

RECENT MEETINGS

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AUTUMN MEETING, 11th SEPTEMBER 2010

This was one of those agreeable meetings where everything comes together to make a most impressive integrated event. The day was dedicated to exploring the life and musical world of Thomas Mace, author of *Musick's Monument* (1676), the last great English treatise on the lute. Stephen Gottlieb brought his original copy of the book for attendees to peruse; David van Edwards formally presented to the Society the 12-course double-headed lute in French flat tuning made by his summer school lutherie students (Luke Emmet, Nicholas Eterodossi, Nick Gravestock, David Henley, David Luff, and Julien Stryjak); and James R. Smith and Eric Crouch's edition of Mace's lute suites was launched. (It is made for the benefit of those who don't have a 12-course lute; consisting of transcriptions of Mace's music for either 10-course renaissance lute or 10-string guitar). All this complemented admirably four talks and mini-recitals: Benjamin Narvey, on Mace the man, illustrated with readings from his less well-known writings as well as *Musick's*

Monument; David van Edwards on the 12-course lute in paintings and in life; Wendy Hancock on 'Humour' in Mace and as a concept for expression in 17th century English music, with music examples kindly played by Alison Crum, Roy Marks, Andreas Linos and Liam Byrne; and a discussion of Mace's planned music room, illustrated with architectural scale models, by Andreas Linos. Matthew Spring christened the newly-built 12-course lute (which is already out on hire) with a performance of one of Mace's suites. The final recital of the afternoon, given by Rosemary Hodgson, all the way from Australia, stayed with English repertoire, though exploring the repertoire current before or around the time of Mace's birth. Her programme, entitled 'The Jewel in the Crown' consisted of examples of the best lute solo music of the Elizabethan and Jacobean solo repertoire: Robinson's 'Go from my window' and 'Gigue', a pavan by Bachelier; a pavan, fantasia and galliard by Alfonso Ferrabosco, Rosseter's chromatic fantasia, Danyel's 'Rosa' and 'Monsieur's almain; Dowland's 'Tarleton's Risserectione', 'Lady Clifton's Spirit', and 'Forlorn Hope Fancy'; and John Johnson's 'Passamezzo pavan' and 'Carman's whistle'. She played with a lovely sweet tone, great delicacy and varied expression, and with attractive use of dynamic variation. A peaceful end to a packed day!

The Man of the Monument: Thomas Mace, by Benjamin Narvey



Both the purpose and personality of Thomas Mace are expressed in the title of his book, *'Musick's Monument; or, a Remembrancer Of the Best Practical Musick, Both Divine and Civil, that has ever been known, to have been in the World.'* The book reflects a man

who was both backward-looking and passionate about music, with an outlook that was at once ambitious and conservative.

Thomas Mace was a lutenist, singer, violist, composer, writer, and above all, an active observer of his musical times. He was a professional musician, as we shall see, but also a very rare and very great *amateur* of music, in the true sense of the word. He describes himself as a 'simple-hearted old lutanist' with an 'insatiable Love and Desire for the Lute'.

Mace was probably born in Cambridge in 1612 or 1613, and led a very long life that probably ended in 1706.² It is in part the length of his life that makes Mace's observations so useful. He lived through the reigns of James I, Charles I, Cromwell and the Commonwealth, Charles II, James II, William and Mary, and finally that of Queen Anne. His life is a thread that links the very disparate musical periods of Dowland (he was already a young man of 20 when Robert Johnson died), Purcell, and the young Handel. From a lutenist's point of view, Mace would have also witnessed the change from the English style of lute playing to a French one, a shift that reflects the new aesthetic fashions imported from France during the Restoration of Charles II. Furthermore, Mace personally knew Jacques Gaultier; in writing about the value of old lutes made by Laux Maler, he says that 'Mr. Gootiere, the famous lutenist in his time, shew'd me one of them, which the King paid 100 l. for.'³ The fact that Mace had direct personal contact with at least one of the great French *luthistes* makes him a key source of information pertaining to the French lute.

In the *Monument*, Mace presents a *summa* of his basic musical beliefs. To his mind, music in England had reached its zenith before the English Civil War (that is, before 1642), and that it was currently in a state of stasis, and possibly decline. Mace tells us 'I must needs say, that in many, or most Places, it [music] is Deficient, Low, Thin and Poor'. The purpose of his book is to stand as a 'Monument' to the English musical tradition; however, far from simply being a passive 'Remembrancer' of

Musick's Monument;
O R, A
R E M E M B R A N C E R
Of the Best
Practical Musick,
Both *DIVINE*, and *CIVIL*, that has ever
been known, to have been in the World.
Divided into Three Parts.

The First P A R T,

Shews a Necessity of *Singing Psalms Well*, in Parochial Churches, or not to *Sing* at all; Directing, how They may be *Well Sung*, Certainly, by Two several Ways, or Means; with an Assurance of a Perpetual National-Quire; and also shewing, How *Cathedral Musick*, may be much Improved, and Refined.

The Second P A R T,

Treats of the Noble Lute, (the Best of Instruments) now made Easier; and all Its Occult-Lock'd-up-Secrets Plainly laid Open, never before Discovered; whereby It is now become so Familiarly Easier, as Any Instrument of Worth, known in the World; Giving the True Reasons of Its Former Difficulties; and Proving Its Present Facility, by Undeniable Arguments; Directing the most Ample Way, for the use of the Theorboe, from off the Note, in Comfort, &c. Shewing a General Way of Procuring Invention, and Playing Voluntarily, upon the Lute, Viol, or any other Instrument; with Two Pritty Devices; the One, shewing how to Translate Lessons, from one Tuning, or Instrument, to Another; The other, an Indubitable Way, to know the Best Tuning, upon any Instrument: Both done by Example.

In the Third P A R T,

The Generous Viol, in Its Rightest Use, is Treated upon; with some Curious Observations, never before Handled, concerning It, and Musick in General.

By Tho. Mace, one of the Clerks of Trinity Colledge, in the University of Cambridge.

