



imprecision will produce chaos when musicians try to play the parts this score generates. Many of the editorial omissions are hard to fathom, like these examples from the *sinfonia*: (1) in bars 24 and 28 slurs are not added editorially even when the viola and basses are moving in parallel thirds, placing them in articulative conflict, one legato and the other detached; (2) in bars 24, 26–28, 55 and 57 staccato marks are added in the oboes to match those in the violin, which they are doubling, while the viola and basses are left to plod along without staccato markings; (3) in the beginning of the third movement, where Jommelli introduces a five-bar, four-voice fugato based on a two-bar motive, the editor decided (correctly) to slur only the last two quavers, rather than include the preceding tie, as at least one of the carelessly drawn slurs in the source suggests. Next, all motives lacking slurs in the source needed editorial ones. Why, then, were some marked and not others, and why was there no attempt to reconcile the slurring in the first statement of the fugato with its recapitulation?

In my opinion the editor's role needs to extend beyond simply representing the 'original'. There is still much work to do before the composer's intentions are fully realized. This is especially true of Jommelli because of the lavish though inconsistent 'hints' that are left us regarding his expectations pertaining to articulation and dynamics. If we simply reproduce a given bar in a given part without regard for what is happening motivically in other parts of the orchestra or in the vocal parts (either in that bar or in other repetitions), we leave the musicians at odds when their electronically generated parts do not agree. This leaves the conductor or principal violinist with the real work of making the musical artefact into a work of art. Surely, even if the editor guesses wrong, the dashed slur or bracketed staccato can go a long way towards assisting musical organizations in realizing a new work from an unfamiliar period without great additional toil, while allowing the discerning conductor to fine-tune the realization to his or her satisfaction. In the end, as Jommelli himself advised Bottelho in Portugal, the *maestro di cappella* will still make the final musical decisions based on what works best in performance (letter from Niccolò Jommelli to Pedro José da Silva Bottelho, 25 September 1770, cited in Marita Petzoldt McClymonds, *Niccolò Jommelli: The Last Years, 1769–1774* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1980), 518).

Despite these issues, which plague every edition of eighteenth-century materials, this new Jommelli edition is a cause for rejoicing. Though it does not answer all of our questions, it offers dependable, long-overdue access to a mid-eighteenth-century operatic masterpiece – one of hundreds yet to be recovered.

MARITA PETZOLDT MCCLYMONDS



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ORIGINAL TEXT, ENGLISH TRANSLATION, AND A COMMENTARY ON AMAND VANDERHAGEN'S MÉTHODE NOUVELLE ET RAISONNÉE POUR LA CLARINETTE (1785) AND NOUVELLE MÉTHODE DE CLARINETTE (1799): A STUDY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH CLARINET MUSIC

ED. JOAN MICHELLE BLAZICH

Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2009

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Amand Vanderhagen (1753–1822) was a Flemish clarinetist, composer and teacher whose name is familiar to any specialist of the instrument. A clarinetist in the royal Gardes-Françaises, Vanderhagen's performing career was largely in military bands, but he proved himself adept at adjusting to the new regime arising from the French Revolution, finding important musical posts throughout the changing and troubled political scene of pre- and post-revolutionary France.



Although prolific as an arranger and composer of a variety of works, particularly those for military band, Vanderhagen is known today primarily for his two methods for clarinet, *Méthode nouvelle et raisonnée pour la clarinette* (1785) and *Nouvelle méthode de clarinette* (1799). These two works have added considerably to our understanding and interpretation of clarinet technique and music from the late eighteenth century and form a fundamental resource for anyone approaching a study of the historical instrument.

Vanderhagen's 1785 treatise was the first instructional method for clarinet dealing with the technical aspects of playing the instrument, as opposed to earlier treatises, which had dealt primarily with guidelines for composing for the instrument. We can glean from it a great deal about the practical issues involved in clarinet playing in the eighteenth century, such as reeds, stance, embouchure and a number of aspects of performance practice, information that in itself reveals what was considered important in the training and performance of musicians at this time.

Previously, Vanderhagen's two instructional works for clarinet have been available only in facsimile editions by Fuzeau and Minkoff, and an English translation of these two important works has therefore been long overdue. It is a shame, then, that Blazich did not make full use of this unique opportunity to present a comprehensive and reliable translation of the two methods. It is clear that her approach has been that of a modern clarinetist and scholar, and her appreciation of the works has been based largely on their role and value as pedagogical sources in a modern context. That this gives the impression of dismissing the wisdom offered by these methods as outdated is demonstrated by such statements as 'Vanderhagen uses both terms and concepts that are now considered archaic' (2). For those who wish to make a study of the early clarinet, however, or for any scholar of historical performance practice, the advice offered by Vanderhagen is as relevant today as when it was written.

