



by the choirgirls thanks to Porpora's teaching. Not least, Markstrom's work also has the merit of offering the opportunity to find in one place some of the most fascinating pages of Porpora's sacred works, too often sacrificed in favour of his operatic production, but to which the Neapolitan composer dedicated a significant part of his creative activity.

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JOHANN BAPTIST WANHAL (1739–1813), ED. TOBIAS GLÖCKLER
DOUBLE BASS CONCERTO
Munich: Henle, 2015
pp. viii + 39 (+ parts), ISMN 979 0 2018 0979 3

Johann Baptist Wanhal's career in music was by all accounts a successful one. A native of Bohemia, he received special instruction at an early age from local masters, studying organ, violin and composition. By the time he left his homeland for the more cosmopolitan environment of Vienna in 1760–1761 he had composed several concertos, notably for the instruments he had studied, and had acquired a modest reputation as a virtuoso violinist. Save for a brief sojourn in Italy (from May 1769 to September 1771) and subsequent sundry excursions, Vienna served as his home and base of operations from that date until his death.

Wanhal actively cultivated the genre of the symphony upon his arrival in Vienna. However, by the 1780s he had greatly curtailed his efforts in the symphonic realm, concentrating instead on producing works that were more aligned with the evolving musical taste of contemporary Viennese society. This taste included the vogue for soloistic double-bass works that blossomed in Vienna, and in other parts of Europe as well, at this time.

Wanhal's concerto is an excellent representative of this vibrant tradition. Tobias Glöckler places the likely date of composition for this work between 1786 and 1789, though, as Paul Bryan has pointed out, dating the works of Wanhal can be 'fiendishly complex' (*Johann Wanhal, Viennese Symphonist: His Life and His Musical Environment* (New York: Pendragon, 1997), xxii). No autograph of this piece is extant; it survives only as a set of parts, in the hand of an unknown copyist, from the collection of the composer and double-bass virtuoso Johann Matthias Sperger (1750–1812). Sperger spent a good deal of his early career in Vienna and may well have encountered Wanhal during that period. In any case, Sperger assembled an impressive assortment of soloistic works for the Viennese double bass, including concertos by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf, Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Anton Zimmermann, Sperger himself and this concerto of Wanhal's. It is on this set of parts – currently held in the Landesbibliothek Mecklenburg-Vorpommern at Schwerin, reflecting Sperger's long-standing appointment at the court of the Duke of Mecklenberg – that Glöckler's edition is based.

Glöckler's volume features a Preface in German, English and French. Indeed, all textual materials throughout the edition – including annotations in the piano-reduction score as well as in the two accompanying solo parts (partbooks 1 and 2) – are given in all three languages. This opening material expands on the background of Wanhal's concerto as mentioned above, and explains the various elements of the edition, including the basic approach used in adapting the manuscript parts, as well as various performance options aimed at making this concerto accessible to present-day double-bass soloists of all kinds.

The manuscript parts from Schwerin designate this work as *Concerto in Eb per il Contrabasso* on the title page. While the orchestral parts are indeed written in E flat major, the solo double-bass part is presented in D major. As Glöckler points out, this reflects the standard practice of the period for soloistic double-bass



literature, particularly in the concerto genre. In this tradition, the soloist would employ a scordatura tuning, usually, as in this case, one half step higher; this allowed the performer to retain, during transposition to a different key, the advantages of the characteristic Viennese tuning (for a five-string instrument, F¹-A¹-D-F[♯]-A) in terms of fingering technique and, more importantly, the resonance of open strings and overtones. This resonance was greatly aided by the employment of frets, which Glöckler encourages. Resonance was at the heart of the Viennese solo double-bass tradition, and Wanhal and his contemporaries were masters at exploiting its inherent qualities.

A similar tuning tradition exists in the modern solo double-bass literature; here, strings tuned a whole step higher than the traditional four-string tuning (E¹-A¹-D-G) are employed. To accommodate this modern practice, the piano reduction in Glöckler's edition – realized by Christoph Sobanski – is provided in D major and in C major. Partbook 1 contains the solo part written in C major. Thus modern players who wish to perform this work in the original key of D major (for the solo part) can employ the solo-string tuning (F[♯]¹-B¹-E-A) and the D major accompaniment. If the performer prefers to approach the work using normal orchestral tuning, the C major accompaniment may be used.

