



Music for a Mixed Taste: Style, Genre, and Meaning in Telemann's Instrumental Works

Steven Zohn

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Georg Philipp Telemann gave us one of the richest legacies of instrumental music from the eighteenth century. Though considered a definitive contribution to the genre during his lifetime, his concertos, sonatas, and suites were then virtually ignored for nearly two centuries following his death. Yet these works are now among the most popular in the baroque repertory. In *Music for a Mixed Taste*, Steven Zohn considers Telemann's music from stylistic, generic, and cultural perspectives. He investigates the composer's cosmopolitan "mixed taste"--a blending of the French, Italian, English, and Polish national styles--and his imaginative expansion of this concept to embrace mixtures of the old (late baroque) and new (*galant*) styles. Telemann had an equally remarkable penchant for generic amalgamation, exemplified by his pioneering role in developing hybrid types such as the sonata in concerto style ("Sonate auf Concertenart") and overture-suite with solo instrument ("Concert en ouverture"). Zohn examines the extramusical meanings of Telemann's "characteristic" overture-suites, which bear descriptive texts associating them with literature, medicine, politics, religion, and the natural world, and which acted as vehicles for the composer's keen sense of musical humor. Zohn then explores Telemann's unprecedented self-publishing enterprise at Hamburg, and sheds light on the previously unrecognized borrowing by J.S. Bach from a Telemann concerto. *Music for a Mixed Taste* further reveals how Telemann's *style polonaise* generates musical and social meanings through the timeless oppositions of Orient-Occident, urban-rural, and serious-comic.



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