

The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists

By Anne Smith

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Most modern performers, trained on the performance practices of the Classical and Romantic periods, come to the music of the Renaissance with well-honed but anachronistic ideas. Fundamental differences between 16th-century repertoire and that of later epochs thus tend to be overlooked-yet it is just these differences which can make a performance truly stunning.

The Performance of 16th-Century Music will enable the performer to better understand this music and advance their technical and expressive abilities. Early music specialist Anne Smith outlines several major areas of technical knowledge and skill needed to perform the music of this period. She takes readers through the significance of part-book notation; solmization; rhythmic flexibility; and elements of structure in relation to rhetoric of the time; while familiarizing them with contemporary criteria and standards of excellence for performance. Through *The Performance of 16th-Century Music*, today's musicians will gain fundamental insight into how 16th-century polyphony functions, and the tools necessary to perform this repertoire to its fullest, most glorious potential.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The 200-plus pages are spilling over with practical information, historical details, amusing and often provocative quotes from composers and performers of the period, and just about anything else that today's performers of 16th-century music need to know. An added bonus is a companion web site that Oxford University press created." --*Early Music America*

"Written by a performer and teacher with years of hands-on experience, this is much more than a tutor or set of rules; it is a dialogue with musicians of the past that provides modern performers - both sixteenth-century specialists and those just entering the field - with a technical, artistic, and cognitive framework for singing and playing this eminently expressive music." --Bruce Haynes, Université de Montréal, Senior Fellow of the Canada Council and author, *The End of Early Music*

"Anne Smith proves that taking the theorists seriously, and consequently applying all the information they give us, does change the picture indeed. We learn to read and to hear with 16th-century eyes and ears, we learn the language from within. Now we performers must have the courage to approach this wonderful repertoire with a fresh look, departing from our comfortable habits and common beliefs. We will be surprised and, more importantly, profoundly moved by the results - to the benefit of our audiences." --Dr. Barthold Kuijken, Royal Conservatories of Brussels and The Hague

"Very much a teacher's book." --*The Performance Practice Review*

"If you're in any way interested in music from the period, indeed in the discipline of understanding, advising on, teaching or generally appreciating the evolution of performance practice, this will prove an informative and highly useful book." --*Classical Net*

About the Author
For almost forty years, 16th-century music - particularly on renaissance flutes - has been the focus of Anne Smith's work at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis.

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