theatrum*.’ Johann Beer, *Musicalische Discurse* (Nuremberg, 1719), pp. 18–19.

8 Johann Beer, *Sein Leben, von ihm selbst erzählt*, ed. Adolf Schmiededecke (Göttingen, 1965).

9 James Hardin, *Johann Beer* (Boston, MA, 1983), pp. 13–14.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

blissful than transitory riches.¹⁰ Similar opinions were held by Telemann, who moved to the stability of a municipal post in Frankfurt am Main after working at the Sorau and Eisenach courts. As he recollected in his 1740 autobiography: 'Whoever wants a lifetime position should settle in a republic.'¹¹ In an earlier autobiography he captured the fickle nature of court life: 'In the morning the weather seems calm and cheery, but in the evening cloudy and dreary.'¹² How drastically the courtly climate could change is evident from J. S. Bach's experience at the Cöthen court, where Prince Leopold lost his enthusiasm for music on marrying an unmusical wife.

The patron's absolute power over the court was symbolized by the strict hierarchy imposed on courtiers and court servants. Often this ranking was listed in ordinances and enacted at mealtimes or in processions.¹³ Telemann proudly recorded how at Eisenach he made his way up the hierarchy, gaining the title of secretary and a seat at the dining table of the marshals.¹⁴ Court employees often jostled for rank, with drawn-out disputes about precedence. Printz's novel *Pancalus* (1691) recounts how, at the fictitious court of the Marquis of Pomponio, the court-tailor, the wine-steward, the cooks, the barber and the gardener all try to leap-frog the musicians in the court hierarchy. Much later in the century at the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg, Mozart resented being made to eat at the same table as the servants, below the valets, but above the confectioner and cooks.¹⁵ Mozart's experience symbolized the limited personal freedom of many court musicians: although they contributed in indispensable ways to the prestige of courts, musicians were liable to be treated as the feudal property of their patron.

The opposite pole from court music was found in the 'public sphere' emerging in large towns and cities. Traditionally towns had employed musicians in churches and schools or as municipal instrumentalists; thus J. S. Bach served as organist in Arnstadt and Mühlhausen, and as cantor (school music teacher) and

10 'sind derer Höfe nicht wenig/welche bey der geringsten *ruptur* den Staat *reduciren*/oder doch ihren Dienern dergestalt abbrechen/daß die Hof-Staat/*vel sua sponte* zerfließen muß. In *regard* dessen sehnen sich viel Fürstliche *Musici* nach denen Städten/würden auch/im Fall die Städte so starck als der Hof/bezahlten/sich dort bald einfinden. Denn was mag wol vortrefflicher in einer Sache seyn/als der Bestand? ... Ich sage: Die beständige Armuth könne glückseliger geheissen werden/als ein unbeständiger Reichthum.' Beer, *Musicalische Discourse*, p. 18.

11 'Wer Zeit Lebens fest sitzen wolle, müsse sich in einer Republick niederlassen.' Autobiography published in Johann Mattheson, *Grundlage einer Ehren-Pforte* (Hamburg, 1740), p. 363, reprint Kassel, 1969.

12 'Qu'au matin Pair pour nous est tranquille & serein, /Mais sombre vers le soir & de nuages plein.' Quoted in Johann Mattheson, *Grosse General-Bass-Schule oder exemplarische Organisten- Probe* (Hamburg, 1731), p. 168.

13 John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (Oxford and New York, 2004), pp. 214-15, 229.

14 Mattheson, *Grundlage einer Ehren-Pforte*, p. 363.

15 Emily Anderson (ed. and trans.), *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, 3rd edn. (London, 1985), pp. 713-14 (letter of 17 March 1781).

