



performance through the emergence of the work concept and the hero-composer and into the era of increasingly mobile and manipulable technologies of musical recreation. Moseley's emphasis on play does much to nuance and open up this narrative. At the same time, the consequences of this historiographic 'return of the repressed' (to cite Freud's definition of the term ('Das Unheimliche', *Imago* 5 (1919), 297–324)) demand further scrutiny. Indeed, this speaks to a broader methodological paradox with which scholars building on Moseley's work will have to contend: that of building an explicitly anti-canonical, heterodox methodology around a framework of sources that are often well situated within the musicological canon.

If at times it may seem to evoke some well-known historiographical tropes, Moseley's approach also offers novel and productive means for the historian to account for transhistorical epistemological connections without losing sight of the historical specificity of individual artefacts. Indeed, it is a great strength of his methodology that the eighteenth century functions neither as a point of origin nor as an untimely precursor of more recent technological developments: rather, it furnishes a set of practices whose material remnants persist even today. And while Moseley's text presents real challenges in asking its reader to be willing to move rapidly and sometimes unpredictably – indeed, exhaustingly playfully – between multiple discourses and modes of analysis, these challenges are, for this player, amply rewarded.

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GIUSEPPE SIGISMONDO (1739–1826), ED. CLAUDIO BACCIAGALUPPI, GIULIA GIOVANI AND RAFFAELE MELLACE, TRANS. BEATRICE SCALDINI

APOTHEOSIS OF MUSIC IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES

Rome: Società Editrice di Musicologia, 2016

pp. lxxviii + 346, ISBN 978 8 894 15046 9

Propelling the present wave of academic interest in eighteenth-century Neapolitan musical practices have been the concerns of music theory – the partimento tradition in particular has offered unique insights into historical compositional technique, with implications for modern analysis and pedagogy. Somewhat less attention has thus far been devoted to the social and cultural circumstances of the four Neapolitan conservatories and to the biographies and oeuvres of the *maestri* who emerged from them (at least in anglophone scholarship). One of the most important sources that provides a perspective on these matters is without doubt the *Apotheosis of Music in the Kingdom of Naples* (*Apoteosi della musica del Regno di Napoli*), by the lawyer, archivist and 'famous amateur' (vii) Giuseppe Sigismondo (1739–1826). Compiled in 1820–1821 but never completed or published in its entirety, Sigismondo's *Apotheosis* has existed until now only as a manuscript in four tomes, housed today in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (D-B, under the shelf mark Mus. ms. autogr. theor. Sigismondo). 'I declare [myself] to be a simple amateur', writes Sigismondo in his introduction to tome I, albeit one with 'an invincible, almost innate passion, cultivated since my most tender years' (3). Though he was an accomplished performer, composer and teacher, Sigismondo did not set out to write a theoretical work:

I shall hardly touch upon the precepts of the art, neither on the laws of harmony, nor fugues, nor canons, nor double counterpoint or the *cantus firmus*, etc., but I shall dedicate myself entirely to the history of music of the past three centuries as taught in *conservatori*, as performed in churches, and as it was introduced and has evolved within our theatres (3).



The *Apotheosis* amounts to a rich, eclectic combination of Sigismondo's own autobiography (tome I), a history of the Neapolitan conservatories and public musical archive (tome II), a brief account of the early seventeenth-century origins of opera in Italy and, finally, a series of short biographies (so-called eulogies) of famous composers, nearly all of whom studied or worked in Naples (tomes III and IV).

Claudio Bacciagaluppi, Giulia Giovani and Raffaele Mellace have created an outstanding edition of Sigismondo's magnum opus. The *Apotheosis* has already served as the principal source for various nineteenth-century publications, including the *Memorie dei compositori di musica del regno di Napoli* by the Marquis di Villarosa (Naples: Dalla Stamperia, 1840), as well as numerous recent studies by Italian musicologists (outlined on pages xi–xiii). In this accessible new form, Sigismondo's work will undoubtedly receive additional scrutiny from scholars in various disciplines. The edition is available in Italian and English versions in both digital and print formats: the Italian version may be purchased for €25 digitally and €40 in print, and the English and Italian volumes are sold together for €40 digitally and €60 in print (it is not possible to purchase the English version alone). Sigismondo's idiosyncratic narrative habits are not always up to modern historiographical standards, but Bacciagaluppi, Giovani and Mellace address this with conscientious editorial work. Detailed footnotes correct errors or lacunae in Sigismondo's accounts, draw attention to additions and corrections by Franz Kandler and Aloys Fuchs (two of the manuscript's previous owners), and provide explanations for Sigismondo's more obscure allusions. When specific musical works are mentioned, the editors provide references to the corresponding scores in Sigismondo's own collection, citing two historical catalogues (an 1801 *Indice* and an 1826 *Elenco*) as well as reference numbers in the library of the Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella (I-Nc) or in other modern libraries. Original page numbers are included in brackets, and the use of obsolete musical terminology has also been preserved (such as the designation of the key of A major as 'Alamire' and A minor as 'Ab3'). Typographical errors in the edition are rare, but not altogether absent. The books make a beautiful impression, with the cover of the English edition featuring a late eighteenth-century nocturnal view of Naples and Vesuvius painted by Joseph Wright of Derby. The editors' Introduction provides an overview of Sigismondo's life and work, as well as the editorial criteria and thorough codicological descriptions of Sigismondo's manuscripts. An illuminating introductory essay by Rosa Cafiero examines the genesis of the *Apotheosis* and sheds light on planned eulogies for Niccolò Jommelli and Saverio Mattei that Sigismondo described in his correspondence with Kandler but apparently never completed (xlix). Two appendices contain sources which Sigismondo consulted and copied in the fourth tome of his manuscript: Giovanni De Silva's *Elogio di Pasquale Cafaro maestro di cappella napoletano* (1788), and an excerpt from the first volume of Jean-Claude Richard de Saint-Non's *Voyage pittoresque ou description des royaumes de Naples et de Sicile* (Paris: Clousier, 1781). An extensive bibliography and separate indices for individuals and for places in Naples (including churches, the conservatories and various musical venues) serve as additional aids.

