

Rachel Brown, *The Early Flute: A Practical Guide* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 200 pp.

In the world of early music it is uncommon for a renowned performer to author a detailed manual of instrumental history, technique, and style. British flutist Rachel Brown has done just this in her book, which is a thorough analysis of the history of flute-making from the baroque era to the twentieth century as well as a guide to performance practice of early music. She divides the book into five sections: historical sources, the development of the flute 1700–1900, technique, style, and case studies.

In her survey of the development of the flute, Brown stresses the fact that instrument underwent enormous changes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She describes and gives photographic examples of instruments produced by the great European makers in Paris, London, Berlin, and elsewhere including the famous keyed-system flutes of Theobald Boehm, who is generally regarded as the inventor of the “modern flute.” Brown also details the development of the piccolo and alto flute as well as modern-day copies of historical instruments, which are in use by many early music performers. She makes a point of pairing specific historical models with composers ranging from J. S. Bach to Dvořák, including repertoire, and giving some isolated passages as examples.

The “technique” section of the book deals with elements specific to flute-playing such as blowing, fingering, and tonguing, whereas the lengthy chapter on style discusses a broad range of terms and concepts applicable to all segments of the early music world. Brown leaves no stone unturned in the listing and explanation of ornamentation, again citing copious examples from the French, German, Italian, and English repertoire. She also discusses styles of vibrato, stress, and phrasing which might be of interest to any baroque performer.

Brown concludes her book with a case study, giving more examples of ornamentation and articulation as applied to specific works from the standard repertoire. She also includes fingering charts

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