

REVIEWS



BOOKS

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DONALD BURROWS AND ROSEMARY DUNHILL, EDS

MUSIC AND THEATRE IN HANDEL'S WORLD: THE FAMILY PAPERS OF JAMES HARRIS, 1732–1780

New York: Oxford University Press, 2002

pp. xlv + 1212, ISBN 0 19 816654

Weighing in at two kilos, this book is not designed for bedtime reading, but a few pages a night is an ideal way to enjoy it. It is more likely that it will be consulted as a reference work, and an essential one.

The Harris family have been known as keen supporters of Handel since Deutsch's *Handel: A Documentary Biography* (London: A & C Black, 1955). In 1994 the papers of James Harris (1709–1780) and his son the first Earl of Malmesbury were added by the sixth Earl to the substantial family archive already held by Hampshire Record Office. The initial report by the County Archivist, Rosemary Dunhill, *Handel and the Harris Circle* (Hampshire Papers 8, 1995), costing less than one per cent of the present volume's cover price, revealed amongst other excitements the existence of the draft libretto for Handel's *L'Allegro* by James Harris and letters charting its development to final form (passed over by Clive Probyn's biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), and printed in full here).

The present volume gives transcriptions with commentary of all references to music and theatre from the entire Malmesbury Papers (and some from other archives): family diaries and letters to and between members of James Harris Snr's family and friends, who, besides his delightful wife, two daughters and son, included – to mention only the 'brother Handelists' – his brothers Thomas and George William, his cousin the fourth Earl of Shaftesbury, the Knatchbull relations, Charles Jennens, Lord Guernsey and the fourth Earl of Radnor.

The family had multiple interconnections, requiring three helpful family trees. Twenty-nine pages of biographical notes of 172 correspondents and diary keepers signal their breadth of contacts. Musical correspondents include Burney, Hawkins, Greene (and his librettist Hoadly), Lockman, Marsh and van Swieten (seeking to acquire scores by Handel). Some remain shadowy: I would like to know more of the humorous Mary Smith, who, though stuck in Salisbury, has in March 1744 already heard 'some of the Songs in Semile, and think the music mighty well adapted to the words' (the book reaffirms the rapidity of new music's spread to the provinces), and (?Miss) C. Gilbert, who reports in 1754 on the new castrato Ricciarelli: 'even the old folks, whose heads are full of Senesino & Farinelli & never can think anything else tolerable, come hobbling with their sticks & vouchsafe to be pleased'.

Music and theatre are liberally defined, and include dance, masquerades, puppet shows, militia bands and marrow-bones and cleavers. Scrupulous observance of the selection criteria means including (for example) Mrs Harris's brother's half-line record of his concert subscription, but not the context for Harris Snr's remarks on art. Anyone who wants to understand the contents and their mass of detail should begin with the excellent Introduction. Major themes are Harris Snr's involvement with Handel's music and leadership of Salisbury musical life, his daughter Louisa's distinction as a (private) singer and his daughters'



(especially Gertrude's) immersion in amateur theatricals. The wider context is English cultural life, for the Harrises were assiduous concert-, opera- and theatre-goers, and eighteenth-century cultural historians will find the book indispensable.

While the family spent much time and passed many judgments on London culture, some of the most interesting musical information concerns the provinces, Durham and Bath as well as Salisbury. Changes and innovations in musical taste are registered (the decline of Handel, the rise of glees – and the pleasure of hearing them sung *softly*). Anyone who has tried to mount a semi-professional annual music festival, or even a single concert, will be in sympathy with Salisbury's ongoing tribulations and triumphs. They will also admire the energy and level of its subscription concerts and annual festival, where guest artists included William Hayes, the Passerinis, Giulia Frasi, Tenducci, Pugnani, the Linleys, Millico, Nancy Storace, Cecilia Davies and Rauzzini (the latter one of Louisa's teachers).

Theatre historians will profit from this volume. Reports on individual performances and plays are legion. Mrs Yates, evidently a pioneer of method acting, visits Bedlam for her role in Glover's *Medea* and stuns her audience with the results; Garrick seems thirty when at sixty-seven he appears in Susannah Centlivre's *The Wonder; or, A Woman Keeps a Secret*; Mrs Harris knows and deplores fake Shakespeare when she sees it: 'Nothing in acting can be finer than Garrick in the character of Lear & Mrs Cibber in that of Cordelia, but why will they not act Shakepear instead of *the thing* they act, is to me wonderful.' Garrick produced Harris Snr's pastoral pasticcio as an afterpiece at Drury Lane in 1762, giving him the usual librettist's angst (the text is in an appendix).

Two circles of amateur theatricals feature entertainingly: the family of Charles James Fox at Winterslow near Salisbury and the Harris daughters and family friends in Salisbury. The thesphy adrenaline – Louisa describes a day of preparations lasting from 7 am until 10 pm – and the social rules which obliged the girls to decline repeated invitations to participate at Winterslow because the company was of both sexes, which compelled even operas, and plays with a majority of male characters, to be performed by women only, and which limited the audience (as, for instance, for Louisa's singing) to family and close friends, all wonderfully illuminate *Mansfield Park* (see Paula Byrne, *Jane Austen and the Theatre* (London: Hambledon and London, 2002), for the period's amateur theatrical craze).

The wider contexts of all this cultural life are tantalizingly glimpsed, with passing mentions of (for example) regimental dancing partners in Salisbury (shades of *Pride and Prejudice*), civil strife in Lisbon, the American War of Independence and the Gordon Riots (a table of national and international events would have helped, and would have explained 'the present juncture of affairs' on 1 March 1744 as the French invasion attempt in late February, rather than 'Jacobite invasion'). The archive has much to offer historians in other fields. Harris Snr was a philosopher, aesthete and philologist (xix) with a national and European reputation that one would not suspect from the present selection of letters. From 1761 to his death he was MP for Christchurch, and from 1774 he was Secretary and Comptroller to Queen Charlotte, in regular contact with both King and Queen: the musical parts of their conversation appear here. The range is widened by Harris Jnr, career diplomat and future first Earl. His postings provide the most colourful passages in the book, notably royal Easter Mass in St Petersburg, 1770s Madrid cabaret and a good character sketch of the future Frederick William II of Prussia (Prince Hal, in effect), which gains inclusion because his mistress had been a stage dancer. From Russia he sends his father a Greek ode set by Paisiello; and from Paris he receives an interesting account of the state of opera in France.

The editors' diligence is phenomenal, and constantly illuminating. Over half the book (aside from 185 pages of front and back matter) is commentary. For nearly every opera, theatre or concert visit we learn the location, programme, performers and managers, and often performance history. To Harris Snr's note on 7 May 1775, 'Went to Dr Burney's', the editors supply the address, the names of ten other guests, the performers' names and what they sang and played; this is typical (for exemplary instances see pages 430 and 713). Occasionally I am not sure about editorial assumptions: for example, that the pianoforte that Handel played at Jennens's house in 1756 was the one that Jennens acquired in 1732; that 'Miltonicks' means *Paradise Lost*; that Morell was the librettist of Handel's *The Choice of Hercules*. Occasionally I am not sure about their



reservations: no other historians doubt that Jennens was a non-juror (one who refused to abjure the exiled Stuarts).

Since the book will be used primarily for reference, the index is crucial. There are two, gratifyingly large and replete with cross references: a forty-eight-page index of persons and a twenty-six-page general index, 'General and personal references' to composers and authors in the former but references to their works in the latter, with twenty-eight- and six-line headnotes respectively explaining their system. Using them gives the reader a sense of the Herculean effort they must have entailed. To find all references to Shakespeare, you need to look under his name twice *and* for all titles of his works. Handel appears as a person in both indexes, with overlapping references, subheaded in one but not the other. The first headnote says that Harris Snr is not indexed, nor is he under Persons, but he has an unadvertised column and a half of references in the General Index. (I could not find an index reference to the Harris town house in Conduit St, despite being directed 'see London, under street names', a stunning list of nearly four columns, but lacking Conduit St. Conversely, despite thirty-two index references, I failed to find an explanation of 'Durnford', the Wiltshire country home where the family kept a pianoforte.)

As other reviewers have noted, the main title of this volume is hardly warranted, unless it intends to support the theory that Handel wielded excessive posthumous influence. He dies one quarter of the way into the book, and although performances of his music continue to be attended and appreciated by Harris Snr, it is hardly his world any more ('your sisters are too refin'd for old Handel', 1775). But for Handel scholars there is a wealth of newly published information here: the conception and triumvirate authorship of the libretto of *L'Allegro*; Handel improvising appropriately during pauses in a reading of *Samson Agonistes* (the source text of his later *Samson*); the fourth Earl of Shaftesbury's devoted encouragement and Handel's response; Handel on horseback, Handel playing the pianoforte in 1740, still playing organ concertos in 1756; his finances, health, whereabouts, social contacts, intransigence; the progress of his manuscripts around the country; and much else. Oxford University Press should make good their title, and complement their commitment to learning which the present volume manifests, by publishing the first section as a paperback, and making its essential Handel material more available (as well as easier to read in bed). It will have a place alongside Deutsch's *Documentary Biography* on every Handelian's bookshelf.

RUTH SMITH



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MARGARET RUTH BUTLER

OPERATIC REFORM AT TURIN'S TEATRO REGIO: ASPECTS OF PRODUCTION AND STYLISTIC CHANGE
IN THE 1760s

Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2001

pp. xxxii + 348, ISBN 88 7096 288 1

Butler's book makes a major contribution to the multi-faceted issues of innovation and reform in eighteenth-century opera after 1750. Forty years ago, the second edition of Donald Grout's *A Short History of Opera* concentrated on the self-declared 'reform' pieces of Calzabigi and Gluck in French-inspired neoclassical style with a nod towards the work of Jommelli in Stuttgart and Traetta in Parma and elsewhere. Most assumed that Gluck's masterpieces plus the rise of opera buffa effected the demise of opera seria, an often-maligned genre. Two of Daniel Hertz's seminal works, 'Operatic Reform at Parma: Ippolito ed Aricia', in *Atti del convegno sul settecento parmense nel 20. centenario della morte di C. I. Frugoni* (Parma: Deputazione di Storia Patria delle Province Parmensi, 1969), 271–300, and 'Mozart and His Italian Contemporaries', *Mozart Jahrbuch* (1978–1979), 275–293, show that opera seria did not, in fact, die in the 1770s and



that Gluck was neither the first nor the only composer to engage in types of experimental Italian opera normally labelled 'reform'. In fact, as I have recently pointed out (Seventeenth Annual Conference of the International Musicological Society, Leuven 2002), it is clear that Algarotti spent six years (1747–1753) in Berlin collaborating with Frederick the Great, Graun and Voltaire in a virtual workshop of experimental Italian opera before the publication of his *Saggio sopra l'opera in musica* (1755), which emerged as the prime motivating force for a fever of experimental activity seemingly radiating from Parma. Such activity in Stuttgart and Mannheim had already been noted but not fully understood in Jommelli and Traetta studies. The problem stemmed from the customary focus in musicological studies on composers, who went from theatre to theatre fulfilling commissions, whereas innovations tended to occur in specific theatres where interested patrons, imaginative librettists and facilities for French-inspired spectacle might all be found. Butler's research has established Turin as one of these centres.