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[More information](#)

civic music director in Leipzig. Increasingly, however, musicians tapped the collective market of urban dwellers for concerts, music theatre, sheet music and tuition. The best example of this new market for music was in early-eighteenth-century London, although elements of it were also found in cities such as Hamburg, Leipzig, Paris and Venice. The term ‘public sphere’ was coined by Jürgen Habermas, who studied the processes whereby ‘the sphere of private people come together as a public’, giving rise to public debate on cultural and political matters.¹⁶ In London, the critical factors included the dwindling power of the royal court and the rise of alternative institutions where the powerful or wealthy could meet or communicate with each other, such as coffee-houses and newspapers. Similar trends occurred in musical life: by 1690 the English court ceased to be the major patron of music, partly owing to its weak finances, partly owing to the indifference of the new monarchs. Already in the late seventeenth century court musicians were regularly moonlighting from their regular employment, augmenting their court stipends by running concert series (as with John Banister) or working for the theatre (as with Henry Purcell).¹⁷ Public musical life continued to develop in the early eighteenth century in the form of concert series and music-meetings, and music played an important part in the theatres and pleasure-gardens.

Harold Love has analyzed the public market for music in London, showing that the ‘public sphere’ as defined by Habermas could be more accurately described as a multitude of tightly knit groups that sometimes interlocked.¹⁸ Different concert series attracted different types of clientele. Thomas Southerne in his play *The Wives’ Excuse* (1692) portrayed a concert-room as the place where the *beau monde* of London go to gossip and flirt. Other concert series were run on subscription with deliberately high prices to ensure social exclusivity. As *The Female Tatler* reported in September 1709: ‘at *Consorts of Note* the Prices are extravagant purposely to keep out inferiour People.’¹⁹ Musical connoisseurs and enthusiasts, by contrast, attended the private clubs known as music-meetings. From 1724 a musical society met for concerts every Wednesday evening at the Castle Tavern in Paternoster Row. The serious tone of the society is evident from its by-laws of 1731, which divide the membership into performers and auditors (a maximum of 160 of the latter). Only members and their guests could attend concerts. New members could join only if they

16 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA, 1989), p. 27.

17 Stephen Rose, ‘Music in the Market-Place’, in Tim Carter and John Butt (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 56, 61.

18 Harold Love, ‘How Music Created a Public’, *Criticism*, 46 (2004), pp. 257–71.

19 Quoted in Rosamund McGuinness, ‘Musical Provocation in Eighteenth-Century London: The *British Apollo*’, *Music & Letters*, 68 (1987), p. 340.

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were nominated by an existing member and if the majority of the membership approved the nomination. The by-laws specified who was responsible for organizing each aspect of the weekly concert, and fines were imposed on members who arrived late, or who changed seats or spoke during a performance.²⁰ Such strict regulations suggest a different clientele from the gossipy audience satirized by Southerne. Other musical societies specialized in particular repertoires: the Academy of Ancient Music (originally the Academy of Vocal Music, founded in 1726) performed sacred polyphony from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Although the public market for music in London was fragmented, its vibrancy attracted many continental musicians. As Johann Mattheson declared in 1713: ‘anyone who wants to be eminent in music at the present time takes himself to England.’²¹ Musicians who travelled to London included Germans (notably George Frideric Handel, but also Jakob Greber, Melchior Hoffmann, Jakob Kremberg, Johann Sigismund Kusser and Johann Christoph Pepusch); musicians born or trained in France (Charles Dieupart, Jean-Baptiste Loeillet); and, above all, hundreds of Italian singers and instrumentalists. Italian singers included the castratos Farinelli (visited 1734–7), Nicolini (visited 1708–12, 1714–17) and Senesino (visited 1720–8, 1730–6), and the sopranos Faustina Bordoni (visited 1726–8) and Francesca Cuzzoni (visited 1722–8). Italian instrumentalists and composers included Nicola Cosimi (visited 1701–5), Francesca Geminiani (in England 1714–32 and intermittently thereafter), Nicola Francesco Haym (resident 1701–29) and Nicola Porpora (visited 1733–6). The main reason for this influx of Italians was the lucrative remuneration available in London. Nicolini, for instance, was paid 800 guineas for the 1708–9 season and would have earned still more from benefit concerts and private performances.²² Such high fees reflected the competition between London theatres, whose impresarios relied on famous or novel virtuosos to entice an audience. Most Italians stayed for only a few seasons before moving on to other engagements, another indication of the premium placed on novelty.²³

Many of the foreign performers coming to London were unaccustomed to the entrepreneurial ingenuity required in its musical world. Johann Siegmund Kusser, arriving from Germany in 1704, wrote down a list of advice apparently

20 *The By-Laws of the Musical Society, at the Castle-Tavern in Pater-Noster-Row* [London, 1731], British Library, classmark 557*.d.43.(2).

