



in Bach's works. But although Schulenberg takes a negative view of much that has been written in explanation of Emanuel Bach's eccentric style, the contribution that *The Music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach* makes is a positive one. Avoidance of any overt interpretative system has allowed Schulenberg to focus intensely on Bach's music itself and to view the development of Bach's style as a response to the circumstances of his musical career – the revision of many works during the 1740s, for example, as an effort to attain the Italianate style of the musical establishment of Frederick the Great. The book is an essential addition to the literature. Its value lies not only in the abundance of information about Bach's works that it contains, but in its generous description of the compositional choices available during his lifetime.

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EDITIONS

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EMANUEL ALOYS FÖRSTER (1748–1823), ED. NANCY NOVEMBER
SIX STRING QUARTETS, OP. 7
Middleton: A-R Editions, 2016
pp. xv + 256, ISBN 978 0 89579 826 8

When he was the Crown Prince of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm II attempted to lure the Italian cellist and composer Luigi Boccherini away from his position in Spain. Three years later, in 1786, when Friedrich was crowned king, he placed Boccherini on the payroll. Boccherini was one of many notable composers to dedicate works to the new king. In 1787 Ignaz Pleyel wrote twelve 'Prussian' quartets (B331–333, B334–336, B337–339, B340–342) and Haydn dedicated his Op. 50 set to Friedrich. Later that year, Mozart was commissioned to write his Prussian quartets, Nos 21–23 (K575, K589, K590). Nearly a decade after that, Beethoven travelled to Berlin, where he dedicated his Op. 5 cello sonatas to Friedrich, and most likely played in their premiere performance with the brother of Friedrich's cello instructor, Jean-Louis Duport. Friedrich Wilhelm's ascension to the throne as King of Prussia thus ushered in an incredibly rich period in the history of music.

One of the king's beneficiaries was the Austrian composer and teacher Emanuel Aloys Förster. Known especially for chamber music, he dedicated a set of six quartets to Friedrich Wilhelm II in 1793. Published a year later, Förster's Op. 7 has until recently lacked a modern critical edition. But under the skilful eye of Nancy November, Op. 7 shines in its new edition, published in the series *Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*.

November argues that Förster's work should take a new place in the history of this period. Without a proper understanding of Förster's works, our grasp of the string quartet and the classical style as a whole is hampered. November details the implicit connections between Förster's and Haydn's quartets, and describes the close personal relationship between Förster and Beethoven. She notes the downside of this closeness, however, as Beethoven's status has led critics to write about Förster solely in terms of his better-known contemporary. Indeed, this is a problem to which November herself occasionally succumbs. In her introductory note, for example, she presents a gloss of Förster's life up to and including his contact with Beethoven; after this point, however, November's biographical sketch gives way to a survey of Förster's compositional output and neglects even to mention the date of Förster's death in 1823 (see 'The Composer



in Context', ix–x). The *New Grove* entry on Förster similarly highlights Beethoven's importance: 'Förster was an important link between the mature styles of Mozart and Haydn and the early works of Beethoven, and his experiments with form and tonality helped to underscore the equilibrium of the High Classic style' (Rey M. Longyear, 'Förster, Emanuel Aloys', revised by Michael Lorenz, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), volume 9, 104–105).

In the next two sections of her introductory essay, 'The Music of the Edition' (x–xiii) and 'Notes on Performance' (xiii–xv), November presents some of the notable features of Förster's music. While the 'experiments with form and tonality' noted above do play a role in her discussion, the most detailed analysis is devoted to more performative aspects of the music. For example, she notes that the prominence of the cello parts befits the status of their dedicatee's role as a cellist, and points out specific idiosyncratic choices for strings, including registral and timbral oddities. In this case, she traces a family line of influence back to Haydn's Opp. 64, 71 and 74, the latter of which was written in the same year as Förster's Op. 7.

November should be commended for emphasizing these unusual elements of Förster's music. However, she misses opportunities to discuss other, more characteristic aspects of Förster's style. Multiple times in her introductory essay, November mentions Förster's 'interesting modulations' without elaborating further. Surely the utterly experimental nature of Förster's tonal practice merits more discussion. The composer's expansive expositions unfold in leisurely fashion, and he often buries a tonal surprise within the new key area. See, for example, the first movement of the second quartet (F major), in which Förster seems to allude to the new key, C major, without ever clearly establishing it. After the transition touches on the relative minor (D minor), C major appears after the medial caesura (V: HC MC, in bar 29). Subsequently, the secondary theme appears in the middle voices, and then it eventually gives way to a three-bar-long prolongation of C major (is this the tonic key? the dominant of the subdominant?) before culminating in an F major chord (bar 45); soon thereafter, this chord is contextualized as the local subdominant, thereby launching a IV–V–I progression (in bars 45–48). Such an experimental tonal process, whether Förster's intention was humorous or otherwise, gives the lie to the perceived rigidity of the classical period.

