



non-existent facsimile of Tartini's Concerto D117 (152) and an example from Bach's Cantata BWV78 has a number of pitch errors in the chorale melody (231). The collection contains many articles of great interest, and it is a worthy celebration of its dedicatee and his singular contribution to studies of eighteenth-century music.

DAVID BLACK



Eighteenth-Century Music © 2009 Cambridge University Press
doi:10.1017/S147857060999025X Printed in the United Kingdom

MARK KROLL

JOHANN NEPOMUK HUMMEL: A MUSICIAN'S LIFE AND WORLD

Lanham, Toronto and Plymouth: Scarecrow, 2007

pp. xiv + 503, ISBN 978 0 8108 5920 3

Mark Kroll's new biography of Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837) is a welcome contribution to the literature surrounding this unjustly neglected figure. As the first substantial biography of Hummel to appear in English, Kroll's book adds to a field that is currently small and conspicuously lacking in full-scale monographs. Karl Benyovszky's *J. N. Hummel: Der Mensch und Künstler* (Bratislava: Eos, 1934), of which Kroll makes extensive use, is now out of date, while Joel Sachs's more recent *Kapellmeister Hummel in England and France* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1977), though thoroughly researched, is limited in its coverage, as it focuses only on Hummel's later concert tours. Other significant studies include a chapter in David Branson's volume *John Field and Chopin* (New York: St Martin's, 1972, 146–167), Derek Carew's 'Hummel's Op. 81: A Paradigm for Brahms's Op. 2?' (in *Ad Parnassum* 3/6 (2005), 133–155) and Jarl Hulbert's 'The Pedagogical Legacy of Johann Nepomuk Hummel' (PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 2006). Kroll himself has also contributed some important publications on Hummel in recent years, including the article 'Hummel the Romantic' (*Early Music America* 13/2 (2007), 20–23) and two editions of Hummel's arrangements: *Mozart's Haffner and Linz Symphonies, Arranged for Pianoforte, Flute, Violin and Violoncello* (Recent Researches in the Music of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries 29; Madison: A-R Editions, 2000) and *Twelve Select Overtures, Arranged for Pianoforte, Flute, Violin and Violoncello by J. N. Hummel* (Recent Researches in the Music of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries 35; Middleton: A-R Editions, 2003).

Kroll's method of structuring the biography is unusual in that the chapter contents are determined by topic rather than by the chronological sequence of Hummel's life and career. The thirteen chapters fall into three categories: biographical accounts (including discussion of Hummel as a touring pianist, and as Kapellmeister at Eisenstadt, Stuttgart and Weimar), Hummel's interactions with contemporary composers, and miscellaneous topics such as his activities as a teacher and his legacy (artistic and pecuniary). The principal reason Kroll gives for organizing the biography in this way is the complexity of Hummel's multi-faceted existence (xii). This approach, however, leads to great disparity in the length of chapters – Chapter 5, for instance, is a mere sixteen pages, whereas the following one stretches to seventy-six – which can be somewhat disorientating, and it also means that the author, on occasion, has to postpone the discussion of certain events until a later chapter, which can disrupt the narrative flow. Nevertheless, Kroll succeeds in providing coherent accounts of the individual facets of Hummel's career, and in this sense the information is made more accessible to readers who are consulting the book as a source of knowledge about general aspects of the period rather than as a biography of the composer per se.

Kroll sheds new light on most aspects of Hummel's life and career. A strength of his scholarship is that he treats nineteenth-century sources with due caution – particularly Max Johann Seidel's biographical



account of Hummel, 'Biographische Notizen aus dem Leben des am 17ten October 1837 verstorbenen Großherzoglich-Sachsen-Weimarischen Kapellmeister und Ritter mehrer Orden: Johann Nepomuk Hummel, ersten Klavierspieler seiner Zeit' (a manuscript of c1837). Consequently, some information and anecdotes that have been accepted and recycled by later writers are revealed as spurious. These include Seidel's description of Hummel's debut in London in 1791, when Haydn supposedly approached the twelve-year-old to stand in for the officially engaged pianist, who had become ill. According to Seidel, Hummel stepped in, learned the concerto in less than a day, performed it adeptly and earned the approbation of Haydn and many others as a result (Kroll, *Johann Nepomuk Hummel*, 34–35). In Kroll's view, Seidel's account is 'most likely apocryphal', and he suggests that 'this story reads suspiciously like Seidel's attempt to enhance Hummel's image as an unflappable prodigy for whom no challenge was insurmountable – in other words, to create a Hummel mythology just as Schindler did for Beethoven' (35). Later, Kroll summarizes both Seidel's and Benyovszky's versions of the famous meeting between Hummel and John Field in Moscow in 1822 (110–111). According to Benyovszky's better-known version, Hummel appeared unannounced at Field's home and initially concealed his identity, only to be recognized by Field when he began to improvise at the piano. Patrick Piggott is one comparatively modern biographer of Field who cites Benyovszky's version (see *The Life and Music of John Field* (London: Faber, 1973), 51–52). Piggott does not actually include a reference to Benyovszky, but this was almost certainly his source; nor does he raise any concerns about the story's authenticity. Instead, he goes on to note that the 'anecdote was greatly admired and frequently repeated by the members of Field's circle', with 'several variations of it appearing in print after Field's death' – for instance, in a periodical called *The Russian Invalid* on 4 September 1846 (51–52). Whereas Piggott concludes that the version of the story published in 1846 should be accepted as 'basically correct', Kroll is more cautious: he suggests that both Seidel and Benyovszky 'convey a strong sense of the way contemporaries and historians *imagined* the encounter of these two pianistic geniuses' (111, my italics). This is one of many examples of the scrupulous nature of Kroll's scholarship.

Chapters 3, 7 and 8 focus on Hummel's activities as Kapellmeister at Eisenstadt, Stuttgart and Weimar, and they prove to be both thorough and well documented. Kroll attributes the problems that led to Hummel's ultimate dismissal from Eisenstadt partly to the composer's lack of diplomatic skills at that stage of his career, and partly to the possibility that an 'artist with the talent, individuality, ambitions and energy of Hummel must have chafed at the limitations and quiet life of provincial Eisenstadt' (48). Hummel's period at Stuttgart was an even more problematic phase of his career. Weimar, on the other hand, stimulated by the presence of Goethe and by the strong theatrical and operatic traditions there, offered a much more auspicious artistic environment in which Hummel could thrive.

In Chapter 9, devoted to Hummel the teacher, Kroll makes full use of the testimony of Hummel's student Ferdinand Hiller (249–252). As a resident at the Hummel household in Weimar, Hiller was uniquely placed to observe Hummel at close quarters. Kroll borrows from Hiller a very instructive description of a lesson with his teacher (249) and devotes the latter part of the chapter to a generously proportioned discussion of Hummel's major pedagogical work of c1822–1825, the *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel, vom ersten Elementar-Unterricht an, bis zur vollkommensten Ausbildung*, commonly known as the *Clavierschule* (252–260). This discussion might have been enriched, however, by some comparison with another pedagogical work of the period, Muzio Clementi's *Gradus ad Parnassum*, Op. 44 (three volumes published separately in 1817, 1819 and 1826), which is similarly monumental in size but very different in its contents and implicit objectives.

Chapter 6 contains an extended account of Hummel's concert tours between the 1780s and 1830s. In terms of developing a general understanding of the period, this is one of the most useful contributions in the book. Kroll emphasizes Hummel's status as the first true touring artist in history – he differed from earlier figures, who, once attached to a particular location, toured only to a limited extent (95–96) – and he explains how Hummel, by negotiating contracts that allowed him a period of three months' leave each year, was able to reconcile his touring career with his positions at court. Kroll contextualizes Hummel's touring within the societal changes that both enhanced and hampered its success: these included the 'continuing technological



advances in transportation and communication during the early years of the nineteenth century', which contributed to the 'ever-increasing success [that Hummel] was able to achieve' with touring (97), as well as the treacherous conditions arising from the Napoleonic wars, which on one occasion put the lives of Hummel and his father in danger. When the pair were returning from the British tour of 1790–1791, their ship was subjected to an attack, during which the young Hummel narrowly escaped injury and possibly even death (103). Kroll's account of Hummel's tour to London in 1830 contains ample evidence of the sophistication and the sheer amount of concert publicity that circulated at this time, particularly in London. He cites a letter by François Féti's that makes amusing reference to an advertising bill displayed on the back of a sheep in a butcher's shop (127–128). The chapter also reveals the extent of Hummel's indefatigable self-promotion, for instance through meticulous forward planning and by contributing directly to the wording and distribution of the concert notices. But, as Sachs showed in *Kapellmeister Hummel in England and France*, Hummel's later concert tours to England, in 1831 and (especially) 1833, were comparatively less successful than his earlier ones. The major factor affecting audience numbers at his concerts, according to Kroll, was the presence in London of Nicolò Paganini, whose increasing popularity deflected interest away from Hummel and initiated the decline of his reputation. Paganini embodied a flamboyant style of virtuosity that was alien to Hummel (138–139), who, by comparison, began to look like a distinctly reactionary figure.

Yet, despite Hummel's inability, or unwillingness, to cultivate equivalents of Paganini's style of virtuosity, it is the very *modernity* of the man and his outlook that often emerges from the pages of Kroll's biography. Not only were his activities as an international touring pianist pioneering, but a sense of modernity is evident in his style as an administrator and in the proposals he submitted in 1828 to Duke Carl Friedrich, the successor of Archduke Carl August at Weimar. These proposals represented an attempt to transfer complete authority over the full spectrum of musical arrangements at court to the Kapellmeister. Through such proposals, therefore, Hummel was 'challenging not only centuries of tradition at the Weimar court and the authority (i.e. "turf") of many vested interests, but also the very nature of the feudal court system'. Kroll goes so far as to assert that 'Hummel was speaking to the very core of the profound changes in society at this time, in which the power, and prerogatives, of the German nobility were being seriously questioned' (205). These changes, of course, culminated in the 'July Revolution' of 1830 and the 'European Revolution' of 1848. In Chapter 13 Kroll pays due – if rather brief – tribute to Hummel's importance in establishing the foundations of copyright laws, an area in which the ramifications of his influence can still be felt today. (This aspect of Hummel's historical legacy was explored earlier by Joel Sachs in 'Hummel and the Pirates: The Struggle for Musical Copyright', *The Musical Quarterly* 59/1 (1973), 31–60.)

Major portions of the book are devoted to Hummel and his relations with contemporaries such as Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Liszt and Chopin. Hummel was Mozart's pupil and a member of the Mozart household for about two years (1786–1788). Accordingly, Kroll emphasizes the importance of Mozart's influence on the formation of Hummel's compositional and performing styles. Chapter 2 contains colourful and revealing descriptions of what appears to have been the haphazard nature of Hummel's training under Mozart, including one incident in which 'Mozart had discovered Hummel asleep on some chairs after he and his wife had returned home late one evening. He promptly told Constanze to "wake Hans, and give him a glass of wine" and then asked the sleepy boy to play for him' (13). Kroll suggests that Hummel's education, rather than following any kind of preconceived system or plan, 'might best be understood as a process of osmosis in which he absorbed everything he witnessed' (14). The latter part of this chapter is given over to a discussion of Hummel as an arranger of Mozart's works (21–23). In Chapter 10 Kroll carefully articulates the complexity of Schumann's attitude towards Hummel, at the heart of which lay the younger composer's disappointment in failing to persuade Hummel to become his teacher (279–287). Kroll goes on to reveal that Schumann contributed, through his journalistic writings, to the establishment of Hummel's reputation as a 'reactionary' figure; in this Schumann may well have been motivated by his earlier, bitter experience.

Kroll's extensive consideration of the cross-currents of musical influence travelling to and from Hummel leads naturally to an exploration of the interiors of the composer's actual works. A lack of critiques of this



kind is a major limitation of the existing literature (Carew's 'Hummel's Op. 81' of 2005 is a rare exception). The considerable number of musical illustrations in Kroll's book clearly indicates that the author realized the value of introducing a more analytical approach (despite the limited scope for this in a biography), but it is this aspect of his study that most consistently disappoints. Many stylistic affinities between the compositions of Hummel and of his contemporaries are proposed, but they often boil down to little more than similarities of keyboard figuration; and these are probably more redolent of widely cultivated conventions of the period than of a specialized exchange of influence from or to Hummel. Comparisons of this type surface with reference to Hummel and Schubert (84–86), Hummel and Schumann (288–289) and Hummel and Chopin (313–322). Kroll periodically assembles a group of musical excerpts to illustrate similarities, but the accompanying commentary is often so scanty that the reader is effectively left alone to analyse the evidence. The unsatisfactory balance between musical exemplification and surrounding discussion is most noticeable in the section on Hummel and Chopin. Kroll's practice of simply juxtaposing examples from works by both composers that show superficial similarities is reminiscent of that used by Branson in *John Field and Chopin*, whose largely comparative approach (principally between works by Chopin and Field, but also including some between Hummel and Field) received mixed reactions at the time (see, for instance, the review by Nicholas Temperley in *The Musical Times* 113/7 (1972), 670). Kroll could also have tempered the established, one-sided view of Hummel's style as outmoded in the context of the period with a discussion of features considered to be more progressive; by referring to elements of harmonic style, structure and motivic process, he would have lifted his discussions out of the circumscribed field of keyboard figuration. Works such as the Piano Sonata in F sharp minor, Op. 81, and the Cello Sonata in A major, Op. 104, in their use of devices like the 'three-key' exposition, invite comparison with the works of Schubert and others. And then there are the progressive (for 1804), large-scale harmonic schemes of works such as the String Quartet in C major, Op. 30 No. 1, whose slow movement is in E major; the scherzo encompasses both E major and A flat major in its trio section, suggesting an inter-movemental dimension to the harmony of the type explored by Beethoven in his Piano Concertos Nos 3 and 5. Equally, the prominent counterpoint in the string quartets and the partially fugal finales of the Piano Sonatas Op. 20 in F minor and Op. 106 in D major raises questions about the composer's absorption of baroque counterpoint at a time when the music of Johann Sebastian Bach was being increasingly disseminated. These contrapuntal elements also acted as an important analogue to the growing perception of Hummel as an old-fashioned figure. Although a biography is hardly the place for in-depth analysis, restriction of stylistic discussion to keyboard figuration is in some danger of perpetuating the conventional, basically undesirable view of Hummel as a virtuoso of the past who composed reactionary and 'shallow' works in which an eighteenth-century formal frame is bedecked with brilliant passagework. A partial compensation for this is Kroll's willingness to acknowledge the high quality and significance of works by Hummel that lie beyond the small group of better-known compositions (332) such as the Piano Concertos in A minor, Op. 85, and B minor, Op. 89, the Septet for Piano, Winds and Strings in D minor, Op. 74, and the Piano Sonata Op. 81.

The body of the book is well supported by appendices, which include a complete list of Hummel's works, a family tree, and a list of honours and awards bestowed on the composer during his lifetime. The illustrations between pages 246 and 247 are informative as well as visually arresting: they include a facsimile of Hummel's hourly lesson plan, which is a useful accompaniment to the discussion of Hummel the teacher in Chapter 9. The bibliography looks substantial and contains a good spread of literature in both English and German, but there are some curious omissions. The writings of David Brock, including his PhD dissertation 'The Instrumental Music of Hummel' (University of Sheffield, 1976) and his earlier article 'The Church Music of Hummel' (*The Music Review* 31/3 (1970), 249–254), are omitted entirely (the latter should surely have been cited during Kroll's discussion of the influence of Haydn on the style of Hummel's masses (42–43)). Reference could have been made to Ian Pearson's article on the Trumpet Concerto ('Johann Nepomuk Hummel's "Rescue Concerto": Cherubini's Influence on Hummel's Trumpet Concerto', *Journal of the International Trumpet Guild* 15/4 (1992), 14–20) during the discussion (38) of John Rice's slightly later article on a similar topic ('The Musical Bee: References to Mozart and Cherubini in Hummel's "New Year"



Concerto', *Music & Letters* 77/3 (1996), 404–424); and Sergei Grochotow's article 'Mozart und Hummel' (*Acta Mozartiana* 40/3–4 (1993), 94–103) could have been mentioned in Chapter 2. Typographical errors in the text and in the musical illustrations occur fairly frequently, and uneven print quality makes the odd word difficult to read.

Certain reservations notwithstanding, there is much to commend about Kroll's scholarship. The book is certainly welcome, and it has been researched and written on a scale commensurate with Hummel's stature and importance as a pivotal musical figure in European musical life of the early nineteenth century. Kroll's ambitious work will hopefully stimulate a new wave of interest in this unjustly neglected and often misunderstood figure; it will certainly serve as the indispensable source of information about Hummel that we have lacked for so long.

ROHAN STEWART-MACDONALD



Eighteenth-Century Music © 2009 Cambridge University Press
doi:10.1017/S1478570609990248 Printed in the United Kingdom

KURT SVEN MARKSTROM

THE OPERAS OF LEONARDO VINCI, NAPOLETANO

Hillsdale: Pendragon, 2007

pp. xx + 394, ISBN 978 1 57647 094 7

Despite the expectation of historical oblivion, Leonardo Vinci (c1696–1730) was not the usual victim of the type of quixotic transition that we might associate with early eighteenth-century opera, when a demand for novelty in music and drama upended the careers of many composers. Vinci's reputation during the eighteenth century was well established, and he was also celebrated posthumously. His name remained familiar among critics, and among impresarios of the period, who chose to restage his operas often well after these works' initial success. Yet Vinci's relative obscurity in modern opera scholarship stems from a familiar phenomenon whereby membership of the pantheon of composers is restricted to those whose lives are treated in traditional historical narratives, at the expense of any acknowledgment of the compositional impacts of historiographically marginalized composers who in their time were not necessarily less important. For Kurt Sven Markstrom, Leonardo Vinci is one of these casualties, a composer of note who has been often passed over in virtual silence by modern historical surveys and style histories that focus on Johann Sebastian Bach, Antonio Vivaldi and George Frideric Handel. Sometimes composers like Vinci have been melded indistinguishably into the musicological background as part of the generation of composers that belonged to the Neapolitan School. In *The Operas of Leonardo Vinci*, 'Napoletano' Markstrom makes a convincing case for re-erecting Vinci as one of the most important agents in the development of the early classical style, as well as a key contributor to early eighteenth-century Italian opera and musical culture.

Markstrom's research on Vinci has gathered momentum over many years. As noted in the Preface, Vinci is no longer such 'an arcane academic subject' as he was when Markstrom first proposed the composer as a topic for his dissertation (xiii). Since then Markstrom has played a key role in transforming our understanding of Leonardo Vinci into a distinct compositional figure of seminal stylistic influence. He has helped to inaugurate a new collected edition of Vinci's works (the 'Progetto Leonardo Vinci') and has prepared several editions for modern performance premieres. The publication of *The Operas of Leonardo Vinci* has thus been anticipated for some time. It is not merely a reworking of the author's dissertation, but a study that now incorporates Markstrom's editorial work as well as his more recent research projects (one on Nicola Porpora, another on Pietro Metastasio).