

edition of her songs. He is considered by many to be one of the foremost scholars on Kaprálová's songs. Here he discusses the composer's distinct vocal style, and examines *Navždy* (Forever) in depth; Cheek describes this as one of Kaprálová's best songs and uses it in order "to see what it reveals about her and her time" (75).

Numerous qualities make Kaprálová's vocal music distinct. Arguably her most impressive compositional trait is her ability to create mood and atmosphere, which stems from her treatment of harmonies. Kaprálová shows a fondness for unexpected modulations and shifts in sonorities, sometimes even writing in an impressionistic vein. Additionally, her predilection for motivic writing in her accompaniments is often derived from the natural inflection of important words in the text. In this way, the accompaniment and melody are truly intertwined. Another characteristic feature is her careful and accurate attention to setting the text, in part due to her lifelong interest in poetry. Kaprálová is incredibly skilled at matching musical and poetic inflection, creating memorable and singable melodies that also remain true to "the natural stress, vowel-lengths, and inflection of the Czech language" (71).

In "Kaprálová and the Czech Tradition of Melodrama," Judith Mabary examines the melodrama in the Czech Republic and its impact on Kaprálová. (Mabary wrote her doctoral dissertation on Czech melodrama.) Although melodrama may not be exceedingly popular today, Mabary feels that understanding these works can further aid in understanding Kaprálová's vocal style and treatment of text in general. Several preliminary sketches exist wherein Kaprálová develops ideas for possible melodrama compositions, some of which are second settings of previously composed songs.

The next chapter, also written by Mabary, analyzes Kaprálová's orchestral works. Despite the fact that Kaprálová's works for orchestra are far fewer than her vocal and piano compositions, Mabary is adamant that an examination of her instrumental works is vital in order to fully understand her compositional style. "Her orchestral compositions are essential to examining her style in its entirety, revealing not only the manner in which she addresses a large ensemble but also how she adapts pre-existing approaches to suit her own musical language" (93). This chapter ana-

lyzes three orchestral compositions which represent distinct facets of her evolving style. *Vojenská symfonieta* (Military Sinfonieta), op. 11, utilizes a neo-romantic orchestra, whereas *Suita rustica* (Rustic Suite), op. 10, incorporates folk tunes. And finally, *Partita*, op. 20, adopts Baroque features "to create a piece with an ancestry in the distant past" (93).

The second part of the book is comprised of five sections in which Karla Hartl provides an encyclopedic chronology of Kaprálová's life and works. Section One is an annotated chronology of the composer's life broken down year-by-year. Next is an annotated catalog of her compositional output, followed by a comprehensive bibliography. Section Four lists all published works by Kaprálová, and the final section provides a comprehensive discography.

*The Kaprálová Companion* is a welcome addition to the body of texts on women composers. Vítězslava Kaprálová's music is beautiful, haunting, and distinct, and deserves to be heard more frequently on concert hall stages across the U.S. One hopes that this long-awaited and superbly-written book will provide inspiration and motivation to those who are interested in learning more about Vítězslava Kaprálová.

*Dr. Michelle Latour, soprano, is active as a performer, teacher, author, and adjudicator, in addition to being a member of the full-time voice faculty at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She is a regular contributor to Classical Singer and The Kaprálová Society. She frequently performs the music of women composers, especially Vítězslava Kaprálová, and has had the honor of presenting the world premiere of On the Green Trail, a song cycle by Lori Laitman composed for Latour.*

### Victoria Armstrong, *Technology and the Gendering of Musical Education*

Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing,  
2011. 157 pp. ISBN 9781409417842  
(hbk); ISBN 9781409434139 (ebk)

TAMARA CASHOUR

In *Technology and the Gendering of Musical Education*, Victoria Armstrong demonstrates the perpetuity of gender inequality in protocols of the modern secondary school music technology curriculum. In 2003, Armstrong, a professor in the School of Management and Social Sciences at St. Mary's University College in Twickenham, London, conducted an empirical study of

eighty-four students from four British secondary school music technology classes. Using qualitative data gathering and analytical strategies, Armstrong builds a case that young women approach and work with music technology differently from young men. Citing earlier "determinist" studies that focused solely on the positive, "democratizing" protocols of technology (to the exclusion of its potentially pejorative effects), Armstrong posits a counterview in her opening page. She holds that reception and use of technology are never neutral, but are bound to a still endlessly repeating essentialist social code that reinforces gendered learning styles in young men and women, a code that should by now be outmoded.

Armstrong's thesis is solid and well-anchored in feminist and social constructivist theory, both of which often teeter on the tightrope of essentialism. Constructivist theory emphasizes individual processes of acquiring knowledge in relation to the social world; essentialism—of which there are several variants—supposes certain pre-existing attributes or approaches irrespective to social interaction. Although Armstrong's data presentation often threatens a slippage between essentialist and social constructivist tenets, the stated focus of her research protocol is on process (socialized learning), rather than product (student's work output) (p. 9). Armstrong firmly acknowledges the constructivist pull on objective observation (p. 17) and offers a disclaimer of any essentialist agenda (p. 136); in doing so Armstrong adopts an important strategy for any researcher studying gender difference/sameness within a constructivist framework.

Armstrong's research ethics for this study were sound. Deftly concealing the "emic"<sup>1</sup> nature of her study under the "etic"<sup>2</sup> rubric of "situated ethics" (p. 13), Armstrong eschewed full disclosure of a "gender agenda" from her subjects. Teachers were advised that gender behavior was but one parameter of the study; students were not informed of such, in the interest of waylaying any self-consciousness or behavior-altering tendencies on their part (p. 13). Armstrong reveals her struggle with this choice, but given certain social codes among that age group in the form of peer pressure, personal liaisons, and competitive academics, this seemed a very strong move on her part.