Butler's brief introductory overview of research on innovation and reform in opera seria during the last twenty years correctly points out the concentration of studies on Parma, Stuttgart, Mannheim and Vienna and the general neglect of similar investigations of important Italian centres. Nor had previous studies on opera in Turin recognized its role in eighteenth-century operatic experimentation. She herself admits having set out to study Turin's rich archival resources as an important 'conservative' theatrical centre at mid-century, only to discover unmistakable ties not only with the above-mentioned centres of innovation but with Algarotti and Berlin as well.

The opera house in Turin, which opened in 1740, was considered one of the finest in Europe, as befitted a powerful political and economic state. For the theatrical historian, its archives are a unique treasure preserving a full range of administrative documents, from the official deliberations, decisions, correspondence and payment records of its governing body, the Nobile Società dei Cavalieri, to the Libri Ordinati, which recorded the decisions of the production directors, including records of negotiations with artists and production schedules. In addition there are librettos and musical scores of operas at various stages of the compositional process. Butler pulls together information from all of these sources to create a revealing 'inside' view of the multifaceted, step-by-step decision-making process that led to the production of an opera in Turin in the mid-eighteenth century.

Of prime importance was the magnificent theatre, which had the space and the equipment to do spectacle in the French style and the patronage and resources to attract the finest singers, composers, choreographers, dancers and designers of the day. The theatre's unusually successful governing structure and processes served as a model for other theatres as far afield as Naples and Vienna. The order in which decisions were made may hold some surprises. For example, the leading singers would be hired several years ahead – often before the operas had been chosen, since particular roles had to be suited to the principals hired. Principals might request specific operas, suggest other suitable singers and even recommend a composer. It was not unusual for the selection of composer to be made late in the day because of difficulties in getting their first or second choices. Payments for his services also lagged far behind stipends paid to the principals, librettists, choreographers and scenographers. This speaks volumes about why it took us so long to understand how innovation in opera manifested itself, assuming that the composer was the decision maker, when in reality the composer remained relatively powerless in the face of demands made by singers, in the presence of a resident librettist or theatre poet (who was often the production director) and in view of the fact that the principal decisions regarding the production, such as the degree of spectacle, had been made long before he appeared on the scene. His low pay – on a par with the second- and third-ranking singers – bears this out.

By pulling together information from various sources Butler is able to provide rare insights into the processes involved in negotiating with imported singers, composers, dancers and designers, as well as the factors impinging upon the selection of the two librettos to be produced each season, whether a perennial piece by Zeno, Metastasio or some other well-established librettist, an imported new work, or a brand new work to be premiered in Turin itself. The practice of contrasting carnival operas (history with myth or the exotic, and well known with new) had already been established and continued to the end of the century. The sources from which librettos are drawn forcefully bear out the interdependence of theatres in Germany,



Austria and Italy. Finally, Butler examines the political, social, intellectual and cultural climate that shaped the single individual most involved in determining what shape opera would take in Turin, namely the theatre's poet from the mid-1750s through the 1770s, Vittorio Amedeo Cigna-Santi. She explains how he blended Metastasian ideals with the innovative challenges of French-inspired opera in ways that shaped the repertory in Turin for decades to come.

Finally, Butler brings together archival materials, manuscripts and librettos for four operas in order to paint a fascinating picture of how each opera came into being – from the hiring of the first singer to opening night and beyond. At the same time the reader is drawn into the innovative process as Cigna moves from the first glimmerings of experimentation in *Enea nel Lazio* to Algarotti's own *Ifigenia in Aulide*, and on to revised versions of two works by Mannheim's audacious innovator, Verazi – *Sofonisba* and *Ifigenia in Tauride* (*Oreste*).

The production of *Enea nel Lazio* in 1760 demonstrates how closely linked Turin was with initial experiments in French-inspired opera in Parma and ballet in Vienna. Turin's contract with Traetta followed hard on the heels of his *Ippolito ed Aricia* (Parma 1759), pre-empting contracts for French-inspired theatrical pieces for Vienna (*Armida*) in 1761, an innovative opera seria for Mannheim (*Sofonisba*) in 1762 and Vienna's first full-length, French-inspired opera seria (*Ifigenia in Tauride*) in 1764. The topic of *Enea e Lavinia* (a sequel to *Dido and Aeneas*) under various titles lent itself easily to French spectacle. An *Enea nel Lazio* had already been produced in Stuttgart (1755), and another would be produced in Parma in 1761 as *Enea e Lavinia*. In addition, Hilverding, Vienna's pioneer in the genre of pantomime ballet, would choreograph *Enea in Italia* in 1765. The choreographer in Turin, Giuseppe Salamoni (detto di Portogallo), was the son of Giuseppe Salamoni (detto di Vienna), and both were disciples of Hilverding. In the hands of the former the ballets for Turin move beyond unrelated *entr'actes* (Italian practice) or the related but merely decorative (as in Parma) to become integral parts of the drama.

Moving on to Cigna's new *Ifigenia in Aulide*, Butler's meticulous research reveals his indebtedness both to Verazi's *Ifigenia* for Rome in 1751 and to Algarotti, who had appended to his *Saggio* in 1755 a revised version of Villati's libretto written for Berlin in 1748 during Algarotti's residency. Far from the conventional form this opera normally assumed in Italian theatres, Cigna called lavishly upon French spectacle – a *dea ex machina*, chorus and ballet integrated into the action, ensembles mid-act and several departures from conventional scene constructions. Liberal instructions for stage actions apparently predate those in *Sofonisba* (November 1762) by Verazi, for whom they became a hallmark.

The Società turned next to Mannheim's Verazi for two path-breaking operas: *Sofonisba* and *Ifigenia in Tauride*, which Cigna reworked as *Oreste*. Butler notes strong correlations between the two centres in regard to Metastasian repertory, as well as composers engaged during the ten years from 1757 to 1766. Both Verazi librettos for Mannheim were produced in Turin just two years later. The Turin production of *Sofonisba* has been viewed as more conservative because the choruses were cut and the final quintet finale was replaced with a conventional *Coro*. Butler argues persuasively that many of Verazi's innovative features had been retained. The few differences could be explained by basic differences in the contracting of personnel. Mannheim's was a court theatre, and the performers part of a standing company, allowing the principal singers time to prepare complex ensembles, whereas in Italy they scarcely had time to learn their roles (from five days to a month, according to the rehearsal schedules). Thus simple logistics – irrespective of the relative conservatism or progressivism of the theatre and its patrons – ruled out those features of Mannheim opera that would have demanded extra preparation time from the principals.

Choruses also presented problems for Italian theatres. They were mainly townspeople or boys from the conservatories. Not only were choral singers difficult to recruit, but they were very expensive for the brief time they spent on stage – not in terms of their stipends, which were meagre, but for the costumes they required. In the *Ordinati*, Butler was able to trace the plans for choruses in *Sofonisba*, their cancellation and their reinstatement. For a decade after 1764 Turin gave up trying to have choruses, not as a result of an aversion to them, but simply because they were considered impractical.



Perhaps no other theatre archive in Italy is as rich with detail from this period as that of the Teatro Regio. Butler's book is an impressive achievement – the product of an imaginative archivist asking significant questions and piecing together answers from disparate sources in order to place opera seria in a flesh and blood context. In so doing she has moved the history of eighteenth-century opera a giant step towards documented enlightenment.

MARITA PETZOLDT MCCLYMONDS



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EDMUND FAIRFAX

THE STYLES OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BALLET

Lanham, MD, and London: Scarecrow, 2003

pp. xxi + 367, ISBN 0 810 84698 5

This forthright book addresses many misconceptions surrounding eighteenth-century dance. Its author, schooled in music, fashion design, languages, classical ballet and Baroque dance, is well placed to address these myths. Fairfax deplors our tendency to conflate the very distinct styles of ballroom and theatrical dance, modern interpretations that remove the element of individuality from performance, and the view of eighteenth-century dance, as a 'primitive predecessor' (xvi) of classical ballet. Fairfax's careful selection and shaping of copious quotations from primary sources should convince all but the most blinkered reader that this period's dances and dancers were anything but primitive. As all quotations are translated into English (the originals are not given), this book has maximum accessibility. The use of line drawings rather than facsimiles is not a disadvantage, for Fairfax always tells us where originals and reproductions are to be found. The carefully chosen illustrations, to which Fairfax refers frequently, serve to counter the perception of eighteenth-century dance as decorous and confined in style.

This book details the distinctions between no fewer than four theatrical dance styles and the links between individual performers (as defined by gender, body type and/or technical aptitude) and the perpetuation of these styles. Ironically, it was the impact of one outstanding performer, Auguste Vestris (1760–1842) – whose own dancing encompassed a mixture of all styles – that contributed to the 'meltdown' of the distinct styles into what we now term classical ballet. As Noverre remarked, 'all dancers embraced with idolatry the new palace that Vestris had just created. Everyone became imperfect and unfaithful copiers . . . They are yet to learn that it is impossible to imitate what is inimitable' (283).

The first chapter considers the rise of the 'French Art of Dance'. The cultural dominance of the French style in the early eighteenth century is generally accepted, but Fairfax reminds us that the Italian style – which was to influence both dance and its music later in the century – was quite distinct in its parallel alignment of the feet, its greater elevation and liveliness and its overall uniformity, which was in marked contrast to the distinctive styles found in France. Fairfax suggests that modern scholars have been 'bedeviled' by their lack of awareness about the prejudices colouring writings of the time, when 'so great was the prestige and renown of the Paris Opéra that writers, both in France and beyond her borders, would frequently and simplistically equate the dominant style of this one theatre with French dance as a whole and sometimes even with mainstream European dance of the period' (197).

The contrast between French ballroom and theatrical dance is the subject of the second chapter. Theatrical representation is, by its very nature, exaggerated: dancers heightened their representations through gymnastic contortions (in the comic or grotesque modes), a greater height of the legs, an increased elevation (of the arms and in jumps) and a far wider step vocabulary than ballroom dancing employed. Feuillet notation, aimed particularly at the amateur market, could not convey the theatrical styles



adequately; the limitations of notation are the subject of the final chapter. A section exploring the various terms and divisions of theatrical style recognized by different writers of the time (83–86) is followed by contemporaries' descriptions of the four larger stylistic divisions that Fairfax adopts. The 'slow' and 'languid' serious style was suited to 'lofty', 'noble' and 'sublime' characters such as gods, heroes and royalty. It was more 'earthbound' than the other styles, and citations of critics of the time suggest that an emphasis on marked attitudes, 'sustained balances' and 'beautiful unfurling movements of the arms' (89) defined this style. A passage from Gennaro Magri's 1779 treatise (96) suggests that solos in this style were usually extemporized. Fairfax, in perceiving a delayed introduction of aspects of the serious style into pantomime ballet, overlooks the work of pioneers such as John Weaver (1673–1760) and Marie Sallé (1707–1756) in this regard, misattributing this development to the later generation of Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810) and Gasparo Angiolini (1731–1803).