21 ‘Wer bey diesen Zeiten etwas in der Music zu præstiren vermeinet/der begibt sich nach Engelland.’ Johann Mattheson, *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre* (Hamburg, 1713), p. 211.

22 Lowell Lindgren, ‘Handel’s London – Italian Musicians and Librettists’, in Donald Burrows (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Handel* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 89.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

given to him by Jakob Greber.²⁴ Kusser noted which impresarios to contact (John Rich and Thomas Betterton) and how to negotiate a contract ('At the signing of the contract, announce that you cannot remain longer than about six weeks ... Don't sign a new contract before the old one has elapsed, and in the meantime point out to them occasionally how they are profiting from you ... Retain your freedom and have it in the contract that you are permitted to perform outside the theatre whenever you wish'). Kusser's list also recommends suitable behaviour ('Be proud but greet everyone politely, for the English like to be flattered'), choosing music that fits English taste ('no pathos, certainly, and short, short recitatives'; 'sing an English aria from time to time') and flattering English sensibilities ('Praise the deceased Purcell to the skies and say there has never been the like of him'). Later Kusser moved to Dublin, where he described the requisites for a concert: tickets had to be printed and sold; change was required, along with a pair of scales to weigh coins; guards had to be hired for the entrance, and the upper doors of the theatre should be nailed shut (presumably to prevent non-payers entering). Musicians had to consider all these practicalities in the new world of public concerts.

Yet patronage remained important in the musical life of early-eighteenth-century London; as much as at court, musicians needed to cultivate the favour of powerful individuals. The opera-companies depended on royal and aristocratic support: the Royal Academy of Musick received an annual subsidy of £1,000 from the monarch and most of its shareholders were aristocrats. Several foreign musicians lived in the household of aristocrats: Cosimi and Haym received food and lodging from Wriothlesley Russell, 2nd Duke of Bedford; and Handel, in his early years in London, was the private guest of the Earl of Burlington and 'Mr Andrews of Barn-Elms'. Performances at noble households and private teaching could make up a large part of a musician's income. Indeed the violinist Geminiani 'was seldom heard in public during his long residence in England. His compositions, scholars, and the presents he received from the great, whenever he could be prevailed upon to play at their houses, were his chief support.'²⁵ Kusser's advice included recommendations on etiquette when dining and conversing with the nobility after performing at their homes. As Simon McVeigh notes, the appearances of musicians at public concerts acted as 'both advertisement and validation' for these private activities of teaching and house-concerts.²⁶

The defining feature of the public sphere in Habermas' analysis is the emergence of coherent public opinion from an array of individual viewpoints.

24 Harold E. Samuel, 'A German Musician Comes to London in 1704', *Musical Times*, 122 (1981), pp. 591–3.

25 Burney, *A General History of Music*, vol. 4, p. 643.

26 Simon McVeigh, 'Italian Violinists in Eighteenth-Century London', in Reinhard Strohm (ed.), *The Eighteenth-Century Diaspora of Italian Music and Musicians* (Turnhout, 2001), p. 153.

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[More information](#)

In the case of England, Habermas identified moral weeklies such as *The Spectator* and *The Tatler* as a ‘key phenomenon’, educating the public with essays on philosophy, literature and art.²⁷ In musical life, too, the periodical press helped to shape public taste. The moral weeklies covered music among other topics, with Joseph Addison writing a series of critical essays on opera in *The Spectator*. In England, however, the discussion of music was scattered across a range of publications from short essays to learned treatises;²⁸ there was no journal dedicated specifically to the critical discussion of music until the early nineteenth century.

