



none). And the Vienna copying house was preparing scores for other centres, which adapted them to their own circumstances, for that particular season.

Eventually, after Mozart's death, came moves to rationalize the textual situation in the Breitkopf und Härtel full score of 1801 (136–140), apt for an age developing its belief in *Werktreue*: an object for Lydia Goehr's 'imaginary museum' rather than a resource for the theatre, and a brake on further evolution of the hybrid versions flourishing in the 1790s. Printed texts enshrine a work into versions we recognize today as 'Prague' and 'Vienna' *tout court*. The *Neue Mozart Ausgabe* score (1968) relegates the two wonderful arias and the *buffo* duet written for Vienna to the appendix, suggesting that only one version has true authenticity. Its much later *Kritische Bericht* (2003) presents a modified statement about sources – one that, of course, Woodfield modifies still further. The inescapable implication is that the concept of a complete and authentic edition is or ought to be doomed. It does not quite follow, however, that all the hard work was in vain, or that the *Gesamtausgabe* should be considered an aberration. There is a market for printed scores, and purchasers of masterpieces want a stout binding, not a pile of manuscript fascicles such as was prepared for the theatres. These Woodfield aptly compares to a pack of cards, ready to be reshuffled to suit the circumstances of a particular place in a particular season. Perhaps in future electronic scores may be produced that users can shuffle around; but for print there was no alternative to making an ordered selection.

Even Mozart's most extensive alterations, to *Idomeneo* in 1786, do not amount to a new concept: the plot is unchanged and the main effect is on nuances of characterization – also affected by different singers' approaches to identical texts. Some versions of *Don Giovanni* acted in the composer's and librettist's lifetimes were outside their control (most obviously the singspiel versions), and knowledge of these richly informs reception history. Probably undertaken with no intention to slight the original, they document what seemed theatrically presentable in an irrecoverable time and place; this does not afford them status as a template for later interpretations. The modern theatre is not the eighteenth-century theatre; layers of meaning have accumulated that require access to a text we can ascribe to definite, even if multiple, authorship. We may like to imagine 'out there, somewhere, ontologically, is the "real" *Don Giovanni* ... enshrined mostly in Mozart's score and the printed libretto'; versions traceable to Mozart have 'privileged status, in relation to which all performances and all other kinds of interpretations are secondary or subsidiary' (Richard Will, 'In Search of Authentic Mozart', *News of the National Humanities Center*, Fall/Winter 2010, 1; <<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/newsletter2010/nhcnewswinter2011.pdf>> (4 July 2011)). This is surely right, but following Edge, Tyson and others, Woodfield makes tellingly clear the pertinence of that 'mostly'; and he points to the irony of performances today going 'authentic' just as 'the academy' is beginning to take a more flexible view of such texts. We are indebted to him for presenting the ingredients that make up the early forms of *Don Giovanni* but we should not regard it as intrinsically wrong to adopt a version of nearly identifiable authorship rather than remixing the *Don Giovanni* soup for every modern production; we can safely leave that to the stage director.

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## EDITIONS

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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827), ED. JON CEANDER MITCHELL

PIANO CONCERTO IN E FLAT MAJOR WoO 4

Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era 80

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This edition presents a new reconstruction of Beethoven's early unnumbered Concerto in E flat major, generally referred to as WoO 4, the only source of which is a manuscript copy in an unknown hand but



with annotations by Beethoven himself. This copy remained in the composer's possession until his death, after which it eventually ended up in Berlin. The manuscript states that Beethoven composed the work at the age of twelve, which would suggest a probable date of 1783 (since he was born in December 1770). However, his age was often reduced by a year in early documents (not usually two years as stated in this edition; for example, he was described as aged six rather than seven at his first public appearance in March 1778). Thus the most likely date for the concerto is 1784. Unfortunately, the source consists of just a keyboard reduction, with occasional annotations indicating orchestration in the tutti passages. These annotations presumably represent real orchestral parts rather than mere intentions, but in order to perform the work with orchestra much reconstruction (or construction) needs to be accomplished editorially.

The only previously published reconstruction is one by Willy Hess, which has been reprinted several times, and nearly all recordings use this version, occasionally with modifications. It is unsatisfactory in many ways, however, most of which are duly noted here by Jon Mitchell, and he has therefore attempted to supply a better reconstruction. This was recorded in 2004 (Centaur CRC 2725), long before being released in print. Meanwhile other new versions have started appearing in recordings, though not in print: a 2009 recording by Ronald Brautigam and Andrew Parrott (BIS SACD-1792), not mentioned by Mitchell, uses Brautigam's own reconstruction, while Howard Shelley has also made a version for his forthcoming recording by Chandos.

The manuscript indicates the presence of flutes, horns and strings in the orchestra, and Mitchell's edition, unlike Hess's, justifiably adds bassoons. The crucial test, however, lies in the orchestration and how the instruments are used. Mitchell's approach is promising: 'Every attempt has been made to create a realization having thematic structure and orchestration technique that are consistent with Beethoven's approach' (89). The horn parts are confined almost entirely to notes in the harmonic series, like Beethoven's early orchestral horn parts and in contrast to Hess's (which use several abnormal notes), while the flutes keep within the range of classical flute parts. Where the orchestral parts are 'not based directly' on the source, small notes are used, though the distinction between direct and indirect adaptation is not made clear. The principle appears to be that any motivic elements introduced into the orchestral parts are shown in small notes, whereas plain harmony notes, even if spaced differently from the indications in the source, are full-sized.

