

ability to balance tightly woven theoretical frameworks with a refreshing spirit of curiosity akin to the very “felt liveliness” the book seeks to explore (11). Invitations to “join [her] in not in wrapping up an argument but in opening one up” ensure the lasting impact of *The Broadside Ballad in Early Modern England* (98).

Linda Phyllis Austern. *Both From the Ears & Mind: Thinking about Music in Early Modern England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. vi + 380 pp. + 5 color plates, 25 halftones, 19 line drawings. \$55.00. Review by ANNA LEWTON-BRAIN, MCGILL UNIVERSITY AND DAWSON COLLEGE.

Linda Phyllis Austern’s latest contribution to early modern studies is wide-ranging, extremely learned, and illuminating to those interested in the history of ideas in general and the history of ideas about music in particular. Austern shows how music permeated nearly every aspect of early modern English culture and intellectual life: from academic debates in the elite colleges, to medical treatises touching on the mechanics of the ear and sensory perception, to magic, alchemy, astrology, architecture, arithmetic, emblematics, moral philosophy, theology, poetics, travel, and even zoology. Music and musical ideas provided a framework by which to understand the world. Music’s liminal characteristics, of inhabiting “spaces between literal and metaphorical, mental and physical, and manifest and mysterious categories” (2), made it particularly useful for thinking through various salient questions from the period such as the relationship between visible and invisible truths. Thus, Austern argues that music “stood at the centre, not the periphery of the early modern English intellectual enterprise” (2).

In “Chapter One: Praise, Blame, and Persuasion” Austern lays out the relationship between speculative and practical music in the period, showing how the “ancient liberal-arts tradition of [speculative] music [was] an intellectual preparative to performance and aural judgement” (10). Thus, as a preparative to her discussion, Austern begins where Renaissance thinkers began, not by examining any particular musical works, but by thinking philosophically about music in general.

Her sources in this chapter include treatises such as the anonymous 1586 treatise *The Praise of Musicke*, “the lengthiest and perhaps most ardent defense of music of the Tudor dynasty” (17), as well as common places about poetry and music. Austern surveys the “ancient encomiastic tradition in which speakers (or writers) first emphasized the importance of music as a subject for the listener’s (or reader’s) attention and then praised its essence, significance, and effects” (10), showing how numerous early modern thinkers turned to classical authorities to argue for the value of music. She provides a corrective to the “the long-standing assumption” of a “coordinated ‘anti-music movement’” in the period (15). In the tradition of intellectual debate surrounding music, as Austern puts it, “it was always somebody else who had no use for music” and, “since the Judeo-Christian tradition emphasized the divine origins of the art, proper practice brought one closer to all things heavenly, which none dared deny” (15).

Although the right sort of music was undeniably of value, the specifics of what that actually sounded like varied depending on religious denomination or the particular moment in history. “Chapter 2: Debating Godly Music” covers the theological debates surrounding the uses and powers of music that shaped and reflected the variations in liturgical musical styles in the Renaissance from polyphony to monody. The primacy of text over music was particularly important for musical reformers such as John Marbeck (c. 1510–c. 1585), whose plainsong setting of the Anglican liturgy is still in use today, but Austern points out that commercial compendia of general knowledge such as Robert Allott’s *Wits Theatre of the Little World* (1559) also included such aphorisms as, “measure & singing were brought in for words sake, and not words for musick” (Allott, fol. 96v; Austern 45). Whether simple monodic psalmody or ornate polyphony was in mode, thinkers looked to common biblical and classical sources to justify their uses of liturgical music and to explain its powers. The most famous Christian examples of the powers of music come from the Old Testament story (2 Sam. 23:1) of David’s musical talents as “the sweet singer of Israel” and from St Augustine’s discussion of music’s affective powers in his *Confessions*, book 9, chapter 6 (42). Austern reminds us that these Christian authorities were supported by “Ancient philosophers such as Aristotle and the early Neoplatonists

[who] had emphasized music's power over the soul and the art's importance to the moral life" (43). Music was thought to penetrate the ears and proceed directly to the heart and soul of auditors and thereby affect their very being. Music in liturgy was often described as evoking an ecstatic experience in an auditor, "dividing as it were his soule from his body, and lifting up his cogitations above himself" (*The Praise of Musicke* 152; Austern 42). Thus music was both physical and metaphysical; through the delights of the ear the soul itself was moved. As Austern expresses it, "within early modern English culture, music had the distinction of providing a pathway to ecstasy through a paradoxically wordly pleasure" (75). The chapter ends with a wonderful reading of Thomas Thomkins's madrigal, "Musicke Devine" from *Songs of 3.4.5 and 6. Parts* (1622), which Austern shows is itself a contribution to the *laudes musicae* tradition, and is a sort of encomium that allows for "the auditory equivalent of Platonic ascent through earthly beauty" through its carefully married words and notes (85).

"Chapter 3: Harmony, Number and Proportion" discusses the theories that explained to early moderns the causes of music's affective powers, especially Pythagorean-Platonic ideas of harmony and proportion that were thought to govern the cosmos. Music was understood to have soul-ordering properties because the soul was governed by the same principles of harmony that music was based upon; indeed, "the most widely circulating discourses on [music] recognized its unparalleled capacities for affect as an extension of numerical proportion and hidden correspondence" (164). Austern reviews Pythagoreanism, and theories such as the "harmony of the spheres," as it appeared in various early modern English texts by authors ranging from William Shakespeare to Robert Fludd. The Boethian doctrine that *musica humana* (the music of the soul and body), *musica mundana* (the music of the spheres), and *musica instrumentalis* (practical sounded music) were all interpenetrating and resonant forms of order continued to inform early modern thinking well into the seventeenth century. Austern points out, the "harmony of the spheres remained viable as a metaphor within philosophical, literary and theological discourse even when its literal meaning became irrelevant or it had been adapted to modeling other, sometimes newer, physical systems" (114). Austern shows the importance of metaphor

and analogy as fundamental ways of thinking about the cosmos for Early Moderns (99). Moreover, Austern digs into the influences of Pythagoreanism and musical-harmonical thinking in early modern magic (142), stoichiology (142), Neoplatonism (132), Emblems (123), architecture (115), and poetry (122).

Both chapters three and four open with readings of the iconic scene in *Merchant of Venice* in which Lorenzo and Jessica, while sitting under a canopy of stars and listening to music, discuss its affective powers (5.1.54-88). But while it begins with further discussion of the music of the spheres, “Chapter Four: To Please the Ear and Satisfy the Mind,” moves on to discuss the role of the senses and cognition in musical affect. Austern shows how sound itself, the building block of music, “was ascribed physical and spiritual aspects” and that it “had direct influences on bodily structures and hidden dimensions” (172). Here she turns to sources such as Francis Bacon and Robert Burton to explain Renaissance theories of affect, showing how the heart and brain were directly affected by musical sounds.

In the final chapter, “Chapter Five: ‘Comfortable ... in Sickness and in Health’: Music to Temper Self and Surroundings,” Austern expands her discussion of music’s effects on the minds of auditors to the effects of music on the whole body and even to collective bodies of people. Music had “capacity to bridge the substantial and insubstantial” as it had both physical and psychological influence. Indeed, music’s therapeutic characteristics were much discussed in the period. Austern reviews the Galenic humoral theory that dominated medical understanding and shows how the sanguine personality was most often associated with music and musicians, but also how the cult of melancholia that blossomed at the end of the sixteenth century had strong associations with particular forms of music such as the lament genre. Austern’s sources in this chapter are extensive, including musical and medical treatises ranging from an instructional manual for the lute compiled by Mary Burwell (b. 1654) to Robert Burton’s seminal *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). The chapter concludes with a discussion of the agency of musicians and composers and argues that for those skilled in music it must have “enabled continuous self-fashioning” (265–66).

Austern's book is filled with knowledge distilled and clarified. She has digested and made comprehensible many of the most important ideas from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from humoral theory to cosmology, and shown how music is at the heart of them. As Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim explains in James Sanford's English translation of his *De incertitudine & vanitate scientiarum et artium*, "Because *Musicke* dothe comprehend al disciplines . . . *Musicke* cannot be entreated without all disciplines" (fol. 27v; Austern 13). Austern has indeed "entreated . . . all disciplines" and shown the breadth and depth of her knowledge of early modern English culture and its music.

The book, she tells us in the "Acknowledgements," was first conceived as a "collection of edited texts" appertaining to music (269). What she has produced instead is so much more than that, and yet, the book can also function as a rich compilation of primary sources. Austern has generously quoted at length from many of the important historical texts relating to music, and when she does musical analysis of pieces, she helpfully includes transcriptions of the complete scores. Likewise she includes images of the emblems she discusses, and the passages of poetry she quotes are comprehensive, allowing the reader to follow her argument fully and engage independently with the primary sources she presents. The "Selected Bibliography" (331–72) is organized into "Before 1700" (further categorized by "Manuscripts" and "Printed Materials") and "After 1700" and is itself a valuable resource for scholars interested in music in early modern England. The book is also fully indexed and available in e-book format, published to Chicago Scholarship Online in January 2021. The e-version includes chapter abstracts and key words and is fully searchable, adding to the value and utility of this book as an important new resource in early modern studies.