L O N D O N,
Printed by T. Ratcliff, and N. Thompson, for the Author, and are to be Sold by Himself, at His House in Cambridge, and by John Carr, at His Shop at the Middle-Temple Gate in Fleetstreet, 1676.

things past, Mace actually wishes to show in the *Monument* how this musical decay might be reversed by looking back to how things were done in what he sees as the better, more stable days of the past; thus he can rightly be considered a conservative, though this is partly why some have seen him as out of touch, or quaint, and always eccentric.

While many lutenists have of course read the *Monument* (or at least sections of it) to glean precious technical information about the lute and lute playing, I think there is more to say from a close reading of the text of *Musick's Monument*, as well as of some of the illuminating non-musical texts he wrote, regarding both biographical details about the author, and his attitudes, world view, and social position, all of which may have affected his musical life; his views on the 'modern' music of his day, and his conception of what he calls 'divine' music. This paper draws on the work of other scholars such as Henry Watson, Donald Gill, and Rupert M. Thackeray, who were not necessarily looking at Mace from a musical vantage point, but rather from the point of view of historical biography and literary history. I should especially like to 're-position' this scholarship with specific reference to the lute repertoire, which of course was Mace's key concern in the *Monument*, as it is ours, and finally to briefly discuss this modern reception of Mace.

Mace's complaint of 'modern' music

Mace writes that 'Musick has come to be undervalued', and that it has become 'an inferiour-low-flighted-undervalu'd-regardless-despicable-needless Thing',⁴ hence the need for his book whose 'Chief sum' is encapsulated in the title, above.⁵ He laments the lack of musical benefactors left in England 'in These

Miserable-hard-dear-Gripping-Times!'⁶ The Civil War had emptied coffers, and although there was 'great need of some new Benefactors', few had come forward. Indeed, Mace compares the funding situation before and after the Civil War as follows:

there is Nothing, or very Little (to be seen or heard of) Given from any late Benefactors, towards the Augmenting or Maintaining of it [music], since the first very liberal and well-meaning Founder['s] large Bounties and Donations; which although They were very large, liberal, and Sufficient Then, yet They are Now in a manner as it were Shrunk to Nothing.⁷

As a result, singers (and presumably most other musicians) had to disperse to make their livings elsewhere, such as, Mace says, 'in the Barbers Trade, and the Shoe-makers Trade, the Taylors Trade, or Professions, (God knows.);' musicians did this saying that 'We and our Families are almost Starv'd.'⁸ In short, due to the 'Zeal-benumb'd-frozen-Affections in These our Times' there was absolutely nothing for 'the Incouragement of Such Things [as music]'.⁹

The result of this almost total lack of funds meant that it was difficult to attract people to the musical profession and to keep them. Mace remarks how good music

necessarily depends upon Education, Breeding, and Skill in That Quality of Musick, which is both a Costly, Careful, and a Laborious-Attainment, not at all acquirable (in its Excellency) by any Inferior-low-capacitated Men.¹⁰

To give an example of how difficult things were for musicians, Mace recounts the following story 'out of no Jocundity, or Jolly-Light-Humour, (God Knows)',¹¹ but only to highlight how the poor financial support for music led to the engagement of even the most unsuitable people in musical posts:

I have known a Reverend Dean of a Quire (a very notable, smart-Spirited Gentleman) Egregiously Baffled by one of the present Clerks; who to my knowledge was more Ignorant in the Art of Song, then a Boy might be thought to be, who had Learn'd to Sing but only One month; yet could make a shift to sing most of the Common Services and Anthems, by long use and habit, (with the Rest) pritty well, (as Birds in Cages use to whistle their Old Notes.) Yet I say, this Dean being known by this Bold-Confident-Dunce-Clark (who you must know took himself to be a kind of Pot-Wit) to have No Skill at all in the Art of Musick; the Dean, I say, upon a Time (after Prayers) coming out and following this Great-Jolly-Boon-Fellow, and as he was pulling off his Surplice, began to Rebuke him sharply, (and indeed very justly) for a Gross Absurdity committed by Him in That very Service Time, by reason of his Great-Dunstical-Insufficiency in Singing of an Anthem alone; in which he was so Notoriously and Ridiculously Out, as caused All, or most of the Young People then present, to burst out into Laughter, to the Great Blemish of the Church-Service, and the Dishonour of God, (at That Time, and in That Place.) But Thus it fell out, (in short) viz. That after the Angry Dean had Ruffed him soundly in very Smart Language, so that he thought he had given him Shame enough for his Insufficiency and Duncery; How think ye This Blade came off? Why, most Notably, and in such a manner as made all the Standers by Wonder and Admire Him; venting himself in These very Words, (for I my self was both and Eye and Ear witness) with a most Stern Angry Countenance, and a vehement Rattling Voice, even so as he made the Church Ring withal, saying,

Sir-r-r (shaking his head) I'd ha' you know I Sing after the Rate of So much a Year, (naming his Wages) and except ye Mend my Wages, I am resolv'd Never to Sing Better whilst I live. [. . .] For the Cholerick Dean was so fully and sufficiently Answer'd, that turning immediately away from him, without one word more, He Hasted out of the Church, but never after found the least Fault with this Jolly Brave Clark; who was Hugg'd more than sufficiently by all the Rest of the Puny-Poor-Fellow-Clarks, for This Heroick Vindication and Wit.¹²

Mace clearly hopes to raise awareness of the critical state of music in post-war England, that through his efforts new benefactors may be found. Furthermore, he invokes Scripture, to show how the funding and teaching of music is vital 'to perform in this so Christian a Duty.'¹³

Mace's Conception of 'Divine' Music

Mace's view was that music was a Christian duty, and there is the hint that he may himself have been an ordained priest (and perhaps more than merely ordained as a lay clerk or singing man) in the Church of England. In a discussion concerning the use of psalms in church, Mace writes:

And because I am as much a Divine (I mean a Priest, and Son of the Church) as a Master in Musick: I will take the liberty to give my Explanation of those words of St Paul'.¹⁴