Potentially, therefore, this edition has much to commend it. Unfortunately, the realization of the aims is at times seriously faulty, and the score really needed a few more pairs of critical eyes to propose changes before it appeared in print. Where the piano part just has florid figuration, there is every reason to add motivic interest in the orchestral accompaniment, as in Beethoven's other concertos, and Mitchell has duly done this. Sometimes his additions work well, as in bars 159–161 of the first movement, where he inserts the opening theme into the violins in a C minor passage. Often, however, the details are flawed, with unsatisfactory part-writing or uncharacteristic sonorities. In the next two bars (162–163) the borrowed melody is transferred to a horn (which seems unsuitable in a minor key), improbably doubled at the unison by violas. This is followed by incorrect parallel octaves between violins and bass (bars 163–164) and unpleasant doubled leading notes – a fault that appears several times elsewhere (see, for example, *i/103*, *iii/250*). There is another charming but unidiomatic horn solo, in C minor, at bar 128 of the third movement, and the horns also cause other problems. The second horn is uncharacteristically agile (for an eighteenth-century orchestral work by Beethoven) as early as bar 9; and although Mitchell is probably right to include horns in the slow movement (where Hess omits them), his introduction of the first horn in bar 6 on a high written A, marked *piano*, seems completely inappropriate, since Beethoven rarely used this note in orchestral horn writing, and normally only in loud passages.

Some of Mitchell's other motivic insertions may also raise eyebrows. In the third movement, at bars 107–108, the second subject from the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 135 is introduced, perhaps unintentionally. For bar 115 of the first movement, Mitchell states: 'Beethoven's closing theme is introduced; it belongs here' (viii). But it does not fit at all well when transferred from bars 131–132, since the harmony is different, creating an awkward disjunction at bars 116–117, an unlikely dominant ninth



at bar 118 and an upward-resolving dominant seventh. Another misfit occurs in bars 37–40 of the third movement. Here a motive is taken from much later in the movement and unconvincingly modified to fit the harmonic outline of the solo part. It would have been far more logical to borrow a theme from the solo part in the bars that immediately follow (41–44), since the harmonic outline is identical. Moreover, Beethoven himself adopts a similar procedure in bars 53–61, where a four-bar phrase is played first by the orchestra and then by the soloist.

An even worse effect occurs at bar 96. Beethoven's keyboard figuration indicates a  $\frac{7}{4}$  chord over a B $\flat$  pedal, and this chord is duly reinforced orchestrally in Hess's version. Mitchell, however, places an E $\flat$  then an F beneath it, giving totally uncharacteristic  $\frac{6}{4}$  and  $\frac{7}{4}$  chords. Several other discords are incorrectly resolved (for example, i/181–182, 230–231). The devil, then, is in the detail. An edition of this kind needs to ensure that every note is carefully thought out and makes perfect sense harmonically, melodically and orchestrally – which is extremely difficult to accomplish. One cannot but admire the way major composers and even many lesser ones seem to achieve it so effortlessly. Here, however, too much of the orchestral writing is questionable, rather uncharacteristic, or simply faulty, even though most of it is adequate enough.

The score is also cluttered with unsuitable editorial additions in the orchestra. These include dynamics, which are said to be 'occasionally' modified but are actually altered or amplified rather often, with several appearances of *mf* and *mp*, which Beethoven almost never used. There are also spurious added slurs, often inappropriate (such as in i/261 and ii/8–11), and even anachronistic upbow and downbow markings. These features combine to give the appearance of an edition more typical of 1910 than 2010.

The solo part offers few difficulties by comparison, and Mitchell has presented a complete transcription, including the tutti sections (unlike Hess). Their inclusion has the double advantage of allowing readers to see precisely what has been adapted for orchestra, and also to make use of keyboard doubling in the tutti sections, as was apparently the norm in eighteenth-century performances, which were directed from the keyboard with at least basso-continuo reinforcement in the tutti passages. The source contains some deleted material in each movement, and these passages have been transcribed in appendices. In several places minor errors in Hess's version have been unobtrusively corrected. The transcriptions are not wholly accurate, however. Several staccato marks have been overlooked (for example, i/9–10 and 110), and a few pitches have been misread (in ii/66, two G $\flat$ s have been rendered as G $\natural$ s); even the title page is incorrectly transcribed. Most of the errors in the manuscript have been corrected, but a few have been misunderstood. This applies particularly to iii/62–66 and 139–142: here Beethoven evidently used two separate leger lines when writing B $\flat$  and C together just below a treble staff, with the result that the original copyist read the B $\flat$ s as Gs (Beethoven's intentions are made clear by a deleted passage where he used the bass clef for a similar chord). Mitchell saw that the Gs must be wrong, but he has substituted Fs or As instead of B $\flat$ s.

The editorial designation of this work as a 'piano concerto' is slightly misleading, since the original title page indicates 'pour le Clavecin ou Forte-piano'. There are occasional crescendos that would be difficult to execute effectively on a harpsichord, as Mitchell points out; thus a piano seems likely as Beethoven's first choice (a clavichord would probably be barely audible). On the other hand, there are a few places where intertwining of the hands might imply two manuals and therefore a harpsichord (i/106, 149).

The editorial introduction discusses the source, the differences between Hess's edition and this one, the forms of the three movements, previous recordings and certain issues of performance practice. A concluding Critical Report indicates editorial methods and policies, though less rigorously than might be desired. It also identifies the bars from which borrowed material has been adapted editorially in the orchestral parts and lists the places where textual errors have been corrected, with some extensive commentary and explanation. Thus the edition possesses all the scholarly apparatus that one might expect in this series, with only minor errors. The musical text, however, leaves much to be desired.

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