

Harpsichord & *fortepiano*

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(MIRCat)

REPORTS

Historical Keyboard Society of North America 2022 Conference: 'Bach and the 19th century'. Hunter, New York, 22-26 June 2022

The Historical Keyboard Society of North America (HKSNA, hksna.org) is a US non-profit organization comprised of members who love and promote early keyboard instruments and the music written for them. Formed in 2012 by the merger of the Midwestern Historical Keyboard Society (est. 1984) and the Southeastern Historical Keyboard Society (est. 1980), its members include instrument builders, players, teachers, and scholars, as well as many who merely love the looks and sounds of these beautiful instruments. HKSNA also sponsors an international harpsichord competition for young performers (Jurow) and a composition competition, promoting new music for early keyboard instruments (Aliénor). However, the annual meeting/conference held in the spring of each year in various locations around the USA is the main focus of the society. It attracts an international audience of performers, scholars and enthusiasts, and features concerts, lectures, scholarly paper readings, and exhibits of scores, books, recordings, and early keyboard instruments.

Like so many other organizations, concert series, and venues experienced, the international pandemic caused the cancellation of many plans HKSNA had for its members, such as the planned conference in 2020, and as a result, the 2021 version was held online. This year's gathering drew an international as well as national crowd of performers and scholars and was held in the beautiful, scenic mountain setting of Hunter, New York, at the Piano Performance Museum of the Catskill Mountain Foundation, home of the Steven E. Greenstein Collection of Pianos. The conference was preceded by the Academy of Fortepiano Performance Annual Workshop, featuring Dutch keyboardist and basso continuo teacher and scholar Thérèse de Goede among others and, for the first time ever, a 'Technicians' Workshop for Fortepiano, Harpsichord and Clavichord.

The theme of the conference was Bach and the 19th century, which as can be expected, attracted many 19th century performers and scholars, but plucked keyboards and keyboardists were in abundance. The opening lecture was given by Raymond Erickson and was entitled: 'Bach's Keyboard Suites: Historical Context and Issues of Interpretation', while the other featured lecture was delivered by Thérèse de Goede, and entitled 'C.P.E. Bach and the Galant-Style of Continuo Playing'.

The conference ran from Wednesday to Sunday in two separate venues in the small town of Hunter, one a typical American Red Barn converted to a multi-purpose room, and the other a beautiful, wooden building housing the piano museum as well as a theatre. With these two venues being used simultaneously, there was time enough for a huge variety of lectures, demonstrations and recitals, next to the official performances held in the evening hours. On the last official day of the conference there was even time for an organized hike to a waterfall in beautiful Hunter Mountain, and there was ample opportunity for socializing during mealtimes and at the receptions following the concerts. With such an international group of keyboard players and scholars it was a wonderful opportunity to renew old friendships and make many new acquaintances.

It would be difficult to choose a favorite presentation, and I was of course not able to attend everything, but to select a few: Maria Luisa Baldassari (Bologna) on 'The *Studii e Divertimenti* by Francesco Durante: Polyphonic writing and Galant style in Naples'; Marcos Krieger (no relation) on 'Johann Krieger's *Anmutige Clavier-Übung* (1699): A less-known precursor of J.S. Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier*'; and Artis Wodehouse on 'J. S. Bach and the keyboard music of three 19th century American composers: Edward MacDowell, George Templeton Strong and Arthur Bird', with examples played on piano and American harmonium (!). There was also a virtual session held in the museum theatre, with contributions from American and Chinese scholars and performers. I gave a lecture-demonstration on research that I am currently compiling into an article, which has a connection to my interest in music from the Dutch Republic: 'Giustini and Lustig: A curious exchange' which included music examples played on harpsichord and fortepiano.