While partbook 1 presents a solo part which can be used with either orchestral or solo tuning on a modern four-string double bass, partbook 2 seeks to embrace the Viennese tuning that was so crucial to the development and expansion of the virtuosic double-bass tradition of Wanhal's time. Therefore, along with a solo double-bass part for normal orchestral tuning in the original D major, partbook 2 offers a separate solo part arranged so that a modern performer can obtain an approximation of the Viennese tuning system by using an adjusted tuning scheme on a four-string instrument (A¹-D-F[♯]-A). Glöckler suggests using a combination of orchestral and solo strings to achieve this alternative tuning (normal orchestral strings for the lower two, a 'weakly strung [orchestral] G string' for the F[♯], and a solo A). The part is notated such that when a modern player employs the traditional fingering patterns, the notes indicated on the part will produce the correct pitch (for example, a notated B^b, played on the F[♯] string but still employing conventional modern technique, will produce the pitch D).

This is a laudable and, indeed, extremely effective method for introducing today's performers to the principles of the Viennese tuning system. As Glöckler points out, the characteristic thirds tuning of the upper three strings (D-F[♯]-A) makes playing across the strings, with limited shifting of positions, the natural technique; this stands in stark contrast to modern practice with the all-fourths tuning, which, of necessity, employs frequent shifting. This adjusted-tuning concept has illustrious forebears; perhaps the most famous of these is the 1952 International edition of the Mozart concert aria for bass voice and double-bass obbligato *Per questa bella mano*, K612, which notates the solo double-bass part using an adjusted tuning of E¹-A¹-E-A. Still, as a performer who frequently uses the Viennese tuning, I have learned to read the musical text as it was originally presented, without the aid of an adapted modern technique. This has allowed me to understand the logic behind the tuning scheme and how that logic is reflected, in terms of the fingering patterns and the emphasis on resonance mentioned above, in both the solo and orchestral literature for the Viennese instrument.

Recognizing that there are those among us who might feel this way, Glöckler has provided a separate solo part (as a supplement to partbook 2) without the adjusted-fingering notation 'for specialists and musicians with practical experience in "Viennese tuning"', available only via the Henle website <www.henle.com>. This part is basically a transcription of the manuscript Schwerin *Contrabasso* part, and includes the orchestral bass line in the tutti sections and the original 8^{va} indications (discussed in greater detail below), as well as the editorial annotations also present in the printed partbooks.

The two piano reductions, when combined with the two partbooks and the downloadable solo part, thus allow for four distinct adaptations of the concerto: normal orchestral tuning in C major and modern solo tuning in D major (partbook 1 with the two versions of the piano reduction), and orchestral tuning in D major, plus the adjusted four-string Viennese tuning, also in D major (partbook 2 with the D major piano reduction). The various available versions are explicated in both partbooks as well as in the piano-reduction score through a table designated 'Double bass tunings and performance options'. Information on how to



obtain a conductor's score and orchestral performance parts – both available through the website of the co-producer, Breitkopf & Härtel – is also given in the Preface (viii).

Another characteristic feature of the Viennese solo double-bass tradition that is considered in this edition is the use of treble clef to notate much of the solo part. Such treble-clef passages are meant to indicate pitches that are to be played an octave below the written pitch. A good deal of this literature employs this notation, often as a way to highlight certain passages as soloistic; an excellent example from the same time and area would be the Mozart concert aria mentioned above.

In the manuscript *Contrabasso* part from the Schwerin set, the unknown copyist also uses the symbol 8^{va} , in addition to the treble clef, in certain solo sections. Other passages are simply notated in treble clef without the 8^{va} symbol; these latter sections are designated *loco*. Despite the contradictory nature of these terms, they are employed in this tradition to produce the same result: all treble-clef passages are performed sounding two octaves lower (that is, an octave lower than written, plus the assumed lower-octave transposition inherent in double-bass notation). The 8^{va} indications are essentially a convenience for the copyist, allowing the pitches to be notated on or near the staff, rather than having to employ a great many ledger lines. Glöckler includes the 8^{va} and *loco* indications in the piano reductions; indeed, the double-bass line in the piano-reduction score contains many of the elements of the Schwerin *Contrabasso* part, including the orchestral bass line in the tutti sections. However, he omits the bass line, as well as the *loco/8va* indications, from the accompanying partbooks. This is understandable, and perhaps desirable, since these features are somewhat foreign to the modern double-bass tradition. The octave-higher treble-clef notation in particular caused much confusion among scholars and performers alike in subsequent generations and can still be somewhat baffling to those unfamiliar with this practice. Removing the 8^{va} and *loco* indications from the partbooks allows the performer to render the notes in the proper register according to modern notational conventions.

Glöckler makes every effort to retain the essence of the articulation and phrasing indications in the Schwerin manuscript parts. In cases in which the written indication may be open to interpretation, he strives for the most 'sensible musical solution to be found based on context' (piano reduction, Preface, v). Any small deviations from what appears in the manuscript, and these are extremely infrequent, are indicated in parentheses wherever they occur. Similarly, there are a small number of original passages in the manuscript part that were altered at some point, presumably by a subsequent performer, perhaps Sperger himself. Obvious differences between these emendations and the original passages – such as an altered dotted rhythm in the first movement (solo part, bar 53 and the corresponding material at bar 124) – are indicated via footnotes in the piano reductions as well as in the partbooks. When additional explanations may be required, these footnotes refer the performer to the Comments section of the edition, in which any such textual discrepancies are fully clarified.