What did it mean to be 'one of the foremost amateurs in the art of harmony' (to quote Giovanni Battista Gennaro Grossi, xxvi) in the musical capital of eighteenth-century Europe? In fact, Sigismondo's education and abilities would have been regarded as enviable even among many professionals (both in his time and ours). He began music lessons around the age of five with Giuseppe Geremia, a student of Francesco Durante, who was then *primo maestro* of the Conservatorio di Santa Maria di Loreto. Like his more humbly born counterparts at the conservatories, Sigismondo began with solfeggi before progressing (under various teachers) to harpsichord and organ playing, the partimenti of Gaetano Greco and others, 'the first rudiments of counterpoint' (7) and the study of scores by composers such as Carlo Cotumacci. Sigismondo's specific descriptions of the lessons he received serve as rare and valuable written testimony of the Neapolitan conservatories' predominately oral teaching traditions. By the time he was a teenager, Sigismondo was able to sing difficult arias at sight and was a capable keyboard player, accompanying singers (including himself) both from fully written-out music and from a figured bass. He enjoyed personal friendships with many of the greatest composers of the age, alongside whom he frequently performed in private concerts. When he was about twenty-one years old, he directed a performance of his own *Cantata del Santo Natale di Gesù* in an Advent concert at the Congregazione dell'Assunta. In the audience was the great composer (and teacher of



Joseph Haydn) Nicola Porpora, who was so impressed with the work that he took Sigismondo as a student, enabling him 'to make great progress in the art of music' and resulting in his being 'completely transformed' (25). Over the years Sigismondo taught dozens of his own students (mostly female amateur singers), and in addition to his legal and musical activities was a professional actor. He wrote comedies and librettos, numerous collections of solfeggi for his students and the three-volume *Descrizione della città di Napoli* (Naples: Terres, 1788–1789), a historical and architectural guide to his beloved hometown.

Sigismondo's accounts of the history and organization of the four Neapolitan conservatories will be of particular interest to many readers, as they shed unique light on the traditions that produced many of the finest composers of the eighteenth century. By Sigismondo's assessment in 1820, these glory days had already ended: one of his core objectives in the *Apotheosis* is to 'demonstrate with highly evident proof that we have entered into the century of [theatrical music's] decline' (2). He attributes the 'present decadence and ruin of this most noble and divine musical art' (82) to numerous changes in the infrastructure of the Neapolitan conservatory model that occurred around the turn of the nineteenth century. What were once four independent institutions had by 1807 been reduced to a single Musicale Liceo (also known as the Real Collegio di Musica), destroying the element of competition between schools that once drove students and *maestri* alike. Among the early attempted remedies for the city's musical decline was the establishment of a public musical archive in 1795, in order to encourage 'the young apprentices [to] consult the scores and manuscripts present in it and profit from the examples of the most famous masters' (66). An avid music collector who had amassed an extensive personal library throughout his life, Sigismondo was the ideal authority to oversee the creation of a canon of Neapolitan 'classical music' (5). He donated his collection – comprising theoretical works as well as theatrical, sacred and instrumental scores – and was named official archivist.

