



PROJECT MUSE®

Introduction

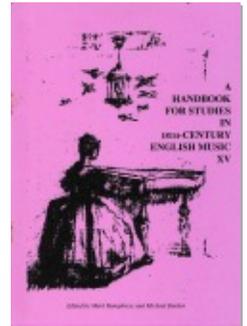
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Introduction

There can be no doubt about the influence of Playford's *A brief introduction to 'The Skill of Musick'*. Its first publication marked a democratization of music as a pastime, and was a publishing success that saw editions published spanning the years 1654 to 1730 and beyond. Mark Burden gives a comprehensive overview of the history of the publication to 1730, including a discussion of its authors and contributors, and appends a detailed comparative bibliography listing all nineteen editions.

So who was Signora Margarita's sister? Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson unravel this biographical conundrum, one caused (and not for the first time) by mis-reporting by Charles Burney. Burney identified the singer Maria Gallia as Margarita de L'Epine's sister, but Baldwin and Wilson establish that she was, in fact, Maria Manina, who ultimately became the wife of the composer, Mr Seedo.

David Coke's article 'The pleasure gardens and the orphanage' describes the background to two fascinating examples of artistic patronage in 18th-century London. He argues that the painter, William Hogarth, was single-handedly responsible for a very public flowering of the arts that took place in the 1730s and 1740s, and was able to succeed through the office of two very different patrons, Jonathan Tyers and Thomas Coram. Their institutions, Vauxhall Gardens and the Foundling Hospital, provided the context for a wide range of artistic activities involving Hogarth, Handel, and others.

Mark Humphreys and Michael Burden

Oxford, September 2007