Armstrong's weaker move is her tendency to employ somewhat outdated re-

sources for theoretical and practical support of her findings. She may have used these earlier sources for historicity's sake, yet current sources are often lumped with earlier sources, making it difficult for the reader both to distinguish "then" from "now," and also with whom Armstrong is aligning her own 2003 results.

Armstrong's overwhelmingly qualitative approach to data presentation might be problematic for some readers. Save for one table listing the schools, gender, and number of students studied, data primarily consists of a vast array of short clips from student interviews and far fewer teacher interviews. Most of these snippets (presented verbatim and freely employing the vernacular of the British "tween" crowd) seems hand-picked to substantiate Armstrong's umbrella hypothesis and its various sub-premises. Wholesomely honest, revelatory and endearing, these conversations fall short as hard evidence, often reading as anecdotal. More quantitative tallying in tandem with this sensitively tendered qualitative data would have done the trick toward sheer clarification of the results as well as amplifying the scientific validity of this study. Encompassing as it does such a small and precious locus of regional subjects, this study cannot conclude sweeping scientific validations at the international level of the field. Its status is therefore rated contributory, rather than ground-breaking. But it remains one of the few studies critical of gendered processes in secondary school *music* tech education and therefore begs careful consideration by field practitioners from all regions.

When Armstrong enters the actual classroom, essentialist social code often rears up, victimizing both male and female teachers. Armstrong substantiates this via data relating student perceptions of (1) their teachers' technical knowledge, and (2) how much tutoring they receive on software operation. Students tended to perceive their female teachers as being less technically knowledgeable (even when the opposite was true), but more supportive in general. The author portrays students grappling with the use of the technology itself, having been given no formal classroom instruction on the software's operation. In this study, most boys launched directly into this activity, whereas most girls preferred to ask peer girlfriends (rather than the teacher) for help. Clearly, Curriculum

is the true culprit here. Why not a structured, graded introductory "how-to" on each software's intricacies before allowing students to tackle the creative process? In that scenario, both boys and girls would get a fair shake on the tech learning curve. Armstrong finally acknowledges a need for such an approach in her Conclusion.

In the latter portion of her monograph, Armstrong insightfully explores three crucial arenas of deterministic classroom music tech protocols: (1) "gendered software" designed with a male or female user approach in mind, (2) "deviance" and "conformity" in relation to an instructor-generated musical idea, and (3) gendered classroom spatial arrangements.

Armstrong's book is most beneficial to K-12 music curriculum designers and teachers who will be supported by it in guarding against essentialist approaches to training their pupils in the use of music technology. Theorists might brief this book to get a view of what is "going on in the trenches" behind the larger political argument. The book is extremely well-organized with clear introductions and cogent conclusions in each chapter, although for those unfamiliar with British secondary school system protocols (such as A-level, GCSE, PGCE, BECTA, SCOT, etc.), an Appendix of Terms would have been useful.

Given the viral speed with which new intellectual property of various technologies is developed and introduced, a follow-up study of these schools, focusing on any changes to class curricula, teaching protocols, and technical set-ups in 2013 might prove useful.

#### NOTES

1. "Emic" is a study conducted from the researcher's stipulations and views. ([http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43454\\_10.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43454_10.pdf))

2. "Etic" is a study conducted from the subject's point of view. (Ibid)

*Tamara Cashour is an active arts interdisciplinary: collaborative pianist, soprano, organist, composer, and recently, opera director/producer. She is currently Adjunct Professor of Instrumental Accompanying at William Paterson University and is on the Vocal Accompanying staff of the Mannes College of Music Extension Division. She holds degrees from Columbia University (music theory) and New York University (feminist and avant-garde music and theater studies), and is currently pursuing a PhD in Higher Education Curriculum, Teaching and Learning.*

### Rosalind Appleby, *Women of Note: The Rise of Australian Women Composers*

North Fremantle, Washington: Fremantle Press, 2012. 184 pp. ISBN 9781921888762

JILLIAN GRAHAM\*

According to the summary on the inside of *Women of Note's* attractive jacket, being a female composer in the twentieth century was a "dangerous game." Some achieved success only after their divorces, others felt the need to lie about their gender to get their music published, and one was considered by her psychiatrist husband to be mentally insane. There were also challenges to gaining exposure and recognition, as they tended to be less well known than their male counterparts. Rosalind Appleby notes her own initial surprise to discover how many women composers there actually were in Australia. (In 2011, the Australian Music Centre<sup>1</sup> recorded that twenty-five per cent of Australian composers are women.)

That is why this book, which profiles the creative output and personal lives of a selection of women composers who have significantly shaped Australia's music history, is such a welcome—and overdue—publication. The contribution of these composers to Australian culture is certainly under-documented, particularly outside the academy. But this is due not only to what Appleby aptly refers to as "Australia's cultural amnesia when it comes to music." Composition has not historically been considered an appropriate profession for women; hence, it was only fairly recently that women had the encouragement and opportunities to acquire the necessary education to create music, and to gain recognition for it.

Biologically deterministic arguments have long been advanced to justify the denial of women's creative and intellectual abilities. The foundations were laid as far back as Aristotle, and built upon by famous philosophers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, including Descartes, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. The notion persisted into the twentieth century and beyond, and was epitomized in 1880 by American journalist and author George Upton, who said that, because of her innate inability to limit her emotions "within