The Schwerin double-bass part also contains cadenzas by Sperger for all three movements. These are reproduced in the Appendix sections of both partbooks. Additionally, the editor has provided at the appropriate places in the partbooks themselves his own 'manageable cadenzas with virtuoso demands' (piano reduction, Preface, vi), as well as a stylistically appropriate *Eingang* in the second movement (bar 71). Glöckler has also supplied a very few *ossia* replacements for passages in the original *Contrabasso* part that he feels require 'modifications or simplifications'. Again, it appears that Glöckler's intent is to make this work as accessible to as many performers – modern players as well as period-instrument practitioners – as possible.

Two criticisms might be made, however, concerning Glöckler's handling of certain elements of the Viennese double-bass tradition. First, his editorial note in the piano-reduction score regarding the 8^{va} indications adds to the confusion concerning these passages: 'The solos written in treble clef sound two octaves lower if notated *loco*, or one octave lower if the 8^{va} sign is present' (piano reduction, 3). This formulation requires the performer to ignore the 8^{va} indications altogether. I believe it is less confusing for the present-day double bassist to think of the matter as I have described it above: all treble-clef indications are read one octave lower – and sound two octaves lower – than written (when the 8^{va} indications are observed). Removing the 8^{va} and *loco* indications from the partbooks fulfils Glöckler's formulation when these passages are executed according to modern notational practices; however, comparison of these sections



in the partbooks with the piano-reduction score might produce uncertainty as to the most appropriate interpretation.

Further, in the Preface the Viennese tuning is given as A–d–f \sharp –a; these are the written pitches that appear in the printed double-bass part. However, as indicated above, the actual sounding pitches are an octave lower. Further still, it seems well established that the double bass that was used in this solo tradition was a five-string instrument. Contemporary treatises, such as Johann Georg Albrechtsberger's *Gründliche Anweisung zur Composition* (Leipzig: Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf, 1790), attest to the five-string configuration. Musical sources also bear this out; the solo part of the Mozart concert aria mentioned above descends to a G \flat , which would have to be played on the fifth (F \flat) string. Thus the tuning for this instrument should be given as indicated above: F \flat –A \flat –D–F \sharp –A. This is a more historically authentic picture of the instrument for which the music was intended. While the five-string configuration is noted in the tuning diagram on the 'Viennese-tuning' solo part available on the Henle website, this information might elude performers working only from the printed edition; moreover, an accurate accounting of the true sounding range of this instrument might serve to clarify the somewhat confusing question of the treble-clef notation for novitiates of the Viennese tradition.

These are very minor objections to an edition that is extremely well thought out and assembled. Glöckler presents a wide range of performance options for the soloist that should render Wanhal's concerto, long a staple of the modern solo double-bass repertory, eminently accessible to all twenty-first-century performers who wish to engage with it.

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RECORDINGS

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JOHN ERNEST GALLIARD (1687–1749), JOHN FREDERICK LAMPE (1702/1703–1751), LUIGI MERCI (c1695–c1751)

THE BASSOON ABROAD: FOREIGN COMPOSERS IN BRITAIN

Ensemble Chameleon: Jennifer Harris (bassoon) / Ulrike Becker (cello) / Barbara Messmer (violone) / Andrea Baur (lute) / Evelyn Laib (harpsichord)

Carus 83.463, 2015: one disc, 69 minutes

At the core of this disc is an attractive collection of sonatas for bassoon and continuo that, although recorded before and well known to bassoonists, are unlikely to be familiar in more general circles. The two main featured composers both enjoyed the patronage of high-status individuals: John Ernest Galliard was a court musician to Prince George of Denmark, the consort of Queen Anne, and Louis Mercy was briefly in the service of James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon (later Duke of Chandos), who famously boasted both Handel and Pepusch among his musicians at Cannons in Middlesex.

Galliard, a native of Celle in Saxony who had studied in Hanover, was well established as a London theatre composer by the time John Walsh published his *Six Sonatas for the Bassoon or Violoncello with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord* in 1733. Mercy seems to have led a more precarious existence as a performer on the oboe and recorder, and the appearance of his *VI Sonate a Fagoto ò Violoncello col' Basso Continuo . . . Opera Terza* in about 1735 perhaps suggests that the Frenchman saw opportunity in a market already tried by Galliard. The language of Mercy's title page – and the Italianization of his name (followed in the liner notes to the present disc) – was of course not uncommon for English sonata publications, lending the publication