(And there is another hint later that he was an 'English Protestant Priest' in connection with a 'patent' medicine, as we shall see.) Mace may even have based sections of the *Monument* at least partly on sermons that he may have delivered—often using the words of 'Good old St. Paul'.¹⁵ He often partakes in religious explanations for music, and even explains religious principles through musical analogy, all the while sprinkling his text liberally with holy Scripture. [Cf. Thomas Whytehorn's scriptural apologies for music in his *Autobiography* of around 1575; and Ian Harwood's summary of the fiersome Elizabethan debates over whether music had a place in church services, in *The Lute* 2005—Ed.] Indeed, he even chastises readers in argument the way a local priest may admonish a parishioner, backing himself up with Scripture. An example of this is his poem entitled 'An Epistle to All Ignorant Despisers of this Divine Part of Music', an exhortation in which Mace once again attempts to buoy support for the musical arts. He writes:

Kind Ignoramus, whoso'er Thou art,
Not having Skill in This most Glorious Art;
Nor knowing Note, and Careless e're to Learn,
I prithee Read This Book: thou'lt then Discern
Thy Gross Defect; and th' great Necessity
Of Learning Something in This Mystery.¹⁶

Further along, Mace places in the margin a list of Scripture that support his views, brandishing them like a threat over the head of the miscreant 'Ignoramus'. He continues:

These are such Certain Truths, none can deny;
The Scripture Speaks them plain, much more than I.
Read, Read Those Sacred Texts ith' Margent Quoted,
Then Sure Thou'lt think Them worthy to be Noted;
If any Spark of Love-Divine be in Thee
Unto God's Glory, doubtless then they'l [sic] win Thee
Not only to the Love of This High Art,
But also move thee 'strive to bear Thy Part

In this So Heav'nly and Sublime a Thing,
In which the Angels, and Archangels Sing
Eternal Allelujahs to Heav'ns King.

This out of Great-good-will to Thee I write,
Hoping it may help Tune thy Soul aright.¹⁷

Mace's belief shapes the very form of *Musick's Monument*; indeed, his text both begins and ends on a religious note. The first part of the *Monument* is a discussion of sacred music, where its final words suggest 'That Musick (It Self) may be that Eternal, and Celestial Language. Allelujah, Allelujah, Allelujah.'¹⁸ Yet, although the *Monument* begins with a chapter on religious music, and ends on 'Musick's Mystical and Contemplative Part', he makes clear his central aim:

Yet my 1st. and Chief Design, In Writing This Book was
only to Discover the Occult Mysteries of the Noble Lute.¹⁹

Mace's thought on music is a sophisticated and considered one; for him music in general is an inexpressible and eternal language, and the music of the lute particularly so:

No LANGUAGE is of greater Force to me,
Than is the Language of LUTE'S Mystery.²⁰

Mace's life and the *Monument*:

Mace does not seem to have had many noble connections, nor did he attain much fame as a musician, and as we shall see, he was certainly not especially wealthy. It would appear that his was a musical family; in the list of subscribers to the *Monument* are listed two other Maces who were presumably relatives (brothers?): Henry Mace, a singing Clerk at York, and Phinehas Mace, who was a Singing Clerk at Cambridge. Having such a family would doubtless have helped him with the musical background to become a singer himself; the cover of the *Monument* states that it is 'By Tho. Mace, one of the Clerks of Trinity College, in the University of Cambridge.'²¹ In his final publication in 1698, entitled *Riddles, Mervels and Rarities, or A New Way of Health, from an Old Man's Experience*, Mace clearly states that he is in the '86 year of his age'; amplifying on this he writes:

I will take the liberty to ask this one question, viz: Whether it be not possible, for a Man that has liv'd to 40, 50, 60, 70, or 80 years Old (as I have now done) may not He (I say) be as Good a Physician (having Studied Himself and Nature (It may be) 30, 40, or 50 of Those 80 years) as a young Stripling, who has been but five years at the University, and has got a Batchellor of Physick's Degree upon his Back; by Reading a few Books (perchance but a year or two neither of those Five, before he got his Degree.)²²

Mace also states in the *Monument* that by the time of its publication in 1676 he had 'above 50 years experience and practice in this art of singing',²³ which means he was younger than 13 when he began, doubtless as a boy treble.

In any event, it is conceivable that his relative Phinehas helped him get a post at Cambridge, and his links to York—the city is mentioned a number of times in the *Monument*—could also be explained by his relative Henry's presence there. Furthermore, Mace recounts that he found his wife in York.²⁴ These facts may explain why he was in the city himself during the Parliamentary siege of 1644. Mace's recollection of the siege, apart from being a wonderful anecdote in itself, is important

in that it is by this story that he recounts his deepest musical experience. This account also epitomises the profound interrelation between Mace's love of music, on the one hand, and his religious life, on the other, something found throughout his writings. He says:

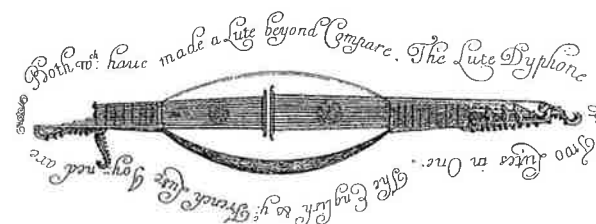
But most certain I am, that to my self, it was the very best Harmonical-Musick that ever I heard; yea far exceeding all other either private, or publick Cathedral-Musick; and infinitely beyond all verbal expression or conceiving. The Time when, was in the year 1644. The Place where, was in the Stately Cathedral Church of the Loyal City of York. And because by the occasion of it, you may the better apprehend, and the more easily be brought to believe the gloriousness and illustriousness of that Performance; I will here (in short seeming-Digression) declare it unto you [. . .] The occasion of it was, the great and close Siege which was then laid to that City, and strictly maintain'd for eleven weeks space, by three very notable and considerable great Armies, viz, the Scotch, the Northern, and the Southern [Mace here recounts the generals of these respective armies, noting well how Oliver Cromwell led the latter]. By This occasion, there were shut up within that City, abundance of People of the best Rank and Quality, viz. Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen of the Countries round about, besides the Soldiers and Citizens, who, all or most of them came constantly every Sunday, to hear Publick Prayers and Sermon in the spacious Church. And indeed their Number was so exceeding great, that the Church was (as I may say) even cramming, or squeezing full. Now here you must take notice, that they had then a Custom in that Church (which I hear not of in any other Cathedral, which was) that always before the Sermon, the whole Congregation Sang a Psalm, together with the Quire and the Organ; And you must also know, that there was then a most Excellent-large-plump-lusty-full-speaking-Organ, which cost (as I am credibly informed) a thousand pounds [. . .] But when that Vast-Conchording-Unity of the whole Congregation-Chorus, came (as I may say) Thundering in, even so, as it made the very Ground Shake under us; (Oh the unutterable ravishing Soul's delight!) In the which I was so transported, and wrapt up into High Contemplations, that there was no room left in my whole Man, viz. Body, Soul, and Spirit, for anything below Divine and Heavenly Raptures [. . .] It would be considered, that if at any Time, or Place, such a congregated Number could perform such an outward Service to the Almighty, with True-ardent-inward-Devotion, Fervency and Affectionate-zeal, in expectation to have it accepted by Him; Doubtless it ought to be believ'd, that it might be and was done there, and Then. Because that at That Time, the desperateness and dismaidness of their Danger could not but draw them unto it, in regard the Enemy was so very near, and Fierce upon them, especially on That Side of the City where the Church Stood; who had planted their Great Guns so mischievously against the Church, and with which constantly in Prayers time they would not fail to make their Hellish disturbance, by shooting against and battering the Church, in so much that sometimes a Canon Bullet has come in at the windows, and bounc'd about from Pillar to Pillar, (even like some Furious Friend, or Evil Spirit) backwards and Forwards, and all manner of side-ways, as it has happened to meet with Square or round Opposition amongst the Pillars, in its Returns or Rebounds, untill its Force has been quite spent. And here there is one thing most eminently remarkable, and well worth noting, which was, That in all the whole time of the Siege, there was not any one Person (that I could hear of) did (in the Church)

receive the least Harm by any of their Devillish Canon Shot: And I verily believe, there were constantly many more then a thousand Persons at That Service every Sunday, during the whole Time of that Siege.²⁵

It is moving to see how Mace's love of music was not challenged by a tragedy that appears to have beset him at some point in his middle years; namely, the onset of a profound deafness, and finally, blindness. In a section of the *Monument* in which he discusses the plans for an elaborate music room that he had designed and wished to build, he writes:

I did also Design the Erecting of such a Musick Room, as I have described; But it pleas'd God to Disappoint, and Discourage me, by Disabling me several ways, for such a Work; as chiefly by the Loss of my Hearing, and by that means the Emptiness of my Purse, (my meaning may easily be guess'd at) I only wanted Money enough, but no Good Will thereunto.²⁶

Clearly, being a deaf musician put one at a profound disadvantage as far as work was concerned; one could not accompany, or properly teach, and as Mace makes apparent, one could not even play properly for oneself. Ever the inventive spirit, alongside his music room, Mace also devised a new instrument, one that he says he 'made with My own Hands, in the Year 1672.'²⁷ It was a 'Lute of Fifty Strings' christened the 'Dyphone' or 'Double-Lute', which was a French lute that shared the same body, in what Watson calls a bizarre kind of 'Siamese twinship', with an English theorbo. Mace's purpose in designing this instrument was to make a lute with a louder sound, one that would allow him to hear what he was playing.



The Occasion of Its Production, was My Necessity; viz. My Great Defect in Hearing; adjoined with My Unsatiated Love, and Desire after the Lute; It being an Instrument so Soft, and Past my Reach of Hearing, I did Imagine, it was possible to Contrive a Louder Lute, than ever any yet had been; whereupon after divers Casts, and Contrivances, I pitch'd upon This Order; the which has (in a Great Degree) answered my Expectation; It being absolutely the Lustiest or Loudest Lute, that I ever yet heard; for although I cannot hear the least Twang of any other Lute, when I Play upon It; yet I can hear This, in a very Good Measure; yet not so Loud, as to Distinguish Every Thing I Play, without the Help of My Teeth; which when I lay close to the Edge of It, (There, where the Lace is Fix'd) I hear All I Play Distinctly; so that It is to Me (I Thank God) One of the Principal Refreshments, and Contentments I enjoy in This World [. . .]²⁸

It would be difficult to conceive of someone more devoted to their art than such a 'simple-hearted old lutanist' playing upon an awkward instrument invented to surmount the handicap of deafness. To picture him bent over in an inconvenient and physically uncomfortable position in order to better grip the lute with his teeth, so that the musical vibrations could be transmitted directly to his auditory nerves is rather heartbreaking.

His deafness may explain the writing of *Musick's Monument* itself. Mace may very well have undertaken the venture as an attempt to make the best of his unhappy fate and refill his 'empty' purse. After all, his malady could not take away from his knowledge of music, and by publishing such a text he could both preserve himself and his most cherished instrument that was quickly fading from fashion.

