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CHRISTOPHER HOGWOOD: THE MONUMENT

Christopher Jarvis Haley Hogwood
(10 September 1941 – 24 September 2014)

Christopher Hogwood has been a household name both in early music and music in general, and his achievements in performing, conducting, recording, editing and scholarship are well known. We wanted to find out more about Hogwood as a man, and spoke to those who worked closely with him. What follows are some reflections on him as a scholar and as a person.

With the Academy of Ancient Music (AAM) Hogwood produced over 200 recordings for the early-music label L'Oiseau-Lyre, and during his first 10 years with the ensemble he also wrote and presented *The Young Idea* on BBC Radio 3. He conducted Handel's *Messiah* with the AAM during the 1984 Olympics at the Hollywood Bowl, the same year that his important biography of Handel was published. He produced over 100 editions with publishers such as Bärenreiter, Edition HH, Ut Orpheus Edizioni and others. These are mere highlights of what one man could accomplish.[1]

Christopher Hogwood and the AAM were essentially the same entity when the ensemble was founded. Offices were in Hogwood's house in Cambridge and the AAM's General Manager was his Personal Manager; only when the AAM management expanded to four or five people did they relocate to premises elsewhere (they are now on King's Parade, overlooking King's College, Cambridge, with two to three times as many staff). The AAM library, also maintained in his own home, was a mixture of the better modern editions already available and reproductions of 18th-century prints, which Hogwood would edit himself for their performances. Even after the AAM moved out, Hogwood continued to employ his own staff, including at any one time a personal assistant and a research assistant, with whom he continued to prepare his own editions, increasingly for publication. His published works, along with his complete discography, are all listed on the website www.hogwood.org and span the range of periods and include keyboard, chamber and orchestral repertoire.

There was no typical day for Hogwood. Although he would invariably rise early and send emails before 5am or even earlier, he didn't do a "prelude and fugue a day" before breakfast like Stravinsky. It was part of his life that he couldn't keep strict patterns because he was often touring abroad. Early in his career he was rarely in Cambridge for more than four weeks in any one year and increasingly he was going from orchestra to orchestra. He'd have evening or morning rehearsals, if he was travelling, and worked whenever he felt like it. He never wasted time. His methods were both organised and flexible. He'd write notes. He was one of the first in the UK to own an Apple Macintosh computer and, as soon as it became practical, he had a laptop everywhere he went, so he could do this almost anywhere. In an airport lounge, he'd read an article, draft an introduction or work through a score. He could concentrate very easily. He would write out ideas and come back to them later. A lot was in his head, and he did a lot of his thinking on the move, but

he liked having a written record. He'd have a good idea one day and re-think it the next, but later might want to go back to his original idea and it was all there in his notes. He liked to record things and to be copied into every email that concerned his work, but he never used a dictaphone: he typed his own texts, drafting and re-drafting them continuously as his thoughts developed.

Many of his projects took shape over long periods, and there were lots of them. Some he took on in anticipation of programming a particular work into a future concert, others because he was aware that a worthy but neglected work had more chance of being picked up by a publisher if a well-known name such as his was attached. Occasionally a publishing deadline would put pressure on a project, but generally with musicology he never rushed, preferring to do the job with due consideration. His attitude was that if the piece was already 250 years old it wouldn't matter if the edition waited a bit longer and it would benefit from the extra time.

He had a great openness with his work in progress. Young scholars are often tentative talking about their work, worrying that someone will steal their ideas and invalidate their thesis. He'd happily talk to people about his ideas because you never knew what avenues might be opened up by discussion. At concerts and lectures, and with orchestras, he valued everyone's experience, and was never secretive about his own.

Hogwood was equally open to letting people look at his collections of books, music and instruments. In fact he was frustrated that more people didn't make use of these resources. If people were understandably intimidated by stepping into a conductor's home, they would quickly appreciate his hospitality and how generous he was with his time and advice. He might offer them lunch and chat to them about their work and offer guidance. He often invited all the local organ scholars and harpsichordists over to see the collection, and scholars would come from further afield to consult specific manuscripts or prints in his library, which was characteristically fully catalogued. He'd never charge them if they wanted scans; if eventually research turned into an article, he just wanted a copy for interest. It was said that he could talk to absolutely anyone. It didn't matter who came for coffee or lunch, or whom they brought with them; they always found something to talk about, even if they were completely unmusical. He made them feel included, wanted and useful.

