



The Language of the Classical French Organ, a Musical Tradition Before 1800. (Study in History of Music)

Fenner Douglass

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The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the growth of a unique relationship between the French organ and the music written for it. Until recently, however, the roots of this precise musical tradition lay hidden in the sixteenth century. Illuminating these mysteries for the modern audience, Mr. Douglass has traced the development of the French organ from the sixteenth century through the Classical Period (1655-1770).

For the first time in English, an explanation is given of the role of mixtures in the *plenum* of the French instrument of the Classical Period. Because the *plenum* determines the very character of the organ, and because the mixtures exert the strongest influence upon its sonority, the reader will be able to understand why French composers were writing music for the *plenum* sharply different from that of their contemporaries in northern Europe. Especially useful is the first complete compilation of known sources of information about French classical organ restriction. Having assimilated the historical facts about the instrument, the reader will be ready to interpret the music of this period on a modern organ.

Mr. Douglass is professor organ at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music.

This authoritative study of the French classical organ is a major source for the interpretation of early French organ music. For this new edition, the author has added a chapter on touch in early French organs and its importance for practice. The bibliography has also been extensively revised.

Reviews of the previous edition:

"The extensive and valuable materials assembled in this study will make it indispensable to both the performer and the scholar of French organ literature."—Almonte C. Howell, Jr., *Notes*

"The only work of its kind in English. . . . Bringing together all of the sources into one volume was alone a task of considerable proportions, and the many conclusions drawn from a careful study of the sources make it a necessary reference for any further study. It should be not only on the shelves but also in the mind of every organ devotee."—Rudolph Kremer, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*

"Douglass has shown us the way that organ studies ought to develop over the next few decades."—*Music and Letters*

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