A view of the eponymous, pre-'decadence' apotheosis of Neapolitan music is presented in the eulogies of tomes III and IV, which consist of short biographies, personal anecdotes and lists of works by the composers in question. Tome III contains the eulogies of Orazio Vecchi (the only one included who did not study or work in Naples), Tommaso Carapella, Egidio Duni, Leonardo Vinci, Giambattista Pergolesi, Nicola Porpora and Domenico Cimarosa; tome IV contains those of Francesco Mancini, Pasquale Cafaro, Antonio Sacchini, Leonardo Leo, Francesco Durante, Tommaso Traetta, Nicola Sala and Nicola Piccinni. Sigismondo's anecdotes are often as colourful and entertaining as they are informative, and here as elsewhere, the editors' meticulously researched footnotes provide helpful corrections and clarifications. Because most students entered the conservatories of Naples as orphans, many of these biographies follow a kind of 'rags to riches' narrative. 'To be born high is due to fate and not virtue', Sigismondo remarks in one eulogy, 'and our Sacchini was born in darkness, yet he died most radiant' (238). The fatherless Cimarosa, we are told, was taken in by a friar who became impressed with his abilities as a singer. After studies at the Loreto conservatory, he built a tremendously successful operatic career and became a favourite guest of the Polish king Stanisław Poniatowski. In an episode resembling the story of Haydn's 'Farewell' Symphony, after the king repeatedly 'beg[ged] him to remain a few more days' (215) and ultimately retained him in Warsaw for an entire month, Cimarosa improvised an aria on a text he had written about his longing to leave, accompanying himself at the pianoforte. When asked for an encore, he improvised entirely new music for the same text, and the delighted king agreed at last to send him on his way.

Sigismondo was as deeply versed in contemporary musical life as anyone of his era, and his opinions on music history and aesthetics are always enlightening. He claims that Durante 'was lacking in inventiveness' (174) and 'was never recognized as a master of genius' (184), but admits that when listening to his fugues 'one finds oneself immersed in an ocean of pleasure' (260). Durante's rival Leo, on the other hand, was 'one of the most sublime geniuses in music, and the foremost amongst the Neapolitan masters of his time' (245). In particular, Sigismondo 'was drawn to the music of Jommelli above all other masters' (39). It should be noted that Sigismondo's aim to create a 'glorified depiction of the history of Neapolitan music' (to quote the editors, x) does not prevent him from speaking favourably of 'the sublime *maestro* Händel' (188), 'master of masters, the immortal Haydn' (71), 'the italianised German and learned *maestro* Christoph Gluck' (283) and other



composers from across the Alps. Sigismondo prioritizes aesthetic concerns above all else, taking interest in music ‘from every century and from each of the most cultivated nations’ (87).

For those who wish better to understand musical life in eighteenth-century Naples and its celebrated conservatories, the *Apotheosis* offers a unique account in vivid detail. Kandler referred to Sigismondo as ‘a mine of knowledge in the whole domain of theoretical and practical music, as well as in musical literature’ (xliv). With this splendid new edition of Sigismondo’s work, we can begin to unearth a trove of important insights into the golden age of the ‘Kingdom of Naples, in which music holds its true empire’ (294).

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ANDREW TALLE

BEYOND BACH: MUSIC AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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In her famous 1987 essay ‘The Blasphemy of Talking Politics During Bach Year’, Susan McClary recalls how she ‘was told outright by prominent Bach scholars that Bach . . . had *nothing* to do with his time or place, that he was “divinely inspired,” that his music works in accordance with perfect, universal order and truth’ (in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception*, ed. Richard Leppert and Susan McClary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 14). Over thirty years later, the direction of Bach scholarship seems to have largely moved away from this lofty image towards situating the composer more in his social, theological, institutional, political, cultural and musical contexts. In *Beyond Bach*, Andrew Talle has made a further important contribution to bringing Bach (in his own words) ‘back down to Earth’ (2).

Talle’s approach to studying ‘the musical lives of ordinary people’ (2) is informed by the disciplines of historical anthropology and *Alltagsgeschichte* (history of everyday life). His book is a multi-faceted social and cultural history of keyboard playing in eighteenth-century Germany, a work whose nuance is hinted at by the beautiful image on the book jacket’s front cover. Talle investigates the role keyboard instruments played in ordinary people’s lives as cultural capital through which they could pursue self-fashioning, courtship, social networking and, last but not least, careers as professional musicians. He presents a series of individual case studies, portraying female amateur musicians and male amateur and professional musicians from a variety of social backgrounds. The wealth of Talle’s material extends far beyond music: one gains, among other things, many valuable if occasionally uncomfortable insights into themes such as the oppression of women, strategies of courtship, and sexual violence (as well as the demonization of homosexuality) in boarding schools and student culture in 1740s Jena.

One of the merits of this book is that most of Talle’s fascinating sources are made available here for the first time in English translation. Most of his sources can be classified as ‘egodocuments’, such as letters, diaries, autobiographies and expenditure lists. His narrative approach mirrors his research objective and the nature of his sources. Talle clearly takes delight in telling stories instead of framing them with theoretical reflections. Accordingly, chapter beginnings occasionally resemble the tone of historical novels. While his approach emphasizes accessibility, Talle does not get carried away by literary fancy, but supports his narratives by archival evidence and ample data.

In chapter 1, ‘Civilizing Instruments’, Talle provides a broad overview of cultural currents from early to mid-eighteenth-century Germany, establishing a useful framework for his case studies. The first section of this chapter is concerned with the meaning of the word ‘galant’ in the context of the affluent German