With an overabundance of performances both large and small, it would be difficult to list them all, but here are a few: a featured concert given by Pierre Goy (Lausanne) on a variety of stunning original fortepianos by Conrad Graf (1826), Clementi (1803), and Pleyel et Cia (pianino, 1841). As HKSNA sponsors new music for harpsichord in the form of a competition, we were treated to an evening performance by winners past and present which included some stunning new works for harpsichord by composers: Belinda Reynolds (1967-), Asako Hirabayashi (1960-), and lastly, *Hand Bones* by Aaron Israel Levin (1995-), my personal favourite. It was in fact a conversation in four parts with live electronics (performed by the composer) and harpsichordist, Jonathan Salamon. The crowning jewel of the conference was a marathon performance of all 24 preludes and fugues from J. S. Bach's *Das*

wohltemperirte Clavier Book 1, with 22 performers from seven different countries on harpsichord, clavichord, various fortepianos (Cristofori, Graf, Clementi and Pleyel) and American harmonium.

Of course, an annual conference also includes meetings and round table discussions, and as a board member since 2019 and recently elected Vice-President of HKSNA, I gladly contributed my share to the discussion of the future of historic keyboard instrument performance, education, and scholarship both in the USA and internationally. Of note was a round table discussion led by Anne Acker (American builder and keyboard technician) and Maria Rose (originally from the Netherlands, and faculty member of the Academy of Fortepiano) on 'The state of building and maintaining keyboard instruments in the US'. There seem to be fewer and fewer builders in North America, and hardly any young people interested in historic keyboard building and maintenance. HKSNA is trying to remedy that situation by creating opportunities for young, interested keyboard technicians, but it is more difficult to change the fact that many builders are aging or no longer with us. A valuable discussion that should be continued wherever historical keyboard playing is taught or researched.

Kathryn Cok

2022 Smarano International Early Keyboards Academy: 'Vienna, Musical Heart of Europe'. Smarano and Vienna, 25 July – 6 August 2022

The 2022 Smarano International Early Keyboards Academy (<https://www.smaranoacademy.com/home>) took place in Smarano, Italy, a small municipality in Trentino, with an additional excursion to Vienna, Austria. Smarano is in northern Italy or the Südtirol region and in 2015, merged with five nearby municipalities to form a new single municipality called Predaia. This year, the Smarano Academy celebrates its 30th anniversary. The Academy is a two-week hub where students come together to learn about the art of keyboard music from the 16th to the 18th centuries from leading international musicians and scholars based on historical methods of teaching. They lead workshops that address the repertoire of keyboard instruments such as organ, clavichord, harpsichord, claviorganum and fortepiano, and discuss the technical aspects in the similarities and differences between the instruments. Beginning in 2022, the Academy decided to dedicate a three-year period to study the relationship between music from Vienna and music in Italy of that time. This year focused on composers such as Frescobaldi, Froberger, Poglietti,

Pasquini, Kerll and Muffat. There was an emphasis on the impact of Emperor Leopold I, who was a key figure for the music in Vienna in the late 17th century. The 2022 faculty included Ulrika Davidsson, Joel Speerstra, William Porter, Edoardo Bellotti, Enrico Baiano, Johannes Ebenbauer, Manuel Schuen and Armando Carideo, who between them covered all aspects of the instruments and the course repertoire, as well as improvisation, performance practice and editing.

The programme included a visit to Vienna from 29-31 July. While there, students and faculty visited and played the Wöckherl organ (1642) in the Franziskanerkirche and the Sieber organ (1714) in the Michaelerkirche. Prior to this, everyone was invited to the presentation by Greta Haenen on King Leopold I at the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien. Haenen's studies included information on the King's private collection of books and manuscripts. William Porter gave a tour of stops on the Wöckherl organ, and Manuel Schuen, organist at the Michaelerkirche, kindly presented the 1714 Sieber organ. On the evening of the 30th, Schuen also performed a public concert of Muffat, Frescobaldi, Kerll, Salvatore and Valeri.