In an interview with the magazine *The Lady* on 16 March 2009, Christopher Hogwood revealed that he had at that time over 30,000 books (buying 15-25 per week) and 3,000 coffee cans, and well as a collection of musical caricatures. He was against background music and was a proponent of the "Pipe Down" campaign. He had a house in Tuscany and a chateau in Aveyron, where of course he could not spend more than a few weeks per year.[2] In 2010 he wrote a short piece to accompany the book *Essays in Honor of Christopher Hogwood: The Maestro's Direction*. In this, he credited a bout of scarlet fever at the age of 9 for giving him the time and space to hear and understand keyboard music and grow to love it. He was a Classicist at Cambridge, with music as a second interest. He got a scholarship to study musicology in Prague for a year and studied harpsichord as well under Zuzana Růžičková. He always said he liked Prague best from the year he spent there. By this point David Munrow, who was in the class below him at Cambridge, asked if he'd like to start a group when he returned in 1965, and this became known as the Early Music Consort. He then started to play with the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields with Sir Neville Marriner. He founded the Academy of Ancient Music in 1973, and the rest is, of course, history.[3]

His musical philosophies changed over time. He went from thinking there was one way of doing things, which was inherent in a so-called *Urtext* score; to an appreciation of reception history and borrowings; and finally found that a work had an entire life, with various stages of composition,

revision and adaptation, all of which are valid to be studied. However, there were still limits: in connection with the dangers of the modern opera production, he was quoted as saying, "I don't want Baroque music overlaid by helicopters and hypodermic syringes."[4]

Described by Emma Kirkby as "a natural scholar", he found it normal to write introductions to his editions and recordings. He spoke to audiences, changing the performance model from one where the performers are in a bubble or on a platform to one where there is a connection between performer and audience. He admired the playing of Leonhardt, especially of the virginalist repertoire. He was a great admirer of Haydn as a true genius, likening him to a television cook who shows the ingredients and method but still manages to stun with the final result.[5] However, he did not present only early music but often mixed it with Martinů, Schnittke and Webern. Whatever the period of music, he played through his editions and new repertoire, keyboard or orchestral, at his Hass clavichord, a fine example of his preferred instrument. For him, the clavichord represented the art of private and amateur music-making, an active recreational pursuit that for more than a century has been giving way to a largely passive appreciation of professional musicians, whether on stage or on record.

On the day he died, the BBC radio show "In Tune" had Emma Kirkby on as a guest, and she said how gentlemanly he was even when people were being extremely rude. He was very well mannered. Until he became ill in his final year, he had never missed a concert. It was never obvious if he was nervous or under the weather; he always appeared to be perfectly comfortable and on form. That was a deliberate thing on his part — part of being professional. He was always concerned with doing the music justice, and presenting it as it really was and letting it speak for itself, but one had to be one's true self, too. By making the effort to put himself at ease and allow his true character to be expressed, he was able to put other people at their ease and get the best out of them, in rehearsal or otherwise.

When he became ill, the matter was managed with typical discretion and he wanted to be treated normally by his family and friends, whose visits buoyed him. As his death drew near he was naturally concerned about unfinished projects, but was reassured to receive reports of their progress, to see some of them in press, and to know that the remainder were in good shape to be completed on his behalf.