It was in northern Germany that the first periodical devoted to the discussion of music appeared, Johann Mattheson’s *Critica musica* (1722–5). Mattheson was the secretary to the British ambassador in Hamburg and was heavily influenced by literary developments in London such as the moral weeklies. Indeed, his weekly magazine *Der Vernünfftler* (1713) contained German translations of articles from *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Many of his musical writings share the moral weeklies’ mission to speak to the lay reader. His first musical treatise, *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre* (1713), is intended to demystify music theory for the amateur: the title-page promises ‘instruction whereby a *galant homme* can gain a complete grasp of the majesty and worth of noble music, form his taste in the same, understand technical terms, and argue skilfully in this splendid branch of knowledge’.²⁹ Mattheson’s musical periodical *Critica musica* is aimed at more specialist readers. It contains an annotated translation of the Raguenet–Le Cerf dispute over French versus Italian styles (see p. 20); discussion of compositional techniques such as canon; and musical news from European cities (reports of opera performances, obituaries of distinguished musicians and reviews of new publications). Much of *Critica musica* is filled with Mattheson’s own polemics, defending his previous treatises and publishing the opinion of other musicians on them; consequently the journal is somewhat inward-looking, more like a learned journal than a moral weekly.³⁰ Yet *Critica musica* paved the way for subsequent periodicals in Germany, such as Mattheson’s own *Der Musicalische Patriot* (1728), Scheibe’s *Der critische Musikus* (1737–40), Mizler’s *Musikalische Bibliothek* (1736–54) and Marpurg’s *Historisch-kritische*

27 Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, pp. 41–2.

28 Thomas McGeary, ‘Music Literature’, in H. Diack Johnstone and Roger Fiske (eds.), *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain: The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 397–421, at 397.

29 ‘Anleitung/Wie ein *Galant Homme* einen vollkommenen Begriff von der Hoheit und Würde der edlen Music erlangen/seinen *Gout* darnach *formiren*/die *Terminos technicos* verstehen und geschicklich von dieser vortrefflichen Wissenschaft *raisonniren* möge.’

30 Imogen Fellinger, ‘Mattheson als Begründer der ersten Musikzeitschrift (*Critica musica*)’, in George J. Buelow and Hans Joachim Marx (eds.), *New Mattheson Studies* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 179–97.

Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik (1754–62). These serials pioneered many features of music journalism, including reviews of new publications, biographical articles and reports from leading musical centres; they helped shape a collective sense of musical taste, first among connoisseurs and then across wider circles of music-lovers.

During the eighteenth century the public sphere increased in significance for musicians, although courtly employment remained important. To take some examples from the second half of the century: Joseph Haydn spent the 1750s as a freelance musician in Vienna, worked for the next three decades at the Esterházy court, then in the 1790s freelanced in London. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart served at the Salzburg court until 1781 (albeit with many journeys to perform at other courts and cities), then worked as a freelance musician in Vienna. Like countless other musicians, Haydn and Mozart sought in their career choices to profit from the diversity of environments for music-making that Europe offered.

National styles

The varied musical geography of Europe in the early eighteenth century was symbolized by the styles of composition and performance associated with different countries. In the sixteenth century there seem to have been fewer differences between national traditions, with a *lingua franca* of polyphonic vocal composition. By 1700, however, Italy, France and Germany each had a distinctive musical style; there was also an awareness of the traditional music of such peoples as the Poles and Scots. (Although Italy and Germany did not exist as nation-states at the time, they were still recognised as territories with distinctive cultures.) The national styles were disseminated by foreign musicians on their travels and were studied by apprentice musicians who went abroad. Around 1700 the Italian style was dominant in Europe, with countless Italian expatriates promoting opera and string-playing north of the Alps. But national styles were not the exclusive property of musicians from the relevant country; they could also be learned by foreigners, as one of the many resources in a composer's vocabulary. Some musicians adopted wholesale the style of another country: Handel was born in Germany, but spent most of his career bringing Italian opera to London; and the violinist Jean Baptiste Woulmyer was of Flemish origin, but learned French techniques of string-playing in Paris, Frenchified his surname to Volumier, and then brought the French styles of performance to the Berlin and Dresden courts. Other musicians promoted a synthesis of French and Italian styles, notably François Couperin and several German musicians including Quantz and J. S. Bach.