

The New Musical Magazine, Review and Register (1809-1810)

Published monthly in London from March 1809 until March 1810, *The New Musical Magazine, Review and Register of Valuable Musical Publications, Ancient and Modern*¹ [MRR] consists of two volumes, thirteen issues.² This journal appears to have been the first English music periodical to combine sheet music, biographical and theoretical articles and reviews of published music under a single cover. Neither the editor, publisher nor authors of the articles are identified in the journal; only the correspondents sign their letters to the editor. The issues contain from twelve to eighteen pages (printed in two-column format) that are divided into two parts. The pages of each volume are numbered consecutively beginning with the number 1.³ A two-page index of the first twelve issues printed on unnumbered pages is found at the conclusion of Vol. I, no. 12, January 1810.

The first part which contains printed pianoforte and vocal sheet music found at the beginning of each issue comprises forty-seven compositions in the high classical style, generally of a difficulty suitable for the abilities of amateurs. The pianoforte music features Mozart's Variations on Grétry's "Dieu d'amour," with extracts demonstrating the execution of the ornamentation;⁴ a Divertimento for two pianos by Mozart; a Divertissement arranged from passages in Mozart's symphonies; Beethoven's Variations on "God Save the King"; and Rondos by Cramer, Kalkbrenner, Ferrari (two pianofortes) and Haydn. A number of pianoforte compositions by lesser-known composers such as Joseph Kemp, Johann Franz Sterkel, John Stanley, T. Latour and J. A. André are also included.

The vocal sheet music features works by Mozart, including three excerpts from *Don Juan* (the tenor arias "Dalla sua pace" and "Il mio tesoro," the duet "Batti, batti"), and the song "Forget, me not." There are also two songs by Henry Purcell—"The owl is abroad" from

¹ According to Imogen Fellingner the term "Royal" was added to the journal's title beginning with issue no. 7. See *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1st ed., s. v. "Periodicals." The term "royal," however, does not appear in the journal apart from a reference in a letter to the editor. See MRR I, no. 11 (January 1810): 187. In the letters to the editor, the journal was identified with the titles *The Musical World* and the *Musical Review*.

² MRR gives no indication of the dates of publication other than the years 1809-10 for the index to Vol. I. The dates assigned to the issues in the Calendar are based on information taken from Imogen Fellingner's *Verzeichnis der Musikzeitschriften des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Regensburg, 1968): 58. Volume and issue numbers are occasionally found at the bottom of the second page of the prose section. The copy of MRR at the New York Public Library has the journal's dates and volume numbers written in pencil on the first page of the first issue.

³ Pages 25 through 28 are incorrectly numbered in Vol. I, no. 2 (April 1809); in the RIPM Calendar corrections are added within brackets. Page numbers 57 and 58 are repeated in Vol. I, no. 4 (June 1809); page numbers 57a and 58a are added in brackets to clarify the repetition.

⁴ MRR I, no. 1 (March 1809): 7-8.

the incidental music for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and "In guilty night and hid in false disguise" from the cantata *Saul and the Witch of Endor*—and a canzonet, "Mia madre dice" and the anthem "Lord grant us Thy salvation" by Haydn. The composers of several songs and glees are not identified.

The first part also contains eighty-four musical examples (fragments) containing errors of notation that are discussed in the reviews that follow in part two. These fragments are used to demonstrate faulty notation of melodic passages, harmonization of accompaniments and cadences, secondary dominants and modulation commonly found in published compositions. The errors in notation concern the spelling of notes in chromatic chords by means of improper accidentals. For example, "G sharp," the "raised seventh" of the relative minor of C major was, in the old system improperly written as "A flat," and, as such had no relevance to the harmonic structure of C major. To clarify these problems of notation, the editor prints a "harmonic chromatic scale" based on the note C and containing the notes of the tonic major and tonic minor scales and the leading notes of the relative minor and dominant major (notated in naturals, sharps and flats).⁵ This is followed by chromatic scales with semitones notated entirely in naturals and sharps or naturals and flats. Neither of the latter two versions of the chromatic scale provide the appropriate "new" notation for modulation to related keys and the employment of chromatic chords such as the Neapolitan, Italian, French and German Sixth chords. Chord progressions, the resolution of diminished seventh chords are then demonstrated in the comparison of the old (faulty) and new systems of notation. The demonstration is expanded to show extracts from Handel's oratorios *Samson* and *Messiah* in both notations. In the reviews the reader is referred to the published extracts.

Part two contains reviews of published music (vocal and instrumental) and occasionally books—these form the major part of the section—correspondence, articles (biographies), a register of new musical publications and general remarks to correspondents and publishers. The music reviews are classified "vocal" and "instrumental" and deal with a great variety of songs and airs and compositions for various instruments (pianoforte, harp, violin, flute and string quartet). English composers of these selections include, among others, Henry R. Bishop, John Clarke, John Davy, T. Haigh, Matthew Peter King, Henry Purcell, William Shield and Sir John A. Stevenson. Two complete English operas, then current on the London stage are dealt with in considerable detail: King's *Up All Night* or the *Smuggler's Cove*, and James Hook's *Safe and Sound*.

In the journal's correspondence section William Hawkes's patent for an improved "organ, and pianoforte" raised considerable controversy.⁶ No less than seventeen communications were directed at Hawke's claims for the transposing instrument and a reliable technical improvement for keeping an instrument in tune. Confusion concerning

⁵ MRR I, no. 5 (July 1809): 73-74.

⁶ An explanatory description and a table of the instrument's seven scales is found in MRR I, no. 4 (June 1809): 58a and 59.

the mathematical explanation of acoustics discussed by the various correspondents adds interest to the controversy.

Six short biographies of composers—Purcell, Handel, William Jackson, Michael Haydn, John James Rousseau and Augustus Berger—are given after the review or correspondence sections.

A register of recent publications of vocal and instrumental compositions concludes each issue. An explanation of the criteria used in selecting compositions for review is found in the first issue.⁷

⁷ MRR I, no. 1 (March 1809): 12.