

Preface

In February 2017, we had the honour of hosting the annual Congress of the Comité international pour les musées et collections d'instruments et de musique (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Instruments and Music, CIMCIM) in Switzerland, under the motto "Presentation, Preservation and Interpretation. The Challenges of Musical Instrument Collections in the 21st Century". Numerous museum experts, scholars, scientists, musicians and other interested parties accepted our invitation to the lectures, discussions, concerts and museum visits that were organised by CIMCIM, the Hochschule der Künste Bern HKB and the Museum für Musik Basel in collaboration with the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and the Klingende Sammlung Bern, supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation.¹

The fourth day of the Congress constituted the "Fourth International Romantic Brass Symposium" and was entirely dedicated to presenting a research project of HKB. This project, entitled "Brass Instruments Between Preventive Conservation and Use in Historically Informed Performance",² investigated corrosion inside historical brass instruments and possibilities for their preventive conservation when they are played either for research purposes or in historical performance practice projects – this in itself being one of the prime topics of CIMCIM. Keynote speeches, presentations of the results of the research project, and case studies from museums and music academies with practical experience complemented each other in the best possible way. While it was impossible to find a single solution to the dilemma as to whether a historical instrument should be played or removed from performance – a dilemma that is in any case impossible to solve conclusively with regard to any specific, individual instrument – a consensus nevertheless emerged in our discussions that would in practice allow museums both options. On the basis of these research results, it should be possible for CIMCIM to formulate recommendations for the future use of brass instruments.

The present volume brings together the results of the above-mentioned research project, supplemented by a selection of the papers from the Congress that focused on brass instruments. Martin Skamletz introduces the history, development and design of the research projects on brass instruments carried out at HKB, which in themselves represent a turn towards practice-oriented research. Adrian von Steiger outlines the issues, research, results and consequences of the above-mentioned project on internal

- 1 For more information and the programme, see www.hkb-interpretation.ch/cimcim (all URLs in this text last accessed 27 July 2022).
- 2 For more information on the project, see www.hkb-interpretation.ch/projekte/korrosion.

corrosion in brass instruments. The research carried out for this project was by necessity multidisciplinary in nature and is presented here by means of contributions from different disciplines. Martin Ledergerber, Emilie Cornet and Erwin Hildbrand carried out a preliminary study to investigate the behaviour of moisture inside brass instruments that are played. Bernhard Elsener, Tiziana Lombardo, Federica Cocco, Marzia Fantauzzi, Marie Wörle and Antonella Rossi used electrochemical measurements to monitor instruments that were played during an experiment that lasted fourteen months. The results generated are evaluated in greater depth in the contribution by Federica Cocco, Marzia Fantauzzi, Bernhard Elsener and Antonella Rossi. David Mannes and Eberhard Lehmann used neutron imaging to visualise internal corrosion within the framework of the study; and finally, Martin Ledergerber used endoscopy to carry out optical measurements and documentation of the progression of corrosion in the aforementioned instruments over the fourteen months in question. The reports on the research project are rounded off by Daniel Allenbach's essay on Igor Stravinsky's ballet *Le Sacre du Printemps*, which provided the musical background to the project.

Both the keynote papers from the Congress set out fundamental issues: Arnold Myers emphasises that museums do not just have to conserve objects, but also their inherent information; and Robert L. Barclay presents the complex context in which the conservation, restoration and reproduction of historical instruments are situated. The latter topic is exemplified by two case studies: Sabine K. Klaus discusses a non-invasive means of predicting the playing behaviour of brass instruments without actually playing them, while Marie Martens presents the research history of the bronze lurs in the National Museum of Denmark, which also included playing the instruments on a test basis.

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Adrian von Steiger

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TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY

Corrosion of Historic Brass Instruments

Romantic Brass Symposium 4 • Edited

by Adrian von Steiger, Daniel Allenbach

and Martin Skamletz

MUSIKFORSCHUNG DER
HOCHSCHULE DER KÜNSTE BERN

Edited by Martin Skamletz
and Thomas Gartmann

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