One might also note Förster's playful approach to the new key in the expositions of his first and third quartets. For example, the exposition of the third quartet includes an almost shocking appearance of a \flat VI chord: about two thirds through the exposition proper, and squarely within the new key area, Förster uses a common-tone modulation to shift from the new key (A major) into \flat VI (F major). There is no subtlety to this gambit: Förster uses extremes in range and dynamics to highlight the modulation, and after three bars this mirage vanishes back into a dominant prolongation, as the new key and exposition come in for a smooth landing.

The first quartet offers a similar tonal device in its first movement. Instead of temporarily derailing the new key, now a \flat VI chord enhances its entrance: see the probable medial caesura in bar 25, the failure of a 'proper' secondary theme in the following bars, and then the \flat VI chord in bars 38–42. This entire sequence intensifies the meandering search for the new key – an approach that is not atypical of Förster's expositions. Förster's reliance on thirds-related harmonies as a prolongational device broadly anticipates the evolution of similar compositional techniques in Beethoven and Schubert, and surely deserves more than to be damned with the faint praise of 'interesting'.

Despite the few omissions detailed here, Nancy November's edition is a model for other similar efforts. Her careful attention to editorial principles is laid out explicitly, but she is not afraid also to assign agency to the performer. The writing itself is lucid, and even colourful, as when she writes that 'sixteenth-note runs in each instrument – played in turn and in tandem – surge upward through the quartet texture' (xii). On the opposite side of the ledger, one might wish for a biographical note with more substance or the presence of footnotes instead of endnotes, but these are minor concerns. On the whole, November's edition provides helpful insight into music that influenced, and was influenced by, some of the



best-known masters of music in this genre. With it, our knowledge of this genre, period and style is greatly improved.

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NICOLA PORPORA (1686–1768), ED. KURT MARKSTROM
VESPERS FOR THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION: A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE 1744 SERVICE AT THE OSPEDALETTO IN VENICE
Collegium Musicum Yale University, Second Series, Volume 21
Middleton: A-R Editions, 2015
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In the diaries of travellers visiting the Italian peninsula between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there may often be found enthusiastic accounts of musical entertainment that the city of Venice offered at its four main *ospedali*: the famous Pietà, the Mendicanti, the Incurabili and the Derelitti. Neither monasteries nor pure music schools, these hospitals were certainly among the most important and dynamic institutions of the lagoon city. They were places set up for orphaned or destitute girls who were offered an education as well as musical training. To provide a music education for these girls, the so-called *putte*, these charitable institutions employed such renowned musicians as Vivaldi, Hasse, Galuppi, Traetta and Sacchini, among others. Music was in fact an essential element in enlivening daily liturgical services. Liturgies and religious feasts were the ‘feather in the cap’ of the performing and recreational activities within the hospitals, occasions on which the girls could demonstrate their vocal and instrumental skills.

Santa Maria dei Poveri Derelitti, popularly known as the Ospedaletto, was founded in 1528 at the monastery of Santi Giovanni e Paolo. In 1743 the institute was looking for a worthy successor to the opera composer Antonio Pollarolo. The position was given to the famous Neapolitan composer Nicola Antonio Porpora, who had already been *maestro di coro* of the Incurabili between 1726 and 1738, and had worked at the Pietà for a short period in 1742. The task entrusted to Porpora as *maestro di coro* was to revive the Ospedaletto’s decaying musical life, thereby making it a more prestigious educational institution. He was to direct the choir, play the organ during the solemn feast days, give singing lessons to the girls four days a week and compose a Vespers every year. Porpora’s teaching and composing activities were particularly intense: during his first year at the Ospedaletto he wrote a mass, a Credo, fifteen motets, eleven antiphons, a series of psalms and a Vespers for the Assumption. The music of the 1744 Assumption Vespers occupies a particularly important place in Porpora’s sacred works, which are still relatively unknown.

The liturgical structure of a Marian Vespers for the solemnity of the Assumption would generally include an introductory responsory, *Deus in adjutorium meum*, and five psalms – *Dixit Dominus*, *Laudate Pueri*, *Lætatus sum*, *Nisi Dominus* and *Lauda Jerusalem* – in addition to a Magnificat and a Salve Regina, interspersed, as was usual, with antiphons, motets or chants. Markstrom’s edition attempts to reconstruct the music for this 1744 service by bringing together five Marian psalms, the canticle of the Magnificat and two versions of the Marian antiphon Salve Regina. Unlike the compositions written by Vivaldi for the Pietà, Porpora’s music for the Ospedaletto was scored specifically for female voices and orchestra; thus in Markstrom’s edition, the choral music is scored for divided sopranos and altos with strings and continuo. But this is a somewhat speculative reconstruction: not all the scores belonging to the 1744 Assumption Vespers have survived. Only three psalms (*Lætatus sum*, *Nisi Dominus*, *Lauda Jerusalem*) and the two Salve Reginas are actually dated 1744. One of the two is especially noteworthy since it was written for Angiola Moro, one