When he died the funeral was held about a week later and was a traditional and private occasion. This was followed later by a memorial service on 11 March 2015 at St George's, Hanover Square, London. Tickets had to be issued to control numbers. James Bowman, Emma Kirkby and the Academy of Ancient Music (Richard Egarr, director) provided music, with soloists Pavlo Beznosiuk, Catherine Mackintosh, Monica Huggett and Simon Standage, and Alastair Ross playing voluntaries at the organ. Perhaps the most touching inclusion was Purcell's "An Evening Hymn". Speakers included Colin Lawson, the director of the Royal College of Music, London, and the early music vocalist and radio presenter Catherine Bott. Lawson laid out his many accomplishments with a great emphasis on his firsts (Mozart symphonies on historic instrument) and proper additions (a *Messiah* that actually sounded like the composer had intended), plus his great devotion to the clavichord. Bott, former presenter of the *Early Music Show* for BBC Radio 4, remembered interviewing Christopher regarding St. Cecilia; due to his previous radio experience and his true enthusiasm and engagement, the spot needed almost no editing at all, nor any further interviewees! She recalled that on another occasion, he had answered her question of how he wanted to be remembered with the idea that he would leave "an enduring footprint — one foot in performance and one foot in the science of it", and that he would like to have an effect on others as profound as Thurston Dart had had on him.

On 12 March 2015 his keyboard collection was sold at auction by Gardiner Houlgate Auction Rooms. It was probably one of the most well documented sales, in that many items were referenced on his website and had Boalch listings. Whilst there were original harpsichords by Hancock, Kirckman, Culliford and an original 1815 Brodmann piano (these already being important), the stand-outs were clavichords. A small travel clavichord by Gräbner sold for £30,000; others included Lindholm £22,000; Horn £34,000; Bodechtel £34,000; Schiedmayer £52,000; and the Hass for £82,000. Many had been used on auspicious recordings, so this was not purely based upon the instruments' intrinsic worth.

Hogwood will be remembered as an ideal role model with his approach to life in general, his positive attitude, and his work ethic. He left a rich legacy of recordings and concerts but he enjoyed so many things, not least his well-balanced life in Cambridge. While he appreciated London and the opportunities it represented – concerts, museums, libraries, galleries, theatres – he always enjoyed coming home to Cambridge and found driving around East Anglia therapeutic. Sometimes he'd be up early, drive to Norfolk for breakfast and be home again before anyone even knew he had gone, and as often as possible he'd enjoy the company of his neighbours over dinner and wine. He read the papers thoroughly every day, kept up with the musical journals and literary magazines, always had several novels, biographies and memoires on the go, and knew what was going on in most fields. A Renaissance man.

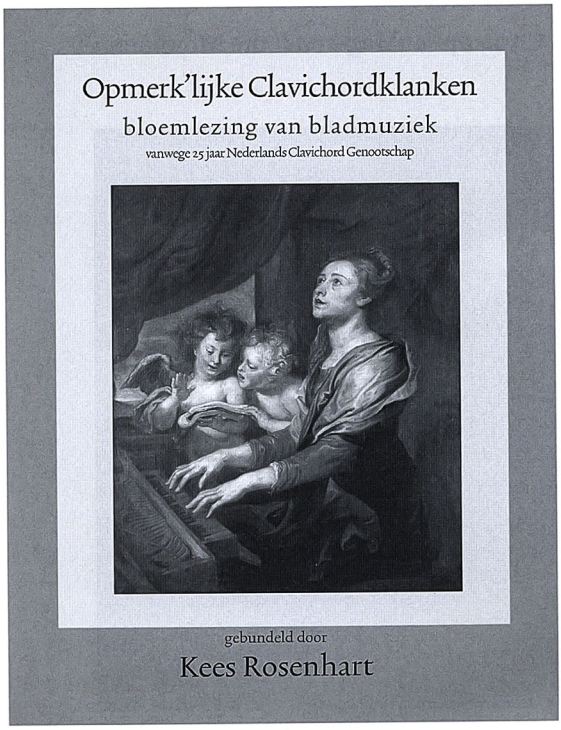
1 From Christopher Hogwood's online biography, <http://www.hogwood.org/biography/ >, accessed 22 December 2014.

2 David Gillard, "Favourite Things", in *The Lady*, March 17-23, 2009. Excerpts can be seen here: http://www.hogwood.org/archive/interviews/the-ladys-favourite-things.html

3 Christopher Hogwood, "How to Evade Autobiography", an afterword that he reluctantly wrote for a volume of *Essays in Honor of Christopher Hogwood: The Maestro's Direction* (The Scarecrow Press, 2010), 243-8.

4 Gillard.

5 "How to Evade Autobiography", 244.



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