The daily schedule for the Smarano academy is very structured, giving emphasis to practicing. A typical day begins with practice from 8.15 to 9.00, then a clavichord masterclass with Joel Speerstra and Ulrika Davidsson from 9.00 to 10.00, where we learned about the best practices and technique of the instrument, as well as understanding our own body map while sitting at any keyboard instrument. Next came a short break before improvisation with William Porter from 10.30 to 11.30, where we looked at the music of Poglietti for clues on how to improvise a short praeludium or toccatina, and later, in the fugal style, or fughetta. Occasionally from 11.30 to 12.30 there would be a lecture by Joel, Armando, or Greta on various subjects such as instrument collections, reading manuscripts and tablature, or about King Leopold I. If there was no lecture, that time was used for practice. After lunch, we had time to practice from 13.30 to 15.00, when we would then have harpsichord masterclass with Enrico Baiano. There was a short break before the final organ masterclass with Edoardo Bellotti which began at 17.45 until dinner time at 19.30. Both Baiano and Bellotti are excellent scholars with a wealth of knowledge on historical sources. After dinner, there was more time allotted for practice from 20.30 to 23.15.

The Smarano Academy hosted a total of eight concerts between the main concert hall and the local church, Chiesa Santa Maria Assunta di Smarano. The performers included Hans Davidsson (organ),

Enrico Baiano (harpsichord), Joel Speerstra and Ulrika Davidsson (pedal clavichord, clavichord, harpsichord, organ, fortepiano), Pieter van Dijk (organ), William Porter (organ), Lea Suter and Massimiliano Raschietti (organ, Basilica Santi Martiri di Sanzeno), Edoardo Bellotti (organ) as well as the students, on clavichord, harpsichord and organ.

The Academy is partnered with organist and musicologist Armando Carideo, to edit and create the Smarano Academy editions of historical manuscripts published by Il Levante Libreria Editrice in Latina, Italy. These editions are done at a very high scholarly level. Carideo gave two lectures during the Academy depicting the process of studying manuscripts to make a modern edition.

For it being in a very small town atop a mountainous region, making it somewhat difficult to travel to, the Smarano International Early Keyboards Academy is still worth attending. The esteemed faculty, the excursion to a large city with important historical instruments, and the structure of your time during the Academy make this a must-do if you are at all interested in early keyboard technique and historical musicology. What I appreciated most was an open conversation between all students and faculty about the past, present, and most importantly, the future of the Smarano Academy where we discussed what we think works and does not work for the betterment of the programme. I hope to see the Academy continue to grow and foster their passion more for early music in the next three decades and beyond.

Dylan L. Sanzenbacher

News and Listings

NEWS

The 2022 Joan Benson Clavichord Award has been made to performer **Carol lei Breckenridge**.

The **Boalch-Mould database** of harpsichords and clavichords and their makers (1440-1925) has gone online at <https://boalch.org>.

An index of **Swedish clavichord and harpsichord makers** before 1900 is now online at <http://www.klaverenshus.se/Clavichords-harpsichords.html>.

A new survey of surviving **historic organs in Scotland** is online at <https://sowneoforgane.com>.

The **Tureck Bach Research Institute** is now housed at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Interlochen, Michigan, website <https://www.interlochen.org/music/fennell-music-library/tureck-bach-research-institute>.

Back issues of the *American Organist* from 1918-1970 have been digitized at https://archive.org/details/pub_american-organist-1918.

OBITUARIES

Scottish harpsichord maker **Morton Gould** (13 May 1928 - 12 July 2021) has died at the age of 93.

Organist **Earline Moulder** (11 October 1934 - 13 April 2022) has died at the age of 87.

Organist and conductor **Simon Preston** (4 August 1938 - 13 May 2022) has died at the age of 83.

Harpsichordist **Aymeric Dupré la Tour** (d. 29 May 2022) has died at the age of 49.

Performer and instrument collector **Richard Burnett** (3 June 1932 - 8 July 2022) has died at the age of 90.

CONFERENCES

The conference **Improvisation in Historical Styles: Performance, Pedagogy, and Research** will take place online on 19-20 November 2022. Contact johnmortensen@cedarville.edu.

EARLY MUSIC ORGANIZATIONS

American Bach Society,
<https://www.americanbachsociety.org>

American Guild of Organists, <https://www.agohq.org>