Weaver's term 'brisk' seems aptly to encapsulate the *demi-caractère* style, for the quotations from critics and an excerpt from the Ferrère manuscript (?1782) reveal it to be a more elevated and lively style than the serious, and therefore appropriate to characters such as fauns, satyrs and shepherds in the operas and ballets. Although both the 'comic and grotesque genres broadly were given over to caricature' (109), the latter distinguished itself by extreme postures and tumbling. As Johann Georg Sulzer noted in a 1794 publication, the grotesque style was identified by 'a lack of restraint or by something exotic'. A scant respect for the cadence of the music was also characteristic (126). Fairfax summarizes the main distinctions between the four broader categories of theatrical dance style by considering issues such as the degree of elevation in jumping, the carriage of the arms and the line created by the body (straight for low-life characters, rounded for the high-born). Always adept at conveying different responses to the same phenomenon, his selection of quotations concerning entertainments that presented more than one dance style reveal that this practice was seen by some as introducing an 'admirable variety' (Ménéstrier, 1682) or a 'happy blend' (*Mercure de France*, 1772), while Noverre deemed a mix of styles to be a 'major fault' (181–182).

Although a preoccupation with the visibility of women's drawers dominates part of the chapter entitled 'The "Fair Sex" and Its Style' (most probably a reflection of the sources), Fairfax places the shortening of female dancers' skirts in the context of fashion changes at the time, while also considering the role that social and legal constraints had on female dancers' movements on stage. He argues that the eclipsing of a distinct male style of dance at the beginning of the nineteenth century led to a 'waning' art form 'bereft of male bravura . . . and deprived of situations wherein full-blooded amatory intrigues could be unfolded' (241). Critics' celebration of individual style is the subject of Chapter Six, followed by a chapter detailing 'The Meltdown of the Four Traditional Styles'. Auguste Vestris's role in this phenomenon is detailed here, as is the enlivening effect the Italianate music of Jean-Philippe Rameau had on the style of the dancers of his day (261–263). Before Vestris could meld the dance styles, it was necessary for someone to loosen the grip that the serious style had held on the public of the Paris Opéra. This was achieved by the advent of two vivacious Italian pantomime dancers, Antonio Rinaldi ('Fossano') and Barbara Campanini ('Barbarini'), in 1739. By the late 1780s dancers at the Opéra 'avail[ed] themselves of a common fund of movements irrespective of their station in the fictional world of the theatre'. Fairfax suggests that this more 'egalitarian' style of dance was a reflection of social change in the late eighteenth century (285).

Fairfax then devotes a chapter to 'Voluptuousness', a quality, he argues, that characterized all the arts in the eighteenth century. Featured subjects include private pornographic shows, the role of debauchery on stage and the inherent passion of the *pas de deux*, as well as colourful anecdotes about individual dancers. Voluptuousness was particularly valued in female dance; the 'sexless . . . disembodied spirit' of the nineteenth-century ballerina was, Fairfax argues, a reaction to the 'decadence of the ancien régime' (309).

Despite the undoubted value of this study, there are some weaknesses to which attention must be drawn. The inadequate index (less than four pages) simply fails to support the extent and the originality of Fairfax's research. Young Lolotte (Charlotte) Cammasse's performance on a tambourine at the Comédie Française in 1739, 'with beats, . . . fluency and correctness . . . [and the new addition of] the amazing feat of beating her tambourine with both feet to the fore and rear within the space of only one measure' (*Mercure de France*,



1739, given on 131) is not indexed under the dancer's name, nor under the particular dance, nor even under the institution at which this innovation was introduced. Major figures such as Marie Sallé, however, are traceable through the index, and Fairfax has discovered previously unnoted references that are well worth consulting. Although a lengthy section on the gestures, steps, costumes and properties of theatrical Furies is indexed (148–157), this is only under the term 'Furies' itself, with no cross references or subheadings under 'costume' or 'properties'. And why are Furies indexed, but not Statues or Harlequins? On a broader issue, the role that technique plays in defining style is not clarified at the outset: the relationship between Fairfax's plan to discuss technique, or 'the manner of executing the sundry steps, *ports de bras*, attitudes, and other movements' (viii) in a separate study, while declaring the subject of the present volume as 'intended in part to counter the currently received but utterly erroneous view that the theatrical dance of the eighteenth century was earthbound and limited in both number of steps and range of movement' (viii) remains uncertain. Moreover, a book offering such a wealth of new material and interpretations deserves a pungent conclusion that drives its message home. The appendix on costume makes some pertinent observations, but is not a suitable conclusion to such a study.

This book is planned as the first in a series of three studies: volume two will consider technique, while the final volume will cover pantomime ballet. Fairfax has challenged many of our perceptions with a clear-sighted approach to constructing history, working from the declared philosophy that a historical document read in isolation is not actual 'history'. Given Fairfax's striking conclusions and the breadth of his reading (he has consulted no fewer than 180 treatises, letters, diaries, memoirs, essays, reviews and iconographical sources dating from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century in English, Italian, French, German, Dutch and Russian, as well as thirty periodicals and several dozen modern studies), we can anticipate that the other volumes will also break new ground in dance history.

SARAH MCCLEAVE



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ROBERTO ILLIANO, LUCA SALA AND MASSIMILIANO SALA, EDS
MUZIO CLEMENTI: STUDIES AND PROSPECTS

Bologna: Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2002
pp. xxviii + 473, ISBN 88 8109 448 7

A Clementi revival is currently in full spate, though the pedagogical tradition he founded in England was probably never completely lost. As a fledgling piano student I took lessons with a Miss Clementi (who, however, I have since been informed, may have been only obliquely related to the composer's family) and was trained by means of Clementi's *Gradus ad Parnassum*, as well as, perhaps inevitably, being introduced to the six sonatinas of Op. 36. It was only much later that I came to know Clementi's piano sonatas, and these, together with the work of Leon Plantinga, transformed the composer's image for me in truly revelatory fashion. His image is now further transformed and enriched by the wide coverage of his life and works presented in the new *Muzio Clementi: Studies and Prospects*.

Clementi's contemporaries, as Fiona Palmer reminds us in her essay on the 1827 dinner held in his honour ('by all accounts . . . a lengthy, highly memorable occasion'), referred to his spreading 'a halo of light around us all' (81ff). Recently his star has again been in the ascendant, with the burst of musicological endeavour on behalf of the composer and his works that has been sparked particularly by the efforts of a group of Italian scholars, the editors of this volume prominent among them. The editors' work on this book has evolved 'within a project of much wider scope: the publication of the composer's *Opera omnia* in 60 volumes' (ix). Thus the hopes expressed in the *Harmonicon* obituary of 1832, quoted by Palmer ('Fashion has



for a moment neglected [his works], but time . . . will preserve and restore his compositions, when but few pages of the favourites of the day shall remain' (93)), are now being realized in gratifyingly substantial form.

'Studies and prospects' might be expected to set forth a number of agendas, and, indeed, this is the fundamental achievement of this book. The team of international scholars represented in the twenty-seven essays (in several languages) have as a common purpose their contribution to the portrayal of Clementi's many-sidedness as a musician, and his claim on our attention beyond – although not ignoring – his traditional role as 'father of the pianoforte'. The four main thematic divisions express the range of his life, work and influence, the first section focusing on a variety of places (Italy, England, Austria and Switzerland, and France), the second looking at the music in general (concertos, chamber works and symphonies – including a fine contribution on the symphonies by Massimiliano Sala, who demonstrates authoritatively why a new critical edition is needed), the third section covering topics connected with the piano (including consideration of the didactic works) and the fourth discussing Clementi as entrepreneur. This fourth section in particular conveys a sense of the breadth and depth of Clementi's activity, with an introductory survey by Dorothy de Val (examining Clementi's reinvention of himself 'from a precocious virtuoso to a keen mercantilist in the mould of Josiah Wedgwood, and a key player in the busy commercial climate of early nineteenth-century London' (323)) complemented by a number of fascinating in-depth studies, including Barry Cooper's reassessment of 'The Beethoven–Clementi Contract of 1807' in terms of the document itself and its historical perspective (the post from abroad could take a long time in those days – if it arrived at all) and Rudolf Rasch's convincing claims for Clementi's significance as 'The Last Composer-Publisher'. An additional group of three 'Lectures' explores further aesthetic, historiographical and documentary issues, including a study by Andrzej Sitarz of another émigré musician who made his career in Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century – the Polish violinist-composer Feliks Janiewicz.

The book is very generously illustrated, with a total of over sixty plates (these are, however, not always referred to specifically in the course of the chapters in which they feature and the list of plates for the essay by Donatella Degiampietro and Barbara Mingazzini, on Clementi as piano manufacturer, is not included in the preliminary list of plates but is given instead as an appendix to the essay itself). The whole volume is edited and produced to a high standard, with few apparent errors (apart from a small sprinkling of misprints) and altogether constitutes a handsome tribute to its subject. Inevitably there is some overlap among contributions, but considerable care has been taken to provide cross-referencing. The volume is furnished with a useful bibliography and indexes, both of Clementi's works cited and of names, but it would have been extremely helpful also to have for reference purposes a chronology of Clementi's life and principal publications.

The contents partly reflect those of the major international conference held in Rome in December 2002 to mark the 250th anniversary of Clementi's birth, 'Muzio Clementi Cosmopolita della Musica: convegno internazionale in occasione del 250° anniversario della nascita (1752–2002)'. [For Rohan Stewart-Macdonald's review of this conference see *Eighteenth-Century Music* 1/1 (2004), 129–133.–Ed.] Among contributions related to the conference papers are Dorothy de Val's useful survey of the piano chamber music, here broadened to encompass 'Piano Music for the Home by Clementi and his Contemporaries', though without the Gillray cartoons that enlivened the spoken version, and Leon Plantinga's keynote address, here presented under the title 'Clementi: the Metamorphoses of a Musician', as the Introduction to the volume – fitting in view of Plantinga's role as the 'father of Clementi studies'. Plantinga deftly draws together many of the threads that are pursued in the essays that follow.

Additional contributions ranging beyond the conference programme include Simon McVeigh's detailed documentary study of 'Clementi, Viotti and the London Philharmonic Society', which offers an interesting interpretation of both Clementi's role and the role of the Philharmonic Society in British concert life, and Roberto Illiano's study of Clementi's chamber music ('I trii di Muzio Clementi'). Illiano begins by articulating his concern about the way works do or do not survive in the general consciousness (in outlining the relevant source history he points out strikingly that, to date, 'essentially no musician has ever had in their hand a chamber score of Clementi' (191)) then proceeds to discuss the twenty-two 'accompanied



sonatas' – seven sets of three and a single publication – with careful reference to their market, the nature of the genre and the surrounding context of English musical life. It is clear that the music has been sidelined historically, a process regarded by Illiano as unjust. (Dorothy de Val's remark that 'only a small proportion of Clementi's work has become part of the repertory, much less canonic' (52), raises many questions about canonic and non-canonic works, some of which are addressed elsewhere in the volume.)

A number of contributors present 'close readings' of specific biographical sources and events. Among these, Federico Celestini writes on 'Un soggiorno svizzero di Clementi' and Peter Niedermüller on 'Clementi und Mozart vor den russischen Großfürsten'. Niedermüller's intention is to reinterpret the well known facts concerning the contest of 1781 between the two musicians, and to place these facts in context, rather than to present new material. His investigation encompasses an interesting comparison of their careers and, rewardingly, extends further to a comparison of their musical styles – asking (and demonstrating) how their approaches to the creation of 'Einheit' (unity) differ in ways that can be seen as characteristic of each composer. Celestini presents a translation (from the original German into Italian) of source material relating to his topic, with introduction and detailed commentary. The *Magazin der Musik* of 1786 carried an anonymous account of the 'Clavierspieler Clementi. Bern im Okt. 1784', and it is this highly informative source that is translated here, with its report of an encounter with Clementi during his stay in Switzerland, following his failed attempt to elope with Victoire Imbert-Colomès. (Notwithstanding his inevitably unsettled state of mind, Clementi apparently impressed his interlocutor with his brilliance 'not only as a musician but in every discipline'. (120))

Clementi's most legendary brilliance was of course as a keyboard virtuoso. Federico Celestini also contributes a stimulating essay on 'L'intelligenza di un virtuoso. Su alcune sonate giovanile di Muzio Clementi' to the section on Clementi and the piano, identifying as the crucial element of the style its focus on 'the new sonority'. This perspective informs his analyses of Clementi's sonatas and his revealing comparisons of these works with sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti and Beethoven.