A year before the book's completion and publication, in 1675, Mace attempted to secure royal patronage for the *Monument*. He wrote a pamphlet entitled *Profit, Conveniency and Pleasure to the whole Nation, being a Rational Discourse concerning the High Ways of England*; the subject was the state of England's roads.²⁹ As Rupert M. Thackeray points out, the 'slightness of this interesting little pamphlet [. . .] leads one to suggest that it was little more than a bid for publicity in order to pave the way for the more important work to follow.'³⁰ This is especially so when one considers that an impressive seven-page advertisement for *Musick's Monument* was attached to it, with full details of its date of publication, price, and where the book could be found. Special features of the *Monument* include 'Playing off the note (or a thoroughbass)', a 'Tréats (sic) of [the] Noble Lute', and several 'Lone-Lessons' (solo pieces).³¹ Mace even goes so far as to write an introductory epistle to the King in rhyming couplets, one whose purpose, as Thackeray suggests, was 'to arouse the King's interest and sympathy'.³² It is in this text that we learn of Mace's blindness:

I am no courtier, know not how to Mode
But bluntly this contrive for public good.
And though I'm well-nigh Deaf and well-nigh Blind;
And Old and very simple in my kind;
Yet shift I daily make for to contrive
Something of good to others whilst I live.³³

Although he does not explicitly refer to *Musick's Monument*, whose advertisement was so prominently affixed to the pamphlet, he states that:

And several works I have already writ,
But none to Publick view are publish'd yet;
Nor shall be till I've tried how this will be
Accepted by Your Sacred Majestie.

While it is not known how the King responded to this pamphlet, it is clear that Mace's plan did not work: although the *Monument* did go to print a year later, it received no royal endorsement, and subsequently the majority of sponsors were friends, family, and colleagues.³⁴ Even so, the *Monument* did not prove a runaway success. Years later, in 1690, several copies remained unsold.³⁵

This pamphlet also fills in various holes in our knowledge pertaining to both Mace and the production of the *Monument*. The advertisement was in part made in order to ask potential subscribers, some of whom, he says, were '200 miles asunder', to come and collect the book (available in loose sheets or bound for an extra fee, as was more or less normal then) in centres where it would be distributed. These centres included London, Cambridge, Norwich, Nottingham and York. Better yet, we learn through the addresses he gives of the relevant distribution centres Mace's own address in St Botolph's Passage, near Queen's College, in Cambridge. We learn that the *Monument* would be available in York at the house of Mace's brother Henry, and at Norwich in the house of another Thomas Mace, a cousin. This latter Mace may have died that year, since he is not listed in the section devoted to subscribers from Norwich at the beginning of the *Monument*. Finally, the book would be available in London at the house of Mace's 'Loving Friend James Hart',

who was 'a gentleman of his Majesties Royal Chappel'. Perhaps this connection to the court was one of the ways Mace had hoped the *Monument* might gain royal patronage.

We also discover that Mace completed writing the text in London, and it seems he was writing until quite close to the publication date. He says:

The Author also desireth, that all Letters directed to Him may be sent to London, (and left at Mr. Nath. Thompson's, his Printer in New Street between Fetter-Lane and Shoe-Lane) where he Does intend to stay (God willing) till his Book be compleatly Finish'd.³⁶

In the same vein, the poem in the form of a dialogue with the lute refers to Mace's work as 'almost wholly done'.

In 1690 Mace's unhappy fate is revealed. If the *Monument* was meant to revive his fortunes and allow him to earn with his pen that which he could no longer do with his ears and hands, then its apparent failure may have set him on the path to penury. The sad advertisement that follows is Mace's penultimate publication, one in which he lists his life's treasures as items to be sold in what would seem a final desperate attempt to scrape a living. As ever, he begins the advert entitled *To all Lovers of the best sort of Music* in verse:

Men say the times are strange—'tis true:
Cause many strange things hap to be.
Let it not then seem strange to you
That here one strange thing more you see.

That is, in Devereux Court, next to the Grecian Coffee-house, at the Temple back-gate, there is a deaf person teacheth music to perfection: who by reason of his great age, v. 77, is come to town, with his whole stock of instruments and books to put off, to whomsoever delights in such choice things; for he hath nothing light or vain, but all substantial and solid music. Some particulars do here follow[. . .].³⁷

Here Mace lists his prized possessions for sale, which he may ultimately not even have been able to pass off as outdated curiosities. Articles mentioned include an organ (presumably the same one he advertised for sale fourteen years earlier in the *Monument*), a pair of viols (he lamentingly says that 'tis a great pity they should be parted'); a pedal-harpsicon, a single harpsicon, even his prized dyphone (alas, it seems that he had totally given up playing by this point, or was at least prepared to), several theorboes, lutes and other viols; his music collection of 'the works of the most famous master-composers, that have lived in these last 100 years', and last but certainly not least, several copies of his own *Musick's Monument*. 'All these', he writes, 'will be sold at very easy rates'. He states that he will be in London for four months 'exactly' in order to conduct his sales, during which time he would be happy to teach 'If any be desirous to partake of his experimental skill in this high-noble-art'. He concludes with little less than a stifled plea, saying 'If any Bookseller, (or Other,) will deal for the whole Parcel of *Musick's-Monument*, they shall have them at considerable advantage [presumably above his already 'very easy rates'] for themselves to gain by.'

Mace describes himself as 'Healthful, Lively, Active and Brisk' in his final publication in 1698, *Riddles, Mervels and Rarities, or A New Way of Health, from an Old Man's Experience*, but his text—one meant to show, as he says, 'How every man may become his own physician'—displays a great compassion for the poor and infirm that belies his own experience:

The Author's Intention by this WORK. Is This, Viz, to Accommodate the Meaner sort of Men; but more especially the Poorest of all, who stand most in Need of Help and Comfort in their sicknesses, seeing no Great and Skillfull-Physicians, will so much as look after them, or scarce think of their Miseries.

Mace claims to have invented what he calls 'The English Protestant Priest's Powder', a cure-all that he says protects against the plague, leprosy, jaundice, consumption (tuberculosis), 'soar [sore] breast' (?), the French Pox (syphilis), madness, and, best of all, can even bring back the dead to life!³⁸ Perhaps it is for this that he calls it a 'universal medicine' that is 'a treasure beyond the Golden Mounts of that talk'd of Phylosophers Stone'. Not only does he say that this Anglican powder is vastly superior to Catholic powders devised by Jesuits (p. 7), but in his advertisement for the powder on the final page of the text he informs the reader that 'the Common Price is but double the weight of Silver; and the Cheapest thing on earth.'³⁹

Despite the claims Mace made about his 'English Protestant Priest's Powder' and its ability to cure death, it would appear that he died nevertheless, most probably in Cambridge in 1706 at the advanced age of 94. On 17 April of that year, Trinity College reported that a 'singing-man's' place was 'voided by Mr Mace'.⁴⁰

Modern reception

Although there are only a handful of scholars who have written on the *Monument*, it is interesting to observe how modern criticism has been particularly diverse, ranging from sympathy and affection for Mace on the one hand to outright hostility on the other. This has much to do with Mace's conservative bent, which for some was a mark of treasured values (and even perhaps of cherished national traits), and for others a provincial kind of aesthetic insularity.

