



the solo part up between the bassoon, cello and lute, with the full ensemble combining to support exciting *concitato* semiquavers; this is followed immediately by an *Alla Ciciliana* in which Harris's plaintive solo line is accompanied solely on the lute. If such variety cannot always be practicable in live performance, the group are nevertheless to be commended for so skilfully exhibiting the versatility of this music and maintaining such a high standard of ensemble playing in the process. Even against this background, furthermore, the emotional and tonal range of Harris's playing are impressive throughout.

The concise liner notes combine helpful context with a degree of autobiographical musing on the part of Harris as to the similarities between her situation as a British musician settled in Germany on the one hand, and on the other the situations of the many eighteenth-century expatriate composers who settled in London. Most intriguing, though, is a reference to the target market for the sonatas featured on the recording: 'the ordinary amateur bassoonist' (6). The reference to such a species in the early eighteenth century may seem surprising, for all that sonatas for other instruments – the recorder, violin, flute and (later) the cello – were clearly aimed at the amateur market. I for one would have been interested to read more about the likely performers of these works beyond professional wind players such as Lampe, Galliard and Mercy; where, for instance, did Galliard find enough players to mount his 'new Concerto Grosso of twenty-four Bassoons, accompanied by Signor Caporali on the Violoncello' in his Lincoln's Inn benefit concert on 11 December 1744 (*Daily Advertiser*, Wednesday 5 December, 1744)? This must have been quite a spectacle, and on the strength of Galliard's sonatas it may also have been of considerable musical interest (regrettably, the music does not survive). Be that as it may, the performance seems unlikely to have been of the standard of the disc under review here. I would recommend the latter heartily as a refreshing companion to the much more numerous recordings of similar music for violin, flute or oboe.

ALAN HOWARD

<adh29@cam.ac.uk>



*Eighteenth-Century Music* © Cambridge University Press, 2017  
doi:10.1017/S1478570616000439

JOHANN MICHAEL HAYDN (1737–1806)

*DER KAMPF DER BUßE UND BEKEHRUNG*

Sylvia Hamvasi, Elisabeth Scholl, Tünde Szabóki, Zita Váradi, Mária Zádori (soprano soloists) / Purcell Choir, Orfeo Orchestra / György Vashegyi  
Carus 83.351, 2014; one disc, 80 minutes

The music of Johann Michael Haydn (1737–1806) has long been overshadowed by that of his legendary older brother. Nevertheless, there has been an enduring interest in the younger Haydn's music, which has resulted in a considerable number of recordings. The Carus label has recently contributed to the collection of Michael Haydn's recorded works with the world-premiere recording of the oratorio *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung* (The Struggle of Repentance and Conversion), MH106. Under the direction of György Vashegyi, soprano soloists Sylvia Hamvasi, Elisabeth Scholl, Tünde Szabóki, Zita Váradi and Mária Zádori join the Purcell Choir and the Orfeo Orchestra to provide an inspired period performance of a little-known eighteenth-century sacred oratorio.

*Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung* was composed in 1768 for Sigismund von Schrattenbach (1698–1771), Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg. Schrattenbach commissioned this oratorio to spotlight the special talents of three new sopranos he had hired for his *Hofkapelle* while travelling through Italy. Much like *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebotes* (The Obligation of the First Commandment), a sacred drama composed by Anton Cajetan Adlgasser (1729–1777), Michael Haydn and the young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung* was a collaborative effort. The oratorio's text was written by Johann



Heinrich Drümel (1707–1770) and structured in three parts, each of which was set to music by a different composer: the first section was composed by Adlgasser, the second by Haydn and the third by choirmaster Johann David Westermayer (1733–1775). Only Michael Haydn's contribution, completed on 21 February 1768, survives.

Written for orchestra, five solo sopranos (two castratos and three female vocalists) and chorus, the portion of the oratorio composed by Haydn continues the story of a pious Christian (Christ), a Freethinker (Freigeist), a 'Worldly Man' (Weltmensch) and the allegorical characters Clemency (Gnade) and Justice (Gerechtigkeit). Following an instrumental introduction, the Christian (castrato; sung here by Scholl), the Worldly Man (Szabóki) and the Freethinker (castrato; Zádori) all present their views of the world. Although all three believe in God, only the Christian does so devoutly, as the other two have lost faith because the wicked prosper, while the pious founder, Justice (Váradí) confronts the Freethinker, insisting that he has lost his way because reasoned thought has led him astray. Clemency (Hamvasi) also dismisses reason as a seductress and urges the Freethinker to embrace piety, for it is the only means by which one can truly be protected from evil. Justice claims that it is not enough to be free from sin, as one must also engage in good deeds and be virtuous. The Christian warns the Freethinker and the Worldly Man of the Final Judgement. It is only now that these less pious individuals begin to think of their salvation. Indeed, at its heart *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung* is a philosophical contemplation on Christianity in the Age of Reason that articulates religion's ability to save even those with wavering faith.