Several broad themes emerge from the book, including the importance of the English context in illuminating the work of Clementi. In 'Clementi and the British Concerto Tradition', one of a pair of essays relating to this genre (Luca Sala focuses specifically on Clementi's Concerto in C in the other), David Rowland traces the evidence for 'a British tradition of unaccompanied concerto performance', finding that British publishing and performance practice produced a situation in which 'the notation of Tutti sections in keyboard parts [of concertos] always permits, or even encourages, solo performance' (181). Rowland provides an interesting analysis of the different versions of Clementi's C major Concerto, and a searching postscript on Clementi's edition of Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto, in which he notes that 'whatever the eventual outcome of the debate [regarding 'the inclusion of a continuo part in performances of the work'], it has not so far taken into account the British publishing conventions outlined in this chapter' (190).

Also on the topic of performance practice, it is good to see the work of the late and much-lamented Bernard Harrison included, thanks to the efforts of Mary O'Neill and William Drabkin. The span of Clementi's career has often been remarked on vis-à-vis the historical context into which it falls (stretching essentially from Mozart to Liszt), but Harrison looks at it afresh, and places performance practice issues in this frame, taking as his starting point the fact that the various stages of Clementi's revisions of his Op. 2 sonatas, over a period of nearly forty years, provide important documentation that can 'tell us in detail about changing performance practices in the period 1779 to 1820' (304). The significance of his findings is, as he indicates, not a matter of 'textual pedantry', but rather of 'radical transformations' in pianistic style (most pervasively in relation to articulation), a process in which Clementi is regarded as a key figure.

On the evidence of this volume the future for Clementi studies looks bright indeed.

SUSAN WOLLENBERG





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LEWIS LOCKWOOD

BEETHOVEN: THE MUSIC AND THE LIFE

New York: Norton, 2003

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I must declare an ‘interest’ in Lewis Lockwood’s book, since my own life-and-works study of Beethoven (*Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)) is still recent and there is inevitably some overlap. Lockwood’s own attitude, with which I would concur, is that these and other Beethoven biographies are best regarded as different portraits of the same person, viewed from different angles and with different emphases, despite their common elements. There will also be different omissions, as no portrait can show everything.

Lockwood’s particular angle is to emphasize the music – as one might deduce from the title. Accordingly, fourteen of the twenty-one chapters focus on this, with relatively little biographical context, while the others are more biographical, though not exclusively so. In this respect the book is closer to William Kinderman’s slightly earlier study, *Beethoven* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), than to my own. Some aspects of the wider historical context are also included, such as an extended discussion of Mozart’s attitude to music and nearly three pages on the rise and fall of Napoleon. Occasionally these digressions stray rather far, as in a summary of the development of national anthems from 1745 to 1931 (154–155), but most have at least a tenuous connection with the main subject.

The book contains numerous fascinating biographical and musical details, some of which will be unfamiliar even to Beethoven specialists – such as the connection between Bach’s B minor fugue from Book 1 of *Das wohltemperirte Clavier* (which Beethoven copied out in 1817–1818) and Beethoven’s C sharp minor quartet, Op. 131. Meanwhile many familiar but unreliable anecdotes are rightly omitted, and those that do appear are accompanied by appropriate cautions.

One of the most outstanding features of Lockwood’s book is his frequent recourse to Beethoven’s sketches as a means of illuminating both life and work. There is an extended account of how the composer began using sketchbooks instead of just loose leaves in 1798 – with discussion of all the biographical and musical implications of this change. In addition, Lockwood often makes passing reference to sketches when discussing particular works, or to unfinished works found among the sketches, such as numerous early jottings and a substantial D major piano fantasia. By integrating sketch study with biographical and analytical comments, he comes far closer than most biographers to showing how Beethoven actually spent a large portion of his life, and the kinds of problems he encountered in his daily work. Several interesting reproductions of individual pages of sketches and autograph scores are included among the fifty illustrations, each with an illuminating caption.

Lockwood’s deep and detailed knowledge of his subject, based on many years of study and original research, is in evidence throughout the book. Holding everything together is his engaging and lucid style of writing, which readily captures and retains the reader’s attention with elegant turns of phrase. Here is his beautifully clear and succinct summary of Beethoven’s attitude to Napoleon (183):

Beethoven’s lifelong attitude to Napoleon oscillated between admiration and dislike, between approval and revulsion, but it always carried a feeling of strong personal identification with a contemporary whose colossal ambition, will to power, and sense of destiny, however differently revealed, seemed to mirror his own.

Although one cannot be certain, after two hundred years, that this is an accurate reflection of Beethoven’s true feelings, it is a plausible assessment, considering the limited surviving evidence.

One might, then, easily be led into thinking that this is the best account yet published of Beethoven’s life and works. Unfortunately such a view is difficult to sustain in light of several problems, not all immediately obvious ones. Firstly, the book is rather oddly structured. Its major divisions are uncontentious, for they



match Beethoven's traditional 'three periods' (preceded by the years in Bonn). Within these divisions, however, some chapters are roughly chronological, whereas others are based on individual themes or genres, creating potential conflicts. Moreover, devoting whole chapters to individual genres means that works not in a standard genre will be either lost or misplaced. Thus the account of the one-act singspiels *King Stephen* and *The Ruins of Athens* is placed in a section headed 'The Seventh and Eighth Symphonies', as is also the single paragraph on Beethoven's 179 folksong settings. The account of the early sketchbooks appears in the chapter 'Music for and with Piano', while the Op. 33 bagatelles (c1802) are discussed only in the chapter on 'Late Piano Music'. And the book begins not in 1770 with Beethoven's birth but in 1787, before doubling back on itself. There may be advantages in this unusual structure, but it could also generate confusion.

A more serious difficulty lies in Lockwood's stated aim to discuss the music 'with the lay reader in mind at what I hope will be a highly accessible descriptive level' (xvi). Beethoven's music is not best served by this kind of approach. In discussions of aspects such as its emotive power and dynamism there is no problem, but this music is also remarkable for its incredible sophistication of motivic developments, tonal relationships, rhythmic innovations, harmonic subtleties and so on. These must all be passed over if one is writing mainly for the lay reader. A good illustration is the first movement of the *Pathétique* Sonata, Op. 13, where the description is strikingly limited in outlook:

The unleashed power of its first movement amazed contemporaries, even those who were becoming aware of Beethoven's C-minor mood. The strong rhetoric of the Grave introduction dramatically prepared the way for the intense Allegro first movement, which whipped up a storm of excitement not previously heard in his – or anyone else's – piano sonatas. Yet the Allegro also harbors strange and subtle moments, such as the rumbling *pianissimo* passages in the development section. (130–131)

The twofold return of the opening Grave during the Allegro is mentioned a little later, but this picture of Beethoven's genius is distinctly lopsided, with major aspects of his craft simply off-limits.

Eventually Lockwood recognizes that this type of approach does not do justice to the music, and so by the late quartets he is offering more advanced commentary that will surely challenge the average lay reader, as in his description of Op. 135. Here he refers to 'a little three-note figure that flips upward from G to B flat (at once echoed in Violin 1) . . . [and] a dotted figure F–G–E that immediately follows', and observes that 'the first notes of the viola phrase, moving upward from G to B flat and down to F, outline the "Es muss sein" figure from the canon and finale' (484). Thus the book falls awkwardly between a layman's and a specialist's guide, and may not satisfy either type of reader. Moreover, by confining such analytical comments largely to the late works, Lockwood may easily give the false impression that ingenious motivic manipulation hardly occurs in the early works or, say, the folksong settings.

Another problem resulting, perhaps, from consideration for the lay reader is the almost complete absence of music examples – surprising in a book that claims to focus on the music. Some relevant music examples can be obtained by visiting a specified website, but for most readers this will be extremely inconvenient.

Another surprising omission is a complete list of works. The 'Classified Index of Beethoven's Works' (579) turns out to be merely an index of the works mentioned in the text, and it shows some unexpected gaps. One might excuse the absence of obscure works such as the vocal trio 'Tremate', Op. 116, or even the Sonata for Piano Duet, Op. 6. But the Horn Sonata, written in 1800 for the horn virtuoso Giovanni Punto, surely deserves a discussion, as does the remarkable String Quintet Op. 29, the first work in which Beethoven places the second subject in a remote key (the submediant), and a work that gave rise to a distressing lawsuit in 1802.

In the works that are discussed there is a heavy bias towards the more popular ones, and Lockwood's judgments generally reinforce traditional views. The two singspiels mentioned above are introduced in three sentences and rapidly dismissed in one: 'Despite some exotic ideas and striking sonority effects in these works, neither is up to his higher standards' (230). These works contain far more of interest than is implied here. Similarly *Christus am Oelberge*, as so often, comes in for unjustifiably harsh treatment (269–271). More



unexpected is the negative assessment of the First Symphony. It is not classed among Beethoven's 'really original compositions' of the first period (which supposedly include works such as the Piano Trios Op. 1 and the Violin Sonatas Op. 12), but is merely a work 'written for worldly success . . . not to shock patrons or listeners too radically' (176). Even the shocking opening chord is discounted on the grounds that the chord occurs as the *second* chord (which is an entirely different matter) in several works by earlier composers. Such comments give cause for concern.

The book's worst failing, however, is its large number of errors, mostly of an elementary nature. Some early examples come in the discussion of Beethoven's first three piano sonatas, WoO 47, of 1783, where we are told that:

The first movements are in perfectly competent small-scale sonata form, in which the first theme of the exposition reappears at the beginning of the diminutive development section and leads to an abbreviated recapitulation. The slow movements are in simple forms of statement, contrast, and reprise, with slight variations on this formula; and the finales are in the regular rondo forms current at the time. [55]

Every statement here is seriously faulty. In WoO 47 No. 1, the 'diminutive' development is only five bars shorter than the entire exposition; and the 'perfectly competent' sonata form is actually somewhat irregular, with no recapitulation of the first theme. In No. 2, the 'abbreviated' recapitulation is precisely the same length as the exposition. This movement also includes a slow introduction that is unexpectedly recalled at the end of the development, thus again suggesting that Beethoven's sonata forms in these works are highly imaginative, not simply 'competent'. The slow movements are even further removed from Lockwood's description: No. 1 is in a more or less regular sonata form, with repeats; No. 2 is in binary form of the J. C. Bach type, also with repeats; No. 3 is a theme and six variations. Thus none of them consists of 'statement, contrast, and reprise'. Of the finales, only No. 1 is in a 'regular rondo form'; No. 2 is in binary form, with repeats; No. 3 also has repeats, but its quasi-sonata form includes unusual rondo elements near the end that make it formally rather interesting. It is astonishing that a writer of Lockwood's reputation should publish analysis that is so inaccurate. And he follows it up two sentences later with a reference to 'the Sonata Opus 2 No. 2 in E-flat major' (none of the Op. 2 sonatas is in E flat major).