Blazich begins the book with an informative and interesting biography of Vanderhagen, probably the most complete to be found. She draws on contemporary sources to build a picture of Vanderhagen's working life and tracks his career through the unsettled times of the Revolution and the new regime. Using this information, she draws a number of conclusions about Vanderhagen's political life and status within the social strata of Paris. In Chapter 1, 'A Brief History of the Clarinet to 1785', Blazich further shows that she is ill at ease with the subject of historical instruments. Her treatment of the history of the instrument, although admittedly intended as only a brief summary, is perhaps over-simplified and is at pains to make a point against the precursors to the five-key clarinet. She has singled out some of the less complimentary contemporary references to clarinets which ignore the instrument's appropriateness to its role at the time and the interest demonstrated in it by leading composers and makers.

Blazich's apparent dismissal of earlier kinds of historical clarinet is also shown in her statement that the baroque clarinet had 'a limited range and usability' (1). This rather sweeping statement gives no credit to the number of challenging works for the instrument by leading composers of the time, nor to the many well-crafted instruments surviving in museums and private collections; it also ignores the modern players of this instrument who can be heard in concert halls and on recordings, demonstrating the nuances and flair of which this instrument is capable. Blazich further dismisses the capabilities of the baroque clarinet in Chapter 4, which is a commentary on the two tutors, when she says that its repertory 'typically covered a range of only about a tenth because of the instrument's physical limitations and loss of sound quality' (215).

The book reproduces all of Vanderhagen's music examples in a modern type face. This approach is of course to be expected in a book which in no way claims to be a facsimile, but it does mean that some of the charm of the experience of reading an original source is lost. Furthermore, this type face seems incapable of notating a slur over more than two notes. Consequently, examples which in Vanderhagen's original have several notes under one slur (such as a group of four quavers with the first three slurred) are notated here with the first three notes joined by two individual slurs. With such markings playing a fundamental role in historical performance practice, this has the result of completely altering the nature of the example from its original.

After the translation of both treatises, Blazich moves on to a commentary on the two works, much of which is a summary of all the preceding chapters and therefore repetitive. Blazich does, however, give the background to and origins of many of the melodies from the duos in the earlier treatise, which gives an



interesting insight into the popularity of various works at the time. Chapter 5 examines the relationship between the treatises of Vanderhagen, Frédéric Blasius and Xavier Lefèvre, considering to what extent the two later authors were influenced by Vanderhagen's work and most particularly whether they used any of Vanderhagen's original material directly. Although this is of interest, Blazich has again missed the opportunity here for some more insightful discussion on the development of clarinet technique as evidenced by any variation or similarity in the authors' individual approaches.

Chapter 6 is a short overview of the legacy of Vanderhagen. Once more it is clear that Blazich's interest in the two treatises focuses largely on their place in the history of clarinet pedagogy, rather than as a relevant and useful source for modern researchers and players. She raises the interesting point that the lack of information on the fundamentals of music in Vanderhagen's first treatise indicates that this work was intended for musicians who wished to learn to play the clarinet, rather than newcomers to music as a whole (247). The final sentence of the book again is rather dismissive of the treatises' relevance today: 'Although most of his treatises' textual content is too archaic for direct use in teaching clarinet today, Vanderhagen's works have enormous significance for the history of clarinet playing and pedagogy, as well as to the formation of the modern method book' (248). Two very useful appendices follow, listing Vanderhagen's complete output of works, compositional and instructional alike, and indicating which of these are currently in print. The third appendix lists the chapter headings for each of the treatises by Vanderhagen, Blasius and Lefèvre.

The translation itself tends to be rather literal, with the effect that some sentences and sections are awkwardly rendered. Article 10 in the 1785 method (44–45), regarding reeds, is a case in point. There are some basic errors, such as a failure to translate Vanderhagen's place of birth from Anvers to Antwerp (10). The volume itself is quite attractively bound in a cloth cover, and contains some reproductions of the original title pages and fingering charts. There is a relatively high number of typographical errors, however, and several pages have been repeated. The explanatory captions or passages accompanying many examples are often not clearly linked, as they are in the original, and it is frequently difficult to tell which text belongs with which example. The duos are printed too small to be of practical use.

Vanderhagen's two treatises are essential literature for anyone contemplating or undertaking a study of the early clarinet. This book may provide a useful first approach to the two works for those unfamiliar with French and unable to tackle the original texts. Yet it would still be advisable to obtain a facsimile of the original in order to have the examples and duets in accurate notation.

MELANIE PIDDOCKE



RECORDINGS

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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

CHANDOS ANTHEMS

Emma Kirkby (soprano), Iestyn Davies (alto), James Gilchrist (tenor), Neal Davies (bass) / The Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge / Academy of Ancient Music / Stephen Layton
Hyperion, CDA67737, 2009; one disc, 66 minutes

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

HANDEL IN THE PLAYHOUSE

Mary Bevan (soprano), Greg Tassell (tenor) / L'Avventura London / Žak Ozmo
Opella Nova, ONCD014, 2009; one disc, 52 minutes