

**Anna Alberni, Antonio Calvia, and Maria Sofia Lannutti, eds., *Polyphonic Voices: Poetic and Musical Dialogues in the European Ars Nova* (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2021), xxiv + 293 pp.**

This volume successfully accomplishes its aim: to survey the complex system of borrowing-allusion-quotation found in the songs of the Ars Nova while also drawing attention to the challenges of achieving such a feat in light of the limited verbal and musical editions of such texts. In this sense, *Polyphonic Voices* fills a critical gap by drawing crucial attention to the culturally rich echoes found within the Ars Nova canon.

Anna Alberni, Antonio Calvia, and Maria Sofia Lannutti's edited volume begins with a consideration of intertextuality and interdiscursivity, a starting point for many musicological analyses beginning in the late eighties and ongoing. The editors assert that intertextuality as well as interdiscursivity, a concept Cesare Segre "defined as a non-intentional intertextuality mainly due ... to the occurrence of shared *topoi* in a certain period, ambience or culture" (160), are key attributes of the Ars Nova that are all too frequently collapsed. Alberni, Calvia, and Lannutti's careful parsing of such features results in a curated volume that takes seriously the harmonic references between Ars Nova works including shared linguistic, religious, and thematic expressions as well as constructed similarities created in the compilation of anthologies. Alberni, Calvia, and Lannutti's edited volume ultimately allows its reader to better understand the poetic and musical reverberations of the Ars Nova by drawing distinction to the complex, interconnected nature of the borrowing-allusion-quotation process found in abundance in the late medieval European musical tradition known as Ars Nova.

In chapter 1, Maria Caraci Vela highlights the synchronicity between French secular polyphony and the reprise of Italian Ars Nova from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. For Vela, this reprise was a "conscious and cultured choice" (43) that aimed to restore Italic music traditions from a proto-humanistic period. As a result of such a union, a "musical bilingualism" (9) was achieved that benefitted both French and Italian poetics by keeping the French side current while working to recover the Italian tradition.

In the second chapter, Alberni examines a small body of fourteenth-century Catalan *danses*, or refrain songs, that follow an *aaab* scheme. By drawing attention to this often overlooked corpus, Alberni suggests that these Catalan refrain songs were part of a much larger intertextual network, a fact that brings to light the significance French-influenced refrain songs had on the evolution of Catalan poetry.

Yolanda Plumley reaffirms the importance of tracing intertextualities in late medieval European Ars Nova texts in chapter 3. By doing so, new insights emerge on how these texts were transmitted and received. To demonstrate, Plumley turns to a collection of French secular lyrics from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that reappear in a cycle of lyrics composed for Easter in the later fifteenth century. By tracing the use of secular songs within the religious lyrics, Plumley argues that the author made the Passion more accessible to lay readers.

The next three chapters examine four prominent polyphonists in the Italian tradition: Jacopo da Bologna, Giovanni da Cascia, Nicolò del Preposto, and Francesco Landini. More specifically, in chapter 4, Davide Checchi affirms that

intertextual echoes found between the four madrigals of the *biscia* cycle by Jacopo da Bologna and Giovanni de Cascia's *Donna già fui*. Checchi asserts that the reverberations between these pieces make reference to the war between Loderisio Visconti and Milan in 1339. In chapter 5, Calvia repeats this necessity of tracing musical intertextuality as a way to unlock new meaning in Ars Nova pieces as well as the relationship between poetic texts. To demonstrate, Calvia exemplifies how tracing the references to Boccaccio's *Filostrato* in two of Nicolò del Preposto's madrigals, *Vidi, com'[a] Amor piacque* and *It'a veder ciascun*, can better help us, as scholars, understand the musical settings of Nicolò's pieces. In chapter 6, Michele Epifani grapples with three *ballatas*, all of which are dedicated to a figure referred to as Sandra. Ultimately, Epifani draws upon the intertextual echoes between the three *ballatas* to help uncover the identity of the dedicatee, Sandra.

The concluding chapters emphasize what readers can gain from carefully re-tracing intertextual references—musical, symbolic, poetic—in order to better understand the Ars Nova repertoire. To that end, Jason Stoessel asserts that the influence of leading humanist Francesco Petrarca can be seen within Johannes Ciconia's selected songs and motet. This connection reveals not only the political underpinnings of Ciconia's poetic texts, but it also acts as evidence for a new, earlier dating of Ciconia's *O Petre, Christi discipule*. In the final chapter of the volume, Lannutti explicates that the Ars Nova canon is primarily contained within musical manuscripts, rendering this corpus particularly vulnerable to error. As a result, it can be challenging to identify the quotations and allusions with accuracy. However, Lannutti posits, intertextual references can be used to identify errors and note corrections in addition to allowing for new interpretations of the canon. To model her argument, Lannutti turns to three case studies, *Sofrir m'estuet et plus non puis durer, e En attendant, souffrir m'estuet* and *Sus la fontaine, en remirant*. Read together, Lannutti reveals that these three pieces were utilized as political propaganda in Italian territories following Boniface IX's election in 1389.

To conclude, *Polyphonic Voices* is excitingly ambitious and insightfully successful in its execution. From Alberni, Calvia, and Lannutti's preface to the final chapter, this volume makes a clear case for the necessity of approaching Ars Nova works from the intertextual framework in which they are couched. *Polyphonic Voices* proves that by doing so we can begin to understand the complex network of poetics of these musical texts as well as the sophisticated, intercultural connections that shape the Ars Nova canon.

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**Ellen Arnold, *Medieval Riverscapes: Environment and Memory in Northwest Europe, c. 300–1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), xxii + 302 pp., 27 ills.**

Ellen Arnold beautifully explores a multitude of ways that rivers and their water were integral to understanding how medieval people lived “within and alongside” nature in their communities (3). This environmental history of the rivers of northwestern Europe demonstrates how vital narratives about these rivers had become to the cultural identity of the communities that lived on their banks and relied on them in their day-to-day lives. Medieval rivers were not “wild,”