The later pages, and the biographical sections, do not escape similar problems. Beethoven's letter to Archduke Rudolph of 3 March 1819 is quoted on page 394. The letter is No. 1292 in Sieghard Brandenburg's complete edition of Beethoven's correspondence (Ludwig van Beethoven, *Briefwechsel Gesamtausgabe* (Munich: Henle, 1996–1998)). Lockwood's endnote, however, refers to the letter as No. 1291 and claims that Emily Anderson dated it as early June 1819, since she was 'apparently working from a copy on [sic] which the date and signature had been cut off'. The date and signature had actually been cut from the original letter itself – not just from Anderson's copy – but the missing fragment has since been located. The letter is quoted again on page 400. Here Lockwood states that news appeared in 'early March 1819' that Archduke Rudolph 'had been elected' Archbishop of Olmütz, whereas the election did not take place until 23 March. Lockwood then adds, in an endnote, that Rudolph's installation as archbishop 'took place on September 3, 1820'. This last date is a misinterpretation of Brandenburg's '9.3.1820', which denotes 9 March!

It is regrettable to have to report that errors such as those described above can be found on dozens of pages of this book. No doubt some of them will now be recycled for many years to come, for once a misstatement has been made in a scholarly book it is almost impossible to remove it from circulation.

BARRY COOPER





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JOHN A. RICE

EMPRESS MARIE THERESE AND MUSIC AT THE VIENNESE COURT, 1792–1807

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pp. xx + 386, ISBN 0 521 82512 1

John A. Rice's excellent new study of the Empress Marie Therese (1772–1807) makes an important contribution to the growing body of scholarship on Vienna's musical culture. By any standard, but particularly in comparison with her Habsburg relatives, Marie Therese was an important patron of music. Her activities have, however, been largely ignored by scholarship, in part because, as Rice observes, 'scholars have tended to view artistic patronage after the French Revolution with less interest than earlier patronage' (6). It is not hard to imagine the reasons for this lack of interest. After all, in the traditional, neatly linear narrative of music history post-revolutionary artists were all striving to escape the shameful bonds of liveried service to follow only the commands of their art and genius. Nineteenth-century patronage does not fit comfortably into this scenario, and Marie Therese, whose attitude towards patronage has a definite pre-revolutionary flavour, would appear to be an inconvenient anomaly. Often imperious in her financial arrangements with composers, she rewarded some with ducat-stuffed jewelled snuffboxes but failed to pay others at all. Nor did she forbear to make compositional demands when something did not suit her, and even had the temerity to ask Joseph Haydn to recompose a passage for her copy of his *Schöpfungsmesse* (238–240). She is an inconvenient anomaly for other reasons too: her attraction to the capricious and humorous was at odds with an increasingly 'serious' aesthetic climate, and her preference for vocal and programmatic music seems out of step with the direction of Austro-German music at the beginning of the nineteenth century – or at least with *our* perception of the direction. That, of course, is precisely what makes her such a fascinating object for study in a postmodern age. She blurs the edges of a dividing line, she complicates and enriches the cultural fabric, and she forces us to confront our own beliefs about the nature of artistic creation.

Rice's study can serve as a model for reconstructing the persona and contributions of a figure like Marie Therese. He begins by reconstructing the contents of her music collection, which was dispersed after her death and partially survives in three Viennese libraries (the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and the Schottenstift). Using various archival sources, including a list of church music she bequeathed to the Hofkapelle and an inventory of scores that ended up in the collection known as the *Kaisersammlung*, Rice is able to estimate the scope of her library: over eighty operas in full score (more than a third of them comic), over forty oratorios, about five hundred excerpts from operas and sacred dramas, at least 208 pieces of sacred music and extensive holdings in instrumental music, including fifteen symphonies by Joseph Haydn. Although he provides a few lists of selected parts of the collection (for example, the church music, Mozart instrumental music and Paul Wranitzky symphonies), he does not attempt to enumerate the complete contents. That would no doubt have stretched the length and cost of the book beyond the limits of modern publishing possibilities, but it would take a very *uncurious* reader not to wonder *which* fifteen Haydn symphonies Marie Therese owned.

But Marie Therese did not simply collect music; like many eighteenth-century patrons, she organized private concerts and performed in them alongside other amateur and professional musicians. Chapter Two discusses the performers and music directors in her inner circle, which included Joseph Weigl, Paul Wranitzky, the castratos Marchesi and Crescentini and the amateur singers Christine Frank and Mathias Rathmayer. Although she played the fortepiano, Marie Therese preferred to perform as a soprano (hence her preference for amateur over professional singers). Rice devotes Chapter Three to an exploration of her vocal talents, demonstrating how composers accommodated her strengths and weaknesses (as they did with professional singers). Chapters Four and Five describe the family entertainments and formal private concerts that Marie Therese presented, which Rice can depict in detail because Marie Therese kept a diary of her concerts during the years 1801 to 1803 (these are transcribed in Appendix 2, 279–309). From these sources



Rice draws several conclusions about her taste: she preferred vocal to instrumental music; she had a fondness for opera librettos with subterranean scenes, rescue plots and themes of fidelity; she opted for recent instead of older church music; and she liked programmatic symphonies and contemporary keyboard music.

Having constructed this portrait of Marie Therese's taste and musical credentials, Rice turns in the second half of the book to examining her impact on Viennese musical life. These chapters are the most original part of his study because they document the ways in which personality, rivalry between patrons, and political or personal agendas can shape both artistic culture and compositional process. Chapter Six, entitled 'Musical Caprice', examines Marie Therese's love of the capricious and whimsical, a characteristic that her contemporaries (among them the apparently humourless Baroness du Montet) found to be 'common' and a sign of ill breeding and ignorance (128). Rice shows how this aspect of her personality shaped her patronage: she collected humorous quodlibet cantatas and symphonies, cultivated musical satires and parodies (such as Wranitzky's *Macbeth travestiert*) and commissioned compositions using unconventional instruments (including a mass with toy instruments). Although he notes that she restricted the performance of such pieces to her family entertainments and did not programme them on her formal concerts, their very existence would seem to cast a shadow over her reputation as a patron, at least in quarters that value drama and seriousness over comedy and whimsy (for example, nineteenth-century Germanic aesthetics or twenty-first-century musicology).

Having thus been introduced, this capriciousness hovers in the background as Rice examines Marie Therese's influence as a patron. Chapter Seven discusses, among other things, her support for the revival of German-language opera productions at the court-controlled theatres and her role in the organization of public benefit concerts. Chapters Eight and Nine describe her involvement with the compositional process of works she commissioned (or tried to commission) from the librettists Giovanni de Gamerra and Giuseppe Carpani and the composers Giovanni Paisiello, Ferdinando Paer and Michael Haydn. One of the projects that she envisaged but never brought to fruition was an oratorio on the theme of the Last Judgment. Her detailed sketch for the libretto reveals, according to Rice, 'her experience as a performing musician, her intimate knowledge of the musical forces available to her, and her awareness of the challenges facing both librettist and composer' (203). Her choice for a composer was none other than Joseph Haydn, and with the mention of his name, one of the subterranean issues lurking under the text of this book comes blinking into the sunlight: scholarship has not associated Marie Therese with the patronage of Haydn or Beethoven, but how can anyone who did not actively cultivate the music of its two most prominent living composers be counted as a serious patron in turn-of-the-century Vienna? Was she perhaps too capricious?

Rice acknowledges that neither Joseph Haydn nor Beethoven belonged to her inner circle of musicians. She commissioned only a single work from Haydn – the *Te Deum* – and did not programme any Beethoven pieces on the private concerts for which we have programmes. As Rice notes, however, she did not begin to establish herself as a patron until the late 1790s, when Haydn was nearing the end of his compositional career and when Beethoven had already been claimed by aristocratic patrons like Prince Lobkowitz. Given the rivalries among patrons (Rice refers to a bidding war between Lobkowitz and the Empress for the music library of the Baron van Swieten (235)), she may simply not have had the opportunity. None the less, she was clearly interested in the music of both, requesting copies of various pieces from Haydn, and publicly accepting the dedication of the Septet Op. 20 from Beethoven. In addition, she appears to have played an important, though mostly unrecognized, role in the commissioning of both the ballet music for *Prometheus* and the opera *Fidelio*. Thus Marie Therese appears to have been at least as discerning as some of her less capricious patronage rivals, and one wonders what direction Viennese music would have taken had she not died at the age of thirty-four of complications from her twelfth pregnancy.

In his introduction, Rice apologizes because the task of transcribing and explaining the mostly unknown archival documents prevented him from 'interpreting the empress's activities within a single theoretical framework and from exploring in depth their manifold implications for gender studies, economics, sociology, and cultural politics' (6). The apology is unnecessary, for sophisticated archival studies like his demand a particular type of interpretative skill. You must describe the data neutrally and transparently, so



that it does not lose its primary-source character, while at the same time making observations and connections that only a full immersion in the material can provide. Organization *is* interpretation, and Rice's chosen scheme explicates his material thoroughly and raises issues that bear further scholarly consideration, while creating a highly readable portrait of an appealing and intriguing patron. Both Marie Therese and the scholarly community have been well served by his efforts.

MARY SUE MORROW



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ANNETTE RICHARDS

THE FREE FANTASIA AND THE MUSICAL PICTURESQUE

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The eighteenth-century landscape garden appeals to one of our most fundamental psychological impulses. To stroll around a fine surviving or restored example, such as Stowe in Buckinghamshire, Painshill in Surrey or Stourhead in Wiltshire, is to be invited constantly to give way to a childlike sense of curiosity – an eagerness to know ‘what’s round the next bend’. And the landscape garden seldom disappoints. After hurrying along a narrow, twisting path, the eighteenth-century visitor was likely to be suddenly confronted by one of any number of unexpected sights: a striking statue or temple, a strange grotto, a broad vista encompassing a lake and the surrounding countryside, or even a live actor impersonating a hermit in his cave. These delights were all executed by the garden designer in a ‘natural’ style – that is, in a manner that eschewed the straight lines, clear views and ordered plantings of the ‘formal’ garden in favour of sinuous curves, partial perspectives and the (apparently) irregular arrangement of trees and shrubs.

Yet the landscape garden was much more than an eighteenth-century theme park. The aesthetic category of the ‘picturesque’ that it exemplified pointed to a number of ideas and dichotomies of pressing concern in intellectual debates of the time: art vs nature, order vs disorder, rule vs freedom. Thus, as the fashion for the landscape garden spread from England across the Continent it became the occasion for much philosophical reflection, most famously, perhaps, in Rousseau’s *La nouvelle Héloïse*. The vocabulary of the picturesque, in turn, became available for metaphorical use in other spheres. In this book, Annette Richards examines its significance for the musical genre of the free fantasia.

As Richards points out, the picturesque in this, its technical sense, has not been used before in musicology. Indeed, by comparing notable features of the musical genre and the garden style, and by uncovering a host of hitherto unsuspected references to the aesthetics of the picturesque in critical writings on the free fantasia, Richards opens up a new field of enquiry in the study of eighteenth-century music, drawing together topics that would previously have been considered disparate. It is appropriate that the book should appear in the Cambridge University Press series ‘New Perspectives in Music History and Criticism’.

