

Sound Heritage

REPORT - Study Day 3

Thursday 10 and Friday 11 November 2016

Tatton Park, Cheshire

The final study day of the Sound Heritage network was preceded by two group activities open to participants: a workshop of vocal repertoire from the music collection of Elizabeth Egerton, née Sykes (1777-1853) of Tatton Park, performed by students from the Royal Northern College of Music; and a site-specific theatre piece encompassing music and dance by Feelgood Theatre Productions at Heaton Hall.

THURSDAY 10 NOVEMBER

Workshop at the Royal Northern College of Music

Sound Heritage participants were invited to the Royal Northern College of Music to take part in a workshop on music from the Tatton Park collection, led by historical performance specialist Harvey Davies. Vocal students from the College, including Isabella Cheevers, Rachel Spiers, Helen Lacy, Isla MacEwan and Stuart Orme, accompanied by pianist Emily Hooker, performed a variety of items from Elizabeth Sykes Egerton's music books, rehearsing for their concert at Tatton Park the following day. This workshop gave Sound Heritage participants the opportunity to listen to and discuss items from the collection with the singers in detail, and offer advice from historical and musicological perspectives.

The students performed a selection of Italian operatic music and English songs, reflecting Elizabeth's wide-ranging musical tastes. The workshop began with a performance of "Dove sei" from Handel's *Rodelinda* (1725) by Isabella Cheevers, which appears twice in Elizabeth's collection. A staple item for eighteenth-century domestic performers of Italian opera, Elizabeth's hand-copied edition of the aria is heavily annotated and ornamented. Hearing the aria both with and without the added ornamentation highlighted the contrast between the two versions and emphasised the significance of the embellishments to the melody. Several English comic items were included to contrast with the Italian repertoire, including Harriett Abrams' "Crazy Jane", performed by Helen Lacy. The song depicts the story of a madwoman who has been abandoned by her lover. It was extremely popular with amateur performers in the eighteenth century and features in a number of surviving domestic music collections, including that belonging to the Austen family. As with "Dove sei", Elizabeth's version contains annotated ornamentation. Samuel Webbe's glee arrangement of Haydn's canzonet "My mother bids me bind my hair" enabled the performers to develop impromptu musical interactions, simulating the performance environment that might have occurred in Elizabeth's home. Overall the workshop was extremely enjoyable and it was fascinating to witness historical and performance experts offer advice to the students much in the way that a singing teacher might have guided Elizabeth when she was collecting and learning this music. The small selection of items performed epitomized the range and diversity of Elizabeth's collection, bringing the trends of late eighteenth-century vocal repertoire and singing technique into the twenty-first century.

Whispers of Heaton at Heaton Hall

Sound Heritage participants were privileged to attend the dress rehearsal of Feelgood Theatre Productions' *Whispers of Heaton*. Directed by Caroline Clegg, who is currently undertaking doctoral research at the Royal Northern College of Music into site-specific performance, the production incorporated two theatre pieces - *The Fight* (by Cathy Crabb and Lindsay Williams) and *The Unknown Bugler* (by Peter Kerry) - along with the contemporary dance work *Spilled Ink* (Tangled Dance Company) and the intermezzo *A Song of Whispers* (by Ailis Ni Riain and Caroline Clegg). A significant part of Heaton Park's history is associated with war: the Manchester Pals battalions trained there between 1914 and 1915 prior to fighting in the Battle of the Somme, while during World War II it became a training base for the RAF. This history provided the framework for an evocative and moving experience, which began outside in the dark to the haunting sound of the Last Post. Moving inside the house, the narrative drew the audience on a journey through different rooms, so that the spaces resonated with both emotional content and music. The most obvious musical reference within the production as a whole depicted the wartime experience of Ralph Vaughan Williams hearing an unknown bugler and a French peasant girl singing, portrayed through the reminiscences of his wife, Adeline, as she visited the hall. This vignette featured music by Vaughan Williams himself (*Pastoral Symphony*) and his friend and compatriot, George Butterworth (*The Lads in Their Hundreds*, *The Banks of Green Willow*), who died in battle in 1916. Forming a backdrop to this scenario, staged in the music room, was the house organ designed by Heaton's architect James Wyatt. The conclusion of the performance included quotations from Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* and *Dona Nobis Pacem*. One of the highlights was the singing of Amy Webber as she ascended the main staircase, her voice resonating compellingly in her performance of the solo soprano line from Vaughan Williams' *Pastoral Symphony*, prefiguring its return in *The Unknown Bugler*, while dancers performed on the stairs below.

FRIDAY 11 NOVEMBER - STUDY DAY AT TATTON PARK

Presentation: Professor Candace Bailey (North Carolina Central University) - "Performing Paris in Charleston's Antebellum Aiken-Rhett House"

The Charleston Museum's archive of music from the Aiken-Rhett House is perhaps the single most impressive collection representing the musical world of elite southern American women. The binder's volumes and single sheets that belonged to Harriet Lowndes and her daughter Henrietta Aiken vividly illustrate the impact of the family's repeated trips to Europe, and in this regard they differ from almost every other binder's volume or set of volumes in southern archives. It is this feature that makes them worthy of meticulous study.

Harriet's music, consisting of four volumes collected prior to her marriage, provides a glimpse of music in Charleston during the 1810s and 1820s. Its emphasis on French romances, a genre that dominated the salons of Paris but not the parlours of Charleston, is highly uncharacteristic and therefore noteworthy. Later, scores of complete operas owned by Harriet reveal her interests while travelling abroad between 1831 and 1858. During these sojourns she purchased many items in Paris, including music, paintings, chandeliers, silver, and furniture with which to decorate the family's home in Charleston. During the 1840s, at least, the Aikens maintained an apartment in the exclusive Faubourg St-Germaine district, although they do not appear to have mingled with native Parisians and socialised with other South Carolinians. Harriet sought to

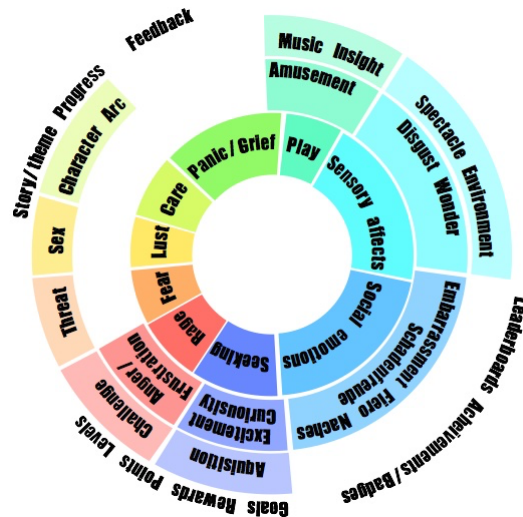
bring Paris to Charleston and to elevate her family's social position (which was already considerable) by doing so. They represented imported culture at home but remained outside of that culture while abroad.

Harriet made four trips to Europe with Henrietta, and the latter's music collection reveals the influence of her mother (more romances and obscure French music, as well as French piano and vocal method books), as well as changing styles in the mid-century (*bel canto* arias by Donizetti and Verdi). Unlike other collections, Henrietta's music remains unbound, which probably reflects her continued use well into the 1880s.

**Presentation: Matthew Tyler-Jones (University of Southampton/National Trust) –
“Resonance: Sound, Music and Emotion in Historic House Interpretation”**

This presentation explored what computer games can teach us about emotional engagement in cultural heritage interpretation. Beginning with a model of emotional affect drawn from Jaak Panksepp and Lucy Biven (2012); Nicole Lazarro (2009); Tynan Sylvester (2013); and Hamari et al (2014), it revealed how music especially has become a versatile emotional trigger in game design. Building on the work of Annabel Cohen (1998) and Karen Collins (2008), it is possible to identify eight functions that music has within games:

- 1) Masking – just as music was played in the first movie theatres, partly to mask the sound of the projector, so music in new media can be used to mask the whirl of the console's or PC's fan.
- 2) Provision of continuity – a break in the music can signal a change in the narrative, or continuous music signals the continuation of the current theme.
- 3) Direction of attention – patterns in the music can correlate to patterns in the visuals, directing the attention of the user.
- 4) Mood induction; and,
- 5) Communication of Meaning – the nice distinction here is between music that makes the user sad, and music that tells the user "this is a sad event" without necessarily changing the user's mood.
- 6) A cue for memory – the power of the music to invoke memories or prepare the mind for a type of cognitive activity is well recognized in advertising and sonic brands such as those created for Intel and Nokia.
- 7) Arousal and focal attention – with the user's brain stimulated by music, s/he is more able to concentrate on the diegesis of the presentation.
- 8) Aesthetics – all too often music is used for aesthetic value only in museums and heritage sites, even if the pieces of music used are connected historically with the site or collection.



Game Affects (in progress)

As an example of the latter point, a project is currently underway to improve the use of music in the chapel at The Vyne near Basingstoke. Currently, a portable CD player is used to fill the silence with a recording of a cathedral choir, which although pretty, is inappropriate for the space and for its story. A new recording is being made to recreate about half an hour of a pre-Reformation Lady Mass, with choristers, organ and officers of the church. It will be delivered via multiple speakers and will be a better tool for telling the chapel's story.

Exploration of narrative structure will take place with a proposed experiment at Chawton House, extending the concept of story Kernels and Satellites described by Steven Cohan and Linda Shires (1988), to imagine the cultural heritage site as a collection of narrative atoms, or Natoms (Hargood et al, 2012), both physical (spaces, collections) and ephemeral (text, video, music, etc.). Music is often considered as a "mere" satellite, but with thought and careful design, there is no reason why it cannot also become the narrative kernel of interpretation.

For cited works, see <https://memetechnology.org/bibliography> and http://people.uta.fi/~kljuham/2014-hamari_et_al-does_gamification_work.pdf

Tour of Tatton Park and Concert

At the conclusion of the presentations, participants were able to view the state rooms of the house, seeing Elizabeth's music collection in-situ in the Music Room, along with the 1789 Kirkman harpsichord. This was followed by a concert in the Cupola Hall and used the 1817 Dettmer square piano on loan to the National Trust as the accompanying instrument. The performance was by members of the Royal Northern College of Music's vocal department who had participated in the workshop at the College on Elizabeth Sykes Egerton's music at Tatton Park; the students toured the house with the study day participants prior to the concert, and were able to see the original scores of the material they had been preparing from facsimile copies. The programme, chosen by Harvey Davies, aimed to show the range of vocal music cultivated by Elizabeth in the 1790s, and included Italian operatic duets by Mozart and Cherubini, solo arias by Handel and Bianchi, English songs by Harriet Abrams, and glees by Samuel Webbe and John Stevenson, all using the contemporary manuscript ornamentation and annotation preserved in Elizabeth's books. The performance was followed by a Q&A session

with the performers, discussing their reactions to the repertoire and the annotation, and the differences in using early piano as an accompaniment and singing in domestic space from their more usual performing contexts.

Discussion – Future Planning for Sound Heritage

The final discussion included short presentations from several participants giving updates on recent projects and events. Dr Jane Troughton, in conjunction with the Yorkshire Country Houses Partnership, has developed a questionnaire in a pilot project to try and obtain details of musical resources held at a number of Yorkshire country houses. She discussed the structure of the questionnaire and the project remains on-going, with responses due in December. Dr Karol Mullaney-Dignam reported on the Sound Heritage Ireland symposium, which she convened at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance (University of Limerick) on 7 October 2016. The symposium was vital in giving international validation to Dr Mullaney-Dignam's own significant work in this area and in developing resources and networks that will facilitate further research and interpretation of music in Irish heritage properties. A full description of the symposium can be accessed at <https://soundheritageireland.wordpress.com/symposium/>. Dr Matthew Stephens gave an overview of the successful Dowling Songbook project, which culminated in performances at Elizabeth Bay House (Sydney) in October. The project was a collaboration between Sydney Living Museums (SLM) and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and is part of a growing portfolio of online material and events that supports musical interpretation of SLM's historic houses. Further information on the project is displayed on the Sound Heritage website: <https://sound-heritage.soton.ac.uk/projects/dowling-songbook-project-elizabeth-bay-house>.

The discussion then turned to developing ideas on how the Sound Heritage network can be maintained and grow beyond the AHRC funding period. The development of a resources guide for both curators and musicians is underway, to be produced initially as a PDF document. The *Understanding British Portraits* online resource was suggested as a template for creating a similar web-based platform for the resources guide in the future. Participants also highlighted the importance of linking the Sound Heritage website to other historical performance organisations, such as the British Harpsichord Society and Early Music America. Possibilities for continuing future engagement and development of projects included involving Masters-level students in short-term projects that would generate specific outcomes for historic properties; and themed study days organised by participants at their host institutions.