Haydn's portion of *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung* includes nine movements, comprising an introduction, five arias, ten recitatives, an aria with chorus, a duet and one chorus. Although each soprano is featured in an aria, only a handful of movements contain truly memorable music. The Worldly Man's first aria is a particularly striking moment, given that the choir is first heard here. Clemency's only aria, 'Jesu, der den Tod besiegt' (Jesus, He Who Conquers Death), includes an impressive part for obbligato horn. The inclusion of a solo horn may have been specifically intended to enhance the virtuoso-like character of this movement, for the part of Clemency was composed for Haydn's future wife, the soprano Maria Magdalena Lipp (1745–1827). Therefore it seems hardly surprising that it is also Clemency, along with the Christian, who is featured in the only duet in the surviving section of *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung*. The more prevalent chromaticism in the middle of this movement is a change of pace, as the composer otherwise tended to place his more adventurous harmonic language in recitatives. Just prior to this duet is a series of recitatives for the Christian and the Freethinker, which contain what may be the oratorio's most dramatic music. In this portion of the work the Christian warns that death and destruction lie ahead. Haydn portrays this downfall through harmonic instability, extreme and quick changes in dynamics, and pulsating strings and brass, which convey a sense of doom. The Christian's proclamation of the End of Days is accompanied by an abrupt and harrowing solo trombone. A reflection of Haydn's preference for this instrument in his sacred music, the obbligato trombone returns in the oratorio's concluding aria, the Worldly Man's 'Ich komm mit wahrer Reue' (I Come in True Repentance), which dispels this ominous and distressing music, thus returning to stability both musically and spiritually. The final music of Haydn's section, a choral movement, reassures the audience that Jesus is a shepherd who shall not allow any of his sheep to go astray; all will remain devout Christians. Such a message would undoubtedly have had resonance in an ecclesiastical territory of the Holy Roman Empire during the Enlightenment.

Under the direction of György Vashegyi, the Orfeo Orchestra's delicate yet energetic presentation of the introduction is the first of many excellent performances included in this recording. Vashegyi used the composer Levente Gyöngyösi's first edition of the oratorio, which was based on Haydn's autograph manuscript, found in Budapest's National Széchényi Library. Perhaps one of the most noteworthy moments is the Worldly Man's *aria con coro* 'Uns erhalte, uns regiere' (Sustain Us, Rule Us), as Szabóki is joined here by the Purcell Choir. Equally impressive are 'Jesu, der den Tod besiegt' and 'Ich komm mit wahrer Reue', the arias including obbligato horn and trombone, which display the mastery of both vocalists and instrumentalists. The performance of the oratorio on period instruments is an especially welcome aspect of this work's premiere recording. It is evident that Vashegyi's efforts to display the abilities and finesse of the



musicians under his baton are well supported by the recording engineers, who have admirably captured this fine performance.

Carus has packaged the CD in an attractive case, which aptly displays Pierre Subleyras's (1699–1749) *Justice* as its cover art. The CD booklet consists of an ample twenty-seven pages and includes all of the information one would expect. Indeed, Zsombor Németh's liner notes provide an accessible historical and musical context for *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung*, biographies of the performers who took part in the project and the libretto presented in German and English translation. In addition to distributing the CD to traditional retailers, Carus has also made this recording available for download through many of the larger online outlets for digital media. One can also find the recording on internet streaming services. Yet it is important to note that while the recording is generally cheaper to download than to purchase in hard copy, it appears that digital copies do not include an electronic version of the liner notes.

Despite a strong performance, there is nothing truly exceptional to be found in Haydn's *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung*. But that is fine with me. I would rather encounter a work previously unknown to me by Michael Haydn than yet another CD featuring the works of his older brother or younger Salzburg contemporary. And there is something inherently exciting in a world-premiere recording, as audiences are able to engage with a piece of music that might not have been performed for hundreds of years. But it is not simply about the novelty of hearing again long-forgotten sounds. The long and laborious journey from archive to concert hall makes accessible the inaccessible – perhaps now more than ever, as digital downloads and mobile listening make music easier to access and enjoy. Indeed, this recording of *Der Kampf der Buße und Bekehrung*, and by extension other premiere recordings, is a worthwhile collaborative effort between music scholars and performers as well as an important medium through which we can deepen our understanding of eighteenth-century culture. For instance, the text's message raises questions about the ways in which the clergy responded to the rise of the Enlightenment, as the story invites one to doubt rational thought and supplant trust in the individual with faith in God. In part, Haydn's oratorio illustrates that a venerable institution losing influence invested in music in an attempt to maintain and project its authority. Although Michael Haydn's music may not define the era, it none the less embodies significant aspects of the period in which it was created. In this recording, György Vashegyi, the soprano soloists, the Purcell Choir and the Orfeo Orchestra do both composer and composition justice.

AUSTIN GLATTHORN

[<a.glatthorn@dal.ca>](mailto:a.glatthorn@dal.ca)