In the first chapter, ‘Framing the Musical Picturesque’, Richards justifies the comparison of the fantasia and the picturesque. She points to their shared techniques of disruption, contrast and surprise, makes an analogy between the opposition of art and nature and that of composition and improvisation, and argues that each invites in the percipient a self-conscious sense of ‘aesthetic distance’. She contends that the picturesque and the free fantasia are linked in having both been marginalized in musicological discourse, the latter on account of its ephemeral nature and status as a performance art, and because of the impossibility of comprehending it by means of familiar formal models such as sonata form. Richards illustrates how a more sympathetic view can be taken by analysing C. P. E. Bach’s Fantasia in B flat H289 from the perspective of picturesque aesthetics.



In 'C. P. E. Bach and the Landscapes of Genius' Richards positions Bach's fantasias – the exemplars of the genre in the late eighteenth century – within the debates between conservative and progressive music critics. While some deplored Bach's disregard of conventional principles of musical ordering, others detected in the fantasias a secret order coexisting with an impulse to lead the listener astray – a combination that reflected the merging of rational and irrational forces in the contemporary theory of 'genius'. A number of writers, most notably Bach's friend the Hamburg critic Carl Friedrich Cramer, framed these issues in terms of the picturesque.

'The Picturesque Sketch and the Interpretation of Instrumental Music' uses an analogy between the free fantasia and the popular pastime of landscape sketching as a way of understanding the preoccupation of some contemporaries with the relationship between improvised and notated music. Of particular interest is the debate surrounding a rumoured 'fantasy machine' that was supposed to notate a fantasia performed on it in the heat of inspiration. Again the views of Cramer are given special attention, this time on account of his imaginative comparison of a fantasia and a cloudscape.

'Haydn's Humour, Bach's Fantasy' loosens the focus on the free fantasia, but, in so doing, shows how the notion of the picturesque can connect the ideas of various late eighteenth-century thinkers. Richards argues that the reception of Haydn in England in the 1790s can be understood in terms of the picturesque, especially as regards his symphonic techniques of surprise, contrast and incongruity. The picturesque finds its way into aesthetic systems that categorize musical styles, even when the quality explicitly referred to is the 'ornamental' (William Crotch), 'Laune' or 'das Launige' (Reichardt and Christian Friedrich Michaelis), or 'das Niedliche' (Friedrich Rochlitz).

'Sentiment Undone: Solitude and the Clavichord Cult' explores an unexpected corner of eighteenth-century culture. Taking the irrational aspects of the free fantasia a step further, Richards first examines Rochlitz's story 'A Visit to the Asylum', which tells of an inmate who, when he believes himself to be alone, executes extraordinary improvisations. She then turns to the connection between the clavichord and the passionate experience of solitude – an aspect of the cult of 'sensibility'. A fascinating section of this chapter concerns a song by Christian Michael Wolff, entitled 'An das Clavier'. Like many songs of this popular genre, its text treats the clavichord as a confidant for the poet's sorrows. In Wolff's setting, however, the usual modest accompaniment is replaced by a daring piece in the fantasia style.

The final chapter, 'Picturesque Beethoven and the Veiled Isis', deals with the early nineteenth century, the era in which the landscape garden achieved its greatest public popularity in central Europe. In the post-Revolutionary period the discussion of the relative merits of freedom and constraint in garden design took on more overtly political meanings. Richards finds the vocabulary of the picturesque in reviews of some of Beethoven's deliberately unconventional music and strikingly demonstrates the usefulness of the concept by explaining a review of the Choral Fantasy, Op. 80, as a reference to a Masonic ritual that was associated with picturesque settings.

The Free Fantasia and the Musical Picturesque is a major contribution to the study of eighteenth-century music, and a review cannot do justice to the range of topics it explores. Instead, I would like to venture some remarks on the book's framing rhetoric. Like many innovative works of the last fifteen years, it sets up an 'old musicology' (without actually using the term) as a foil: 'Beyond the well-pruned avenues of more conventional studies of eighteenth-century music a picturesque space beckons' (15). Those studies are said in general to privilege sonata form with its logic of 'repetition and return' and, as regards analytical techniques, to 'emphasise formal coherence and downplay surface discontinuities' (15, 100). This is the explanation for the relative neglect of the free fantasia. By contrast, for Richards, the fantasia, along with the picturesque, has 'a certain post-modern appeal'. The critical vocabulary with which she characterizes them bears out this conviction: 'fragmentation and disruption', 'unruly freedom', 'startling, often disturbing', 'fragmentary, subjective, open-ended', 'mosaic of rhapsodic, quick-changing effects', 'resistance to notation and intrinsic instability' (5, 6, 1, 15, 17, 100). One result of this rhetoric is that the argument is shaped by a series of antitheses: sonata vs fantasy; order vs disorder; mainstream vs neglected repertoire; conservatism vs subversion; old vs new musicology. Although in the second chapter Richards brings out the idea of a tension



between coherence and incoherence in the free fantasias of C. P. E. Bach, even citing with approval Heinrich Schenker's essay on the subject, later chapters leave that tension underdeveloped.

The implied political scenario is obvious (and familiar): a postmodernist critic investigates neglected or disparaged music while casting off the shackles of a modernist regime which supposedly exerts intellectual control through the idea of unity. Whatever the merits of this aspiration, it seems to me that the musicologists' quarrel sometimes threatens to get in the way of a nuanced appraisal of the specifically eighteenth-century politics of the musical picturesque. Richards describes the fantasia in the language of rebellion. Yet there was in general no easy map from landscape gardening to politics. The style was introduced to central Europe by the landed German princes. In its early days in England, the garden designers Charles Bridgeman and William Kent were patronized by Queen Caroline, wife of George II. On the other hand, the arch-Whig Lord Cobham intended his magnificent garden at Stowe to be a celebration of the Glorious Revolution and of 'ancient British liberties'. Some of this ideological diversity comes through in the final chapter, but for most of the book it remains an undercurrent. What exactly was the attitude of C. P. E. Bach, or of the articulate and imaginative Carl Friedrich Cramer? Perhaps these questions are unanswerable, but at least they deserve to be asked. Richards's tantalizing suggestion that C. P. E. Bach's Free Fantasia in F sharp minor, H300, entitled *C. P. E. Bach's Empfindungen*, 'may be read . . . as the critical utterance of a revolutionary' cries out for a more substantial historical context than the casual comparison the piece receives with the writings of Laurence Sterne and Jean Paul Richter (178).

Still, these reservations hardly detract from the enjoyment of the book, which is packed with intriguing insights, appropriate excerpts of music and elegant illustrations. In true picturesque spirit, it keeps the reader curious to find out what unusual perspective will be disclosed on turning over the next page.

MATTHEW RILEY



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GIANCARLO ROSTIROLLA (WITH ESSAYS BY STEFANO LA VIA AND ANNA LO BIANCO)

IL 'MONDO NOVO' MUSICALE DI PIER LEONE GHEZZI

Milan: Skira, 2001

pp. 495, ISBN 88 8118 427 3

Among several Italian caricaturists active during the first half of the eighteenth century, Pier Leone Ghezzi (1674–1755) was the most prolific and talented. Using a distinctive technique (perhaps learned from print makers) in which parallel lines of varying thickness suggest various degrees of shadow, Ghezzi captured with pen and ink the personalities and physical idiosyncrasies of hundreds of Romans and visitors to the Eternal City. He added to many of his portraits biographical remarks about the person portrayed, often including information about relations between the artist and the subject and the date of the portrait. Although many of the drawings are now scattered in museums and private collections across the world, the majority of surviving drawings are preserved in eight albums in the Vatican Library (MSS Ott. 3112-19), collectively entitled *Mondo novo*.

As a music lover and amateur musician, Ghezzi made musicians a frequent subject of his caricatures, many of which depict performers at the Monday concerts that he gave for many years at his residence in Rome. The musical drawings include some of his finest work, his own musical expertise and passion for the art bringing to these portraits extraordinary vitality and a palpable sense of authenticity. Some of these drawings, especially those of famous composers like Pergolesi and Jommelli, have been known for a long



time and often reproduced, but many others had never been published until they appeared in Giancarlo Rostirolla's valuable but severely flawed book.

Ghezzi's portraits of musicians are important not only because they preserve likenesses of singers, instrumentalists and composers both great and small (many of whom are portrayed nowhere else). They also depict a wide variety of music making, analysed by Pierluigi Petrobelli in an important series of articles. Ghezzi shows how keyboard players sat (and sometimes stood) at their instruments. (Look, for example, at the splendid picture of Gaetano Franzaroli, No. 180, standing with his back to the viewer at the keyboard of a harpsichord.) He shows how violinists and other string players held their instruments and their bows. He depicts the composer Nicola Logroscino conducting an orchestra by tapping the fingers of his right hand against the cheek-piece of his harpsichord (No. 320). No evidence of musical life in Rome during the first half of the eighteenth century is more remarkable and valuable than this corpus of drawings and their accompanying inscriptions.

The idea of bringing all of Ghezzi's musical caricatures together in a single volume goes back to the Roman musicologist Alberto Cametti, who proposed the project to a publisher in 1926. Three-quarters of a century later, the idea has finally come to fruition in a volume much larger than Cametti (who apparently knew only the Vatican albums) envisaged, comprising about 385 images – both drawings by or attributed to Ghezzi and engravings based on his drawings. (Cametti proposed the publication of about 165 drawings.)

Rostirolla presents the drawings in chronological order, in so far as this can be determined by the dates on many of the portraits and other evidence (such as the stylistic features characteristic of particular parts of Ghezzi's oeuvre and the dates of particular musicians' visits to Rome). Most of the engravings fall outside the chronological framework; with few exceptions they are illustrated alongside the drawings on which they are based. One of the exceptions involves an engraved portrait of the buffo singer Francesco Baglioni, reproduced here in an illustration that is much too small and indistinct (No. 185). Rostirolla makes no mention of the original drawing, which he was apparently unable to find. What was apparently the drawing in question was sold at auction in 1986 (see the auction catalogue published by Christie's New York: *Fine Old Master Drawings*, Tuesday, 14 January 1986, lot number 163).

The main body of plates (Nos 1–328) is followed by two appendices with photographs of drawings discovered too late for inclusion in the chronologically ordered series (Nos 329–376) and several drawings of uncertain attribution (Nos 377–384). Most of the drawings are illustrated in colour, and most have been reproduced very clearly, though a significant minority of reproductions are disappointingly fuzzy (for example, the portraits of the tenor Gregorio Babbi, No. 238, and of the composer and violinist Carlo Tassarini, No. 222). Ghezzi generally carried his drawings to the very edge of the sheet, so it is a pity that in a few cases (for example, the wonderful portrait of Logroscino at the keyboard) the edges of the sheets are cut off, along with an unknown amount of Ghezzi's drawings.

Apparently when Rostirolla was unable to obtain good photographs he seems to have had recourse to photocopies, with predictably ugly results (for example, a collection of portraits of papal singers, Nos 36–39, a portrait of the soprano Biagio Ermini, No. 131, and a picture of a cellist and a listener standing behind him, No. 312). The well known and important caricature of Farinelli in a female role, No. 84, is reproduced backwards, and so small as to be almost useless.