In the first camp, Mace symbolises the English gentleman-cum-amateur of music. Writing in 1909, Henry Watson begins his article on Mace describing him as precisely this kind of Englishman, with an immediacy and affection that makes one wonder if he had not read himself into his subject when he assures us that 'modest, serious men having genius, talent, and worth, have never been scarce in England.'⁴¹

In his sizeable article, perhaps Watson's greatest merit is his classification of Mace's *Monument* as a work of literature. He writes that Mace and his tutor should 'be classed with the not-too-numerous books preserved to the world—like Pepys' and Evelyn's Diaries, and Izaak Walton's *Complete Angler*'.⁴² Indeed, it is this reading of Mace as literature, and not as music, that truly captivates Watson; he even goes so far as to say that 'it is not necessary to enter into any close analysis' of the musical information in the *Monument*, since 'It is [only] a work of interest and value on the lute.'⁴³ Needless to say, there is in fact a very great deal of worth that a close analysis of the *Monument* can bring to modern music scholarship. That said, Watson's classification of the *Monument* as a literary text is a useful one; one that can help set an appropriate context within which such a musicological analysis can be carried out.

Central to this claim of Mace's literary status is Watson's assertion that the English texts he mentions above, in whose company he believes the *Monument* belongs are ones 'in which the author reveals himself while discoursing upon his theme'.⁴⁴ This is undoubtedly true of Mace's *Monument*, and its link to Walton's *Complete Angler* is clear: both these texts are on specialised subjects, yet are written in so personal a manner as to transcend the subject at hand and become instead a form of

autobiography—which is of course an accepted literary idiom. It is perhaps in this genre that the *Monument* fits best as a literary work, and the fact that autobiography is the essential point of a diary facilitates the comparison with Evelyn and Pepys.

Apart from a general common writing style, some other noteworthy parallels appear. For instance, Pepys, like Mace, was also a committed lutenist, and often comments upon his musical life in his diary. And Evelyn, like Mace, also wrote on extremely diverse subjects that were so far apart as to seem curious to the modern observer. Just as Mace the musician wrote a pamphlet on England's roads, Evelyn the diarist and gardener wrote for instance an equally civic-minded book about air pollution in London entitled *Fumifugium (or The Inconveniencie of the Aer and Smoke of London Dissipated)*. Watson is correct in his claim that these four authors shared a common *zeitgeist* when he remarks that 'the authors I have named were all alive when *Musick's Monument* was published; and Thomas Mace, along with them, reflects the quaintness and the intimacy of the literary style of the time'.⁴⁵

Thackeray, writing in 1951, shares Watson's appreciation of Mace as literature, as well as his being a refreshing and direct window into his musical times. Where Watson stated that he turns to Mace 'for the sheer pleasure of the task',⁴⁶ Thackeray starts his article with the warm observation that 'Anyone who knows Thomas Mace's *Musick's Monument* [. . .] cannot help feeling an affection for its author.' He continues:

Seldom do we find a technical book on any subject with such a personal note. Mace's mention of his family, his courtship, his pupils, his deafness, his practical common sense, and his good humour—all of these, together with a quaint literary style, half prose, half doggerel verse, with a liberal use of italics and capital letters, full of homely metaphors and elaborate compound adjectives like 'Occult-Lock'd-up-Secrets', and 'Silly-Conceited-Idle-Headed-Intoxicated-Brainsick-Inthusiast'—all these go to make up what is surely one of the most entertaining musical instruction books in the English language.⁴⁷

In his brief article, which serves as a short but accurate survey of Mace's life and accomplishments, Thackeray's main theme seems to be the sympathetic view of Mace himself: the man of his time who was the victim of his age. He states that 'even if we had no other information about Mace than that contained in the book, we should feel that we knew and loved this "simple-hearted old lutanist"', and he feels confident that the *Monument* 'is the best memorial that could remain to us of its author'.⁴⁸ Finally, Thackeray comments that 'a technical instruction book which can be read for pure entertainment is something quite unique'.⁴⁹ This sentiment runs very close to that of Watson, who writes:

[A]lthough the *Monument* which he [Mace] set up has become the tomb in which his beloved Lute lies buried, though not yet finally disesteemed, [Mace] conferred a service upon the art while he lived, and a permanent interest upon it when he passed away towards an obscurity from which his own honest pen has proved sufficient to preserve him.⁵⁰

A third modern writer writing in 1936, Otto Kinkeldey, shares this sympathetic view of Mace. He writes that Mace was 'Stubborn, almost a fanatic, but solidly serious where the lute was concerned, he was a man of fantastic ideas in other directions'.⁵¹ Kinkeldey seems impressed in equal measure by Mace's considerable knowledge of musical matters as well as by his rather more unexpected interests.

Less sympathetically Donald Gill writes that '*Musick's Monument* is the work of an old man who has compromised himself in a pathetic attempt to restore an unfashionable instrument to favour'. Gill goes further, saying that *Musick's Monument* 'is most misleading if regarded as a text-book of English lute-playing.' Indeed, 'It would be far better if it were regarded as a text-book of how not to play the instrument.' Gill also finds Mace's music examples 'dull and stereotyped in the extreme', and feels that 'Mace was writing to impress rather than to instruct.'⁵² Gill does have a point. Mace was hardly *au courant*, he lived very far from Paris, then-Mecca of the lute which he had probably never visited, and often writes from a reactionary perspective; after all, the very point of the text is to resurrect an instrument that was already rapidly going out of style.

And yet, old-fashioned or not, Mace certainly had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the lute, its repertoire, and its culture. Furthermore, since he came from a musical family, and worked professionally as a singer and viol player, he was well positioned to know the music world in England, which witnessed the importation of the French style and French musicians, such as the great Jacques Gaultier, and a further wave of French influence with the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. Thus, Mace's knowledge can be considered to have been very great, and he certainly moved amongst—if, alas, he was not one of—the greatest musicians of 17th-century England.

A question and answer session followed. As for Mace's assertion that music was now in decline, exactly 100 years earlier Thomas Whytehorne, in his autobiography of c.1575, said the same thing. Michael Fleming's researches into testamentary inventories, however, seem to show a decline in musical instrument ownership in the mid 17th century, a situation which cannot have been helped by Civil War. How much can we really be sure of in Mace's life? If he was only a lay clerk, did lay clerks ever have the chance to preach? Was Phineas Mace an older or a younger relative? Do we know that Musick's Monument was really a financial flop, or that his sale of his goods was prompted by desperation, rather than retirement from practical music of a very elderly musician? Financially he seems to have gone on collecting his probably modest stipend even after he was too deaf to sing; many lay clerks had other business interests besides their pay from singing. In his heyday he had enough money to build two organs—something which Michael Fleming's researches into 17th century were only generally found in the homes of the aristocracy—and to collect all those instruments!

*For whom was Mace's book written? In common with his writings on health, he was probably writing for the general reading public, gentlemen amateurs and so on, and those who wanted to encourage the raising of musical standards, and especially a revival of the lute, by making it 'easie'; a long list of sponsors or subscribers appear near the beginning of the book. Since printing began in the preceding century, a host of 'how to do it' books had appeared, but in that golden age of letters, even a technical manual was supposed to be 'a good read'; a parallel example from Mace's own time would indeed be Izaak Walton's 'Compleat Angler'; a wonderful book even if has no intention of ever going fishing. The dyphone was discussed. Mace says that neither end touched the floor when the other end was being played, so the theorbo neck end cannot have been too long. Obviously the technique of resting one's teeth on the edge was only recommended for those whose hearing was failing. Did it even exist? Seemingly so, since he offered it for sale, as part of his distress sale, if such it was, in old age. Mace seems so sincere, open, and public-spirited in *Musick's Monument*; it is hard to reconcile this with his 'snake-oil salesman' persona of the purveyor of quack medicines. But then if we think of all those people today who believe with total sincerity in the healing powers*

*of pendulums, crystals, essential oils, iridology, reflexology, shiatsu, ley lines, ayurvedic medicine and homeopathy, none of which have any proveable scientific basis, is it so hard to credit that Mace, in an age when most 'legitimate' medicine was little better than voodoo, should have sincerely believed in his own *nostra*?*

Mace says he started learning the lute around the age of 8 or 9, about 1621, when Dowland was still alive; he would have begun playing in renaissance tuning. The style of the music is of the 1640s rather than the 1670s, even though he uses the names of baroque suite movements. It is interesting that the most moving musical experience of his life was not some elaborate work of polyphony, but simply a huge congregation with a loud cathedral organ, singing psalms, presumably in unison.

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Notes

- 1 See title page of Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument; or, a Remembrancer Of the Best Practical Musick, Both Divine and Civil, that has ever been known, to have been in the World* (London: T. Ratcliffe & N. Thompson, 1676).
- 2 See Michael Tilmouth and Matthew Spring, 'Mace, Thomas', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (accessed 19 January 2009). Tilmouth and Spring also suggest that York may have been a possible birth place for Mace.
- 3 Mace, *Musick's Monument*, p. 48.
- 4 Mace, *Monument*, p. 8.
- 5 *Ibid.*, preface. Regarding the earlier English tradition, Mace writes 'that if it be considered how in this present Age, (if we seem not to decline, or go backwards, yet) we nothing at all Excell or Exceed those Divine Works of the foregoing, and never to be forgotten admired rare Authors of the last Century of Years [Byrd, Tallis, etc.], whose names are recorded in our Church-Books, and (doubtless) will be preserved, as precious *Monuments* and Examples to all after Generations, so long as the World and the Church endure.'
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 12 *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 14.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 4. It is possible Mace was merely ordained as a matter of course in order to take up his post at Cambridge (see below), but that he was not actually a priest. In any event, he was ordained in some capacity, and was clearly well versed in religious matters.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 272.
- 19 *Ibid.*, preface.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- 21 *Ibid.*, Title Page.
- 22 Mace, *Riddles, Mervels and Rarities, or A New Way of Health, from an Old Man's Experience* (1698), p. 1.
- 23 *Monument*, p. 5.

- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 122.
 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20.
 26 *Ibid.*, p. 244.
 27 *Ibid.*, p. 203.
 28 *Ibid.*, p. 203.
 29 *Profit, conveniency, and pleasure, to the whole nation* (London, 1675).
 British Library shelfmarks Hirsch I.333/1391.c.20.
 30 See Rupert M. Thackeray, 'Thomas Mace', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 92,
 No. 1301 (July, 1951), pp. 306-307.
 31 Mace, 'An Advertisement' in *Profit, Conveniency and Pleasure to the whole
 Nation, being a Rational Discourse concerning the High Ways of England*
 (1675), p. 24.
 32 Thackeray, 'Thomas Mace', *ibid.*
 33 This epistle is the only reference to Mace's blindness.
 34 See 'Epistle' in *Monument*.
 35 This point will be returned to below.
 36 Mace, *Advertisement*, pp. 28-29.
 37 *An advertisement to all lovers of the best sort of musick* (London, 1690?).
 British Library shelfmark Harl. 5936(384). [There is now a pub, *The
 Devereux*, on the site of the Grecian Coffee House—Ed.]
 38 Mace recounts 'Eight Eminent Stories' illustrating how the powder cures

- each of the above states, including one where he supposedly brings a dead
 child back to life. See *ibid.*, p. 12.
 39 In the text Mace also discusses the role of music in medicine, going so
 far as to compose a piece entitled 'A Musical Canon, of 4 Parts in One, in
 the Unison, Not made by Man nor ever Thought upon, Yet Real Truth it is;
 Come Riddle me Riddle me this.' He also discusses the medicinal uses of
 astrology and of tarantulas. See *ibid.*, p. 26.
 40 See Tilmouth and Spring, 'Mace, Thomas', *Grove Music Online*.
 41 Watson, Henry. 'Thomas Mace: the Man, the Book, and the Instru-
 ments'. *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 35th Session (1908-9), p. 87.
 42 *Ibid.*, p. 87.
 43 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
 44 *Ibid.*, p. 87.
 45 Watson, Mace, p. 87.
 46 *Ibid.*, p. 88.
 47 Thackeray, Mace, p. 306.
 48 *Ibid.*, p. 307.
 49 *Ibid.*
 50 Watson, Mace, p. 89.
 51 Otto Kinkeldey, 'Thomas Mace and his "Musick's Monument"', p. 21.
 52 Donald Gill 'The Lute and Musick's Monument'. *The Galpin Society
 Journal*, Vol. 3, (March, 1950), pp. 9-11.

Mr Mace's Marvellous Music Room, by Andreas Linos

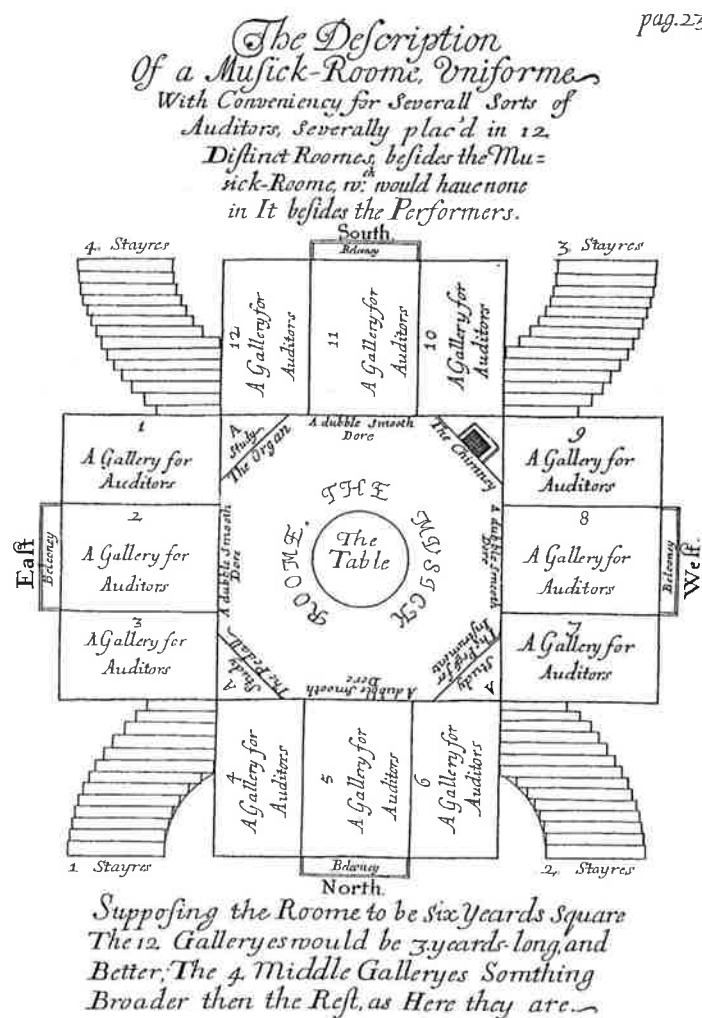
On pages 238-245 of *Musick's Monument* Thomas Mace, in one of his many charming digressions, describes and proposes a music room which would serve the art of music by allowing it to be performed and heard to its best possible advantage. As so often in his writings, Mace here shows himself as both conservative curmudgeon—he has obviously sat through many unsatisfactory performances in unsuitable spaces—and as optimistic visionary, for no purpose-built music room was to be built in England for three quarters of a century; until the Holywell Music Room in Oxford opened its doors in 1748 (this claims to be the oldest custom-built concert hall in Europe). Mace enumerates the advantages of such a room, which would allow instruments and music to be heard in a good acoustic, and pleasant ambience, with adequate space for the performers and comfortable accommodation for the audience.

His conception has a number of very interesting features. Most chamber music to Mace's time would have been performed in intimate spaces, and the layout 'in the round', with the audience sitting in 12 galleries or bays, preserves that sense of close contact with the performers, while separating performers and listeners. The central performance space was to be raised by a step for better visibility and audibility. The stairs at the corners and the balconies remind us that this is on the first floor (like the Wren library in Mace's own Trinity College, Cambridge), raised above street noises and damp air (the first floor or *piano nobile* was of course the normal habitation of persons of quality, with the servants 'below stairs' down to the early 20th century). He specifies four staircases so that auditors will be able to enter or leave without spoiling the whole concert. The corners of the performance space accommodate a fireplace for warmth, an organ, a 'pedall' (a sort of harpsichord with foot-operated changes of stop), and the 'press' or cupboard for instrument storage.

Mace gives us a plan, but no elevations of the building, only a written description. So what would the building have looked like, had it ever been built?

To the surprise and delight of the audience, Andreas Linos took out of his bag, and erected on a small table an architect's model of Mace's music room while he was speaking.

I think Mace had in mind a musical instrument when he was designing his music room; in a sense the room is an instrument



itself. In all his other writings Mace is describing in very concrete terms the truth of music in his day, but his music room seems a flight of fancy, except in the sense that it embodies a great deal of practical musical experience, and acoustic experience of existing instruments.

But let us consider his text, which I have read over many times to try to understand his intentions. He begins by saying many things which to us seem absolutely obvious, but which