Following the plates is a very detailed and useful catalogue, with commentary on each drawing and engraving, including biographical information about all the musicians portrayed, transcription of any writing that appears on the drawing and bibliography. The transcriptions contain quite a few errors. For example, in No. 10 the date should probably be 1710, not 1708; in No. 35 the month should probably be 'Decembre', not 'Novembre'; and in No. 37 'D. Antonio' should probably read 'D. Ambrogio'. (This apparent misreading invalidates much of the entry that follows, which consists largely of speculation about the identity of a singer named Antonio.) In No. 40 'Vincenzo' should read 'Vincenzio'; in No. 73 the phrase 'nell'opera d'Adelaide' has been left out of the transcription after the name Matilde; in No. 166 'et d'altre' should probably read 'et altre'; in No. 174 'sona' should read 'suona' and the date should probably be '8 Maggio', not '1 Maggio'. In No. 179, 'suonator' should read 'sonator', and 'da' should read 'con'; in No. 183



the words 'di musica' have been left out after 'mia accademia'. And so forth. The mistakes are so frequent that future scholars will unfortunately have to check Rostirolla's transcriptions against the originals before making use of them. More troubling is that these errors are typical of the book's scholarly apparatus as a whole, which would have greatly benefited from more careful fact-checking and proofreading.

The book has been elegantly produced, with thick, glossy paper and a strong binding. (My copy, however, is marred by a binding error: two gatherings (196–208 and 209–224) have been bound in the wrong order.) Making available to scholars for the first time one of the most important bodies of visual documentation of eighteenth-century music, *Il 'Mondo novo' musicale di Pier Leone Ghezzi* deserves a place in all libraries devoted to the serious study of the history of music or the history of art.

JOHN A. RICE



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JAIME TORTELLA (WITH A PREFACE BY YVES GÉRARD)

BOCCHERINI: UN MÚSICO ITALIANO EN LA ESPAÑA ILUSTRADA

Madrid: Sociedad Española de Musicología, 2002

pp. iv + 534, ISBN 84 86878 80 2

The posthumous critical fortune of Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805) has been both peculiar and, in its way, exemplary. Shortly after his death the composer's reputation went into deep eclipse – except in French-speaking musical cultures, where it had long been bright, and continued to shine for quite some time. This can be traced in various media: the magnificent collected edition of the composer's quintets undertaken by the Parisian firm of Janet & Cotelie in 1813; Fétis's sympathetic entries in his *Biographie universelle*, first published in Brussels in 1835; and in Pierre Baillot's copious and perceptive remarks on Boccherini's chamber music in his violin method of that same year. Felix Mendelssohn encountered a Boccherini quintet at one of Baillot's soirées in 1831; his remark that the music was 'a peruke, but with a very charming old man underneath it' (*Reisebriefe aus den Jahren 1830 bis 1832*, second edition, ed. Paul Mendelssohn Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1862), 262) attests to the decline of Boccherini's reputation in German-speaking lands: to be deemed old-fashioned – however charming one might be – was to die a critical death.

Parisian enthusiasm for Boccherini, however, continued. In 1851 Louis Picquot, a tax-collector at Bar-le-Duc and a musical amateur of considerable taste and literary ability, published the first biography of the composer, a sketch appended to a catalogue of his works; it was republished in 1930 with additional commentary by Georges Saint-Foix ('Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Luigi Boccherini, suivé du catalogue raisonné', in Saint-Foix, *Boccherini: Notes et Documents* (Paris: Legoux, 1930)). Yves Gérard has remarked that 'All later works dealing with Boccherini have done no more than reproduce, borrow from or translate this fundamental work' (Gérard, *Thematic, Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini*, trans. Andreas Mayor (London: Oxford University Press, 1969)). This is a cause for both gratitude and caution, as Picquot's work is in the grand old nineteenth-century tradition of anecdotal biography: a colourful, but largely uncorroborated, string of stories and opinionated criticism.

The Baroness Germaine de Rothschild, of the French branch of the great banking family, was mother-in-law of the cello virtuoso Gregor Piatigorsky. It was through him that she became interested in Boccherini – enough so to do an impressive amount of amateur research. She published her *Luigi Boccherini: sa vie, son oeuvre* in 1961; its 1965 translation by Andreas Mayor (*Luigi Boccherini: His Life and Work* (London: Oxford University Press)) made it the first full-length English-language treatment of the composer. Rothschild also sponsored the research for, and publication of, Gérard's monumental 1969 catalogue of Boccherini's works, published in English and still a gold standard within its genre for its careful, thorough and balanced



scholarship. Inevitably, a certain amount of new information has been uncovered since the catalogue's publication; Gérard is at work on a second edition.

Meanwhile, the Italians had rediscovered Boccherini as a native son. His body was disinterred from its Madrid resting place in 1927 and reburied in his native Lucca. There has been a sprinkling of Italian biographies since. In large part they continue to derive from Picquot; not until the late 1980s did Italian scholars begin to produce really new work on Boccherini. The 1988 biography by Luigi della Croce (*Il Divino Boccherini: vita, opere, epistolario* (Padua: Zanibon)) includes a useful Epistolario, and has some new insights into the music, while those of Remigio Coli (*Luigi Boccherini* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 1988; revised 1992)) bring to light some interesting new documents pertaining to Boccherini's early life and manage to depart from most of the recycled anecdotes and critical estimations of the composer.

Over the last generation or so we have seen a modest swell in critical studies of Boccherini's music. I mention here only the German scholar Christian Speck's thoughtful, intensive style-critical work in German and in English (see, for example, *Boccherinis Streichquartette: Studien zur Kompositionsweise und gattungsgeschichtlichen Stellung*, ed. R. Bockholdt (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1987)); a handful of doctoral dissertations, including one from Israel (Miriam Tchernowitz-Neustadt, 'The String Trios of Luigi Boccherini', University of Ramat Gan, 1991) and three from the United States (Ellen Iris Amsterdam, 'The String Quintets of Luigi Boccherini', University of California at Berkeley, 1968; Timothy Noonan, 'Structural Anomalies in the Symphonies of Boccherini', University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1996; and my own, "'As my compositions show me to be": Physicality as Compositional Technique in the Instrumental Music of Luigi Boccherini', University of California at Berkeley, 1997); the proceedings from a 1993 symposium, *Luigi Boccherini e la musica strumentale dei maestri italiani*, with both analytical and contextual articles by nineteen authors (*Chigiana* 23 (1993)); a fine 1995 biographical article by the American scholar Daniel Hertz ('The Young Boccherini: Lucca, Vienna, and the Electoral Courts', *Journal of Musicology* 13 (1995), 103–116); and a slender but eloquent 1992 volume by the Spanish scholar Ramón Barce (*Boccherini en Madrid. Primeros años: 1768–1779* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Madrileños)).

By virtue of its slenderness, however, this last book points out the great lacuna in Boccherini scholarship. I have referred to the composer above as 'Italian/Spanish', with the intent of asserting his adopted nationality on a par with his native one, for the composer lived in Spain – mostly Madrid and its environs – for well over half his life, from 1769 until his death in 1805. We have no solid evidence that he ever left, and his descendants still live there. But all his biographers save Barce (who confines himself to early episodes) have treated the Spanish part of Boccherini's life in a notably desultory manner, while in-depth discussions of his place as an artist within Spanish musical culture have been very scarce. (The best general one we have had so far is an overview by Antonio Martín Moreno, 'Siglo XVIII', embedded within the eighteenth-century volume of *Historia della música española*, ed. Pablo López de Osaba (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1985)). It appears strangely as if, in moving to Spain, Boccherini walked right off the map of Western music, and behind the infamous and ancient *cortina negra*, the 'black curtain' that so often separates Spanish history from that of the rest of Europe. Ancient the *cortina* may be, but it is not really defensible that Boccherini's Spanishness should have been so neglected.

It is into this lacuna that Jaime Tortella has stepped, initially with a short book on Boccherini's personal finances (*Luigi Boccherini y el Banco de San Carlos: un aspecto inédito* (Madrid: Editorial Tecnos, 1998)), and then with several articles ('Boccherini, su tercera crisis de creación y el Conde de Aranda: una hipótesis explicativa', *Nassarre (Revista aragonesa de musicología)* 14 (1998), 179–194; 'Las viviendas madrileñas de Luigi Boccherini: una laguna biográfica' (with José Antonio Boccherini Sánchez), *Revista de musicología* 24 (2001), 163–187). He has now produced a large, meticulous biography. Tortella's purpose is frankly corrective, as his subtitle indicates: he is concerned with presenting Boccherini to us in his Spanish milieu. Thus he hopes to do better justice to 'this new Spaniard whom our country still has not known how to value as he deserves' (10). Given this unprecedented purpose, it is not surprising that his book contains a good deal of new material and that it essays some new critical perspectives on the composer. Tortella has made a



concerted effort to avoid received wisdom and to evaluate Boccherini's life anew. This effort, undertaken hand in hand with some impressive archival research, makes this a landmark biography.

In his *Preámbulo*, Tortella frames his project in true Enlightenment fashion, as an operation of *shedding light*. He focuses upon aspects and episodes of Boccherini's Spanish years that have remained obscure, some as the result of scanty documentation, others as the result of previous scholarly carelessness. The main areas of biographical shadow to which Tortella turns his attention are three: the question of whether Boccherini travelled to Prussia from Spain sometime after 1785; the decade 1787–1796, 'until now an absolute documentary and informational vacuum' (10); and the idea that Boccherini died in poverty (this last topic having also been addressed in Tortella's earlier book).

In so framing his project, Tortella has invoked some larger frameworks as well. The first is epistemological. Documentation – that is to say, the lack thereof – is a terrible problem in studying Boccherini. Any serious treatment of the composer's life becomes perforce a demonstration of a crucial, perennial problem of historical method. This was articulated by Gérard in a wonderful article in 1967 ('Luigi Boccherini and Madame Sophie Gail', *The Consort* 24, 294–309), which gives a frank account, both heart-breaking and hilarious, of the difficulties he encountered in trying to authenticate one short anecdote by Picquot. The struggle prompts some eloquent meditations on the 'total impossibility of locating a particular document that could throw light on a specific event'. Where Boccherini is concerned, this situation occurs frequently. As Gérard himself puts it, 'The solid mass of second-hand information, given with no quoted authority, forms a barrier before which any research is brought to a standstill, often with no way of distinguishing between what could be fact and what must be invention' (295).

Later, after a minute elaboration of his attempts to penetrate this 'solid mass' on a single issue (that of Boccherini's purported meeting with the French pianist and woman of letters Sophie Gail), Gérard admits: 'my own despair, confronted with the infernal labyrinth of the Gail affair, was both certain and complete!' (300).

Within the difficult landscape limned by Gérard, Tortella's caution is exemplary. He presents his research with a scrupulous awareness of its own limits. Indeed, his awareness leads him to repeated methodological excursions and cautionary interventions in his biography's narrative momentum, and it makes for some bumpy reading. Quite often, an entire discussion will be framed as a corrective to carelessness among previous biographers, and Tortella is not always explicit about the initial mistakes. Without a detailed knowledge of the preceding scholarship on these topics, the reader may be puzzled by the doubling-back on apparently incidental points, and the persistent tone of refutation. Nevertheless, the insistence of this book is in its way eloquent: it serves as a reminder of the epistemological risks inherent in biography.

It is Gérard again, at the end of the Sophie Gail article and also in a 1992 letter quoted by Tortella, who articulates another framework within which this biography moves: that 'research on the life and activities of Boccherini can and ought to be done by local researchers' (12). This is an arresting assertion, especially to the Boccherini scholar who has not the good fortune to be Spanish. I think Gérard means it as a corrective, in the context of the relative lack of Spanish work on the composer; but it raises an interesting larger question, one deserving of serious contemplation. To what extent has a foreigner the authority to explain another culture? The question has particular application to eighteenth-century Spain, so long known to the rest of the world only through accounts by outsiders – men like Swinburne and William Beckford, who included it on their grand tours, or career diplomats, like Jean-François Bourgoing. Such accounts are invaluable, but they also, inevitably, make commonplace things exotic; and thus they necessarily lack a certain thickness of description that would reflect the actual experience of living and working there. Eighteenth-century Spanish intellectuals were sensitive to this, even as they tended to participate in the exotic interpretations that made them comprehensible to the rest of Europe. Thus in 1774 José Cadalso complained of 'the shallowness of those who through their own brief observations, or . . . only through the accounts of inobservant travellers, have spoken of Spain' – even as he presented his own account of his country through the eyes of a fictitious Moroccan visitor (*Cartas marruecas* (c1774), ed. Joaquín Marco (Barcelona: Planeta, 1985), 11).



One of the strongest qualities in Tortella's biography is the way he is able to meet Cadalso's 230-year-old challenge, writing observantly and in depth of the composer's Spanish cultural milieu. As a historian trained in his country's splendid tradition of archival research, Tortella is able to do an exceptional job of providing documentary context, a manoeuvre that serves him particularly well where specific biographical information is missing and a manoeuvre that raises yet another interesting question of method – namely, the extent to which biography must be about a specific person. Where, indeed, does person end and context begin? Tortella makes good use of the ambiguities that follow from this question.

For example, Tortella's use of the technique of contextual extrapolation is very substantial in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, which treat Boccherini's life during the years from 1775, when his patron Don Luis de Borbón was exiled from Madrid. This important period in the composer's life has never been examined in detail; not only do we lack much direct evidence, but it was a peripatetic time, making the hunting-down of documents a complicated business indeed. Tortella has done that hunting; he offers us a rich array of documentary information, and although much of it is necessarily peripheral, he constructs a vivid picture from its implications. We learn of the court's many displacements in the years following 1775, and of the places to which it moved – most of them small towns to this day. A detailed discussion of floor plans and layout of the Palacio de la Mosquera in Arenas suggests how a noble family lived in spatial relation to its dependents; we are given epistolary evidence of visits to Boccherini from his brother, the poet Giovanni Gastone (who, for all his distinguished career in Vienna, seems to have been a bit of a pest and a whiner); we read documents by Don Luis's confessor that sketch a sad portrait of the Infante's failing health and marital discord, 'a veritable hell in surroundings that should have been a paradise' (184). Finally, and most virtuosically, Tortella uses bank records in order to explain the composer's uneven rate of productivity during 1780–1781 and then again in 1783–1784 (building here on his own 1998 article).

Tortella admits: 'It is difficult . . . to give a sense of the musician's relation to the surroundings in which he lived, although . . . we do know his economic means' (239–240). Yet this apparently small key, financial records, opens many doors, becoming in the end a fine example of 'reading out' a life from a pile of documents. From the drafts of wills and marriage documents, Tortella sketches the kind of daily personal social network within which lives such as Boccherini's were lived. It is both illuminating and moving to read extracts from Boccherini's 'Escripttura de capital' for 1787, a list of possessions that the composer brought to his second marriage. Nine double-sided pages long, its extent tells us that Boccherini was reasonably well-to-do and its thoroughness that he was (as he himself once put it in a letter), 'a man of probity', thorough and responsible almost to a fault. Also for this reader at least, the very humility of its contents (bedclothes, table silver, cash on hand and so forth) serves to make this man come to life for us, as no amount of glowing adjectival prose can do.

Tortella devotes one section of this chapter to the family of string players with the surname Font, four sons and a father, whom Boccherini came to know during the 1770s. Various Fonts remained close to the composer throughout his life. Unlike their friend Boccherini, they were not composers, nor virtuosos, but 'mere' orchestral musicians, and Tortella is able to demonstrate that, as a direct result of their more humble status as musicians, their fortunes were at best uncertain, and at times hard indeed. There is considerable pathos not far below the surface of the account of the 'declaración de pobre' made by Francisco Font and his wife in 1789 (248–249), giving a gritty documentary edge to the summary on page 250:

The musical world in which Boccherini is involved offers no amenities. Rather, it is a hostile environment which requires sacrifices, causes anxiety and at times penury, and which on many occasions obliges one to humble oneself in order to meet one's most urgent needs.

In this vein, the bumpiness of Tortella's narrative style at times pays off – he will 'snag' on some small detail, only in order to spin out from it another web of valuable context. Thus the death of Boccherini's oldest daughter, Joaquina, in 1796 at the age of twenty-five prompts observations on the possible effect of some years of bad harvests – a general 'situation of scarcity and lack' (311) – upon the urban population and on the death rate of Madrid during the 1790s. By pages 323–324 Tortella is not mincing words about 'the disastrous



reign of Carlos IV . . . [in which] wars [caused] precipitous falls in prices . . . famines, and epidemics'. For the non-Spanish reader, these excursions into the fraught and complicated political-economic situation in *fin de siglo* Spain are helpful indeed.

Every interested reader of a documentary biography will begin, I think, to compile a list of 'openings' that beg further attention. In my own case, this includes the reference on page 266 to Boccherini's cellos, which appears in the 'Escripttura de capital': an instrument by 'Estayner' – that is to say, Stainer – and a 'Violon Chico' – that is, a 'little cello'. (The idea that Boccherini owned a Stradivarius, first proposed by the Spanish cellist Gaspar Cassadó in the 1960s, and in the *New Grove Dictionary* perplexingly multiplied into *two* cellos by that maker, has no documentary support; it seems to be little more than a fond fantasy.) This simple entry, cheek by jowl with inventories of books and clothing, suggests volumes. Stainers were the most prestigious instruments of Boccherini's generation – the Strads of the late eighteenth century, as it were. That he owned one in 1787 suggests that, despite his apparent abandonment of a virtuoso career after 1770, he continued to take himself seriously as a cellist. And the sonic qualities of these Tyrolean cellos, in particular their sweetness in the upper registers, irresistibly invite inferences about the contribution of Boccherini's equipment to his heavy use of the alto and soprano ranges, for which his cello music is so justly famous (some cellists might say, notorious). Furthermore: where is this cello now? (Suggestively, there is a Stainer cello in the collection of the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid.)

Meanwhile, a 'little cello' might be a so-called 'violoncello piccolo'. Such instruments frequently had an additional top string, tuned to D or E, and thus offered extended, and much less problematic, access to those same upper registers. If this is so (and we are unlikely to be able to prove it either way), then a fair number of my own theories about the executorial genesis of Boccherini's compositional style will be in need of severe revision.

Further intriguing 'openings' appear from page 278 onwards, where Tortella coordinates the text of Farinelli's *Fiestas reales* (Carlo Broschi, called Farinelli, *Fiestas reales* (1758) (Madrid: Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, 1972)) – the famous singer's own accounts of the operatic establishment he created in and around Madrid from 1746 to 1758 – with documents surrounding Boccherini's second marriage to Joaquina Porreti. Joaquina was the daughter of the cellist Domingo Porreti, who as Farinelli's continuo cellist was an important figure in the opera orchestra, 'putting the orchestra together with his cello and his fingers', as Farinelli describes it (277). Here we find, simultaneously, a rare acknowledgment of the central importance of the continuo cellist in opera seria, and of the considerable status, within Boccherini's 'web of friendship and marriage within the guild of musicians in Madrid' (280), of the family into which he married.

My own interpretations of this particular 'opening' bring me into some conflict with Tortella's ideas elsewhere in the book. Porreti's role and status make it clear that this second marriage, just like Boccherini's first, was into a family involved with musical theatre. Indeed, the composer's own family had the same bias: not only did his elder brother Giovanni Gastone have a career as a librettist, but several of Boccherini's sisters became professional dancers. Nevertheless, it is certainly true, as Tortella remarks, that 'Boccherini was never [much of] a composer for the stage, of opera, or of vocal music' (62). Where I differ from him is in his assertion that 'opera and its kindred arts, above all the so-called opera seria, remained outside of the Luccan's angle of vision'. As a way of accounting for the sometimes highly dramatic turns in Boccherini's music, Tortella resorts instead to the idea of *Sturm und Drang* (61). This seems to me unnecessarily tortuous, *Sturm und Drang* being a primarily German phenomenon of the 1770s – well after Boccherini had left German-speaking lands, and well before he became intimately involved with Haydn's music. Meanwhile, he had a rich fund of dramatic compositional conventions directly available to him via the opera seria tradition, to which we know he was repeatedly exposed.

Such conflicts are an inevitable result of the 'openings' created in a documentary biography. People will interpret different sets of facts very differently, calling upon different aspects of the 'same' material to support their theories. It is one of the strongest and most appealing features of Tortella's scholarship that he leaves the door open to such divergent interpretation; this intellectual generosity permits us to remember that the value of divergent opinions is not in their resolution, but in the further, deeper questions they raise



– in this case, the puzzling question of *why* Boccherini did *not* choose to write more music for the stage, given his exposure to it, its maximal prestige and (as I see it, at any rate) his natural penchant for it.

Tortella also features discussions of the works, which he includes in separate chapters alongside those of the life, as is standard in biography. He writes as an amateur: that is, his training is as a historian, and his musical experience is that of the avid listener. I believe quite strongly that extremely insightful music criticism can be written without musicological credentials, and even more strongly, that it can be essayed without reliance on the score examples, jargon and structuralist posturing that have raised such an effective barrier between musicology and the rest of the humanities. Indeed, I would go so far as to argue that in this regard, non-musicologists enjoy an almost ideal authorial position as biographers of musicians, offering as my example the splendidly integrated musical discussions in the Mozart and Beethoven biographies of Maynard Solomon. Although Solomon does use score references quite a lot, his discussions are eminently digestible without them. Tortella is in a position like Solomon's, and, for the most part, he makes good use of it. His discussions of Boccherini's works, and of their music-historical context, are nicely pitched towards an educated general readership; a good example is his sketch of the history of the violoncello on pages 51–53, which concisely presents information essential for understanding this composer.

Tortella's musical discussions do occasionally revert to received wisdom, and in so doing miss a few really crucial tricks. For the musicologist reader, these reversions create 'openings' of a different, more frustrating kind. For example, the discussion on pages 56–58 of Boccherini's heavy reliance on certain key areas – an important issue in understanding this composer – makes no reference either to the centuries-long influence of modal theory (without doubt a part of the composer's early training) on period conceptions of major and minor modes or to the substantial period literature on key associations (that is, the 'meanings' of different keys, as generally understood in the eighteenth century), as collected and summarized by Rita Steblin (*A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, second edition (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002)).

It would be merely a cheap shot for a musicologist to take issue with occasional failures of music-critical sophistication, had Tortella not exhibited so much of exactly that sophistication in other places; he himself sets the bar high. He offers, for instance, a fine summary of the importance of misattributed works (Boccherini having been very richly provided with them): 'If the putting-together of a catalogue has as its goal the documentation of an artist's work, it seems logical that it includes all that which implies a valuation [of that artist] on the part of other artists of the same ilk; false attributions bear at heart an indubitable critical importance' (66–67).

Tortella also knows how to ask trenchant questions about compositional process. He ends his Chapter Eight with a comparison of works produced by Boccherini and by Francisco de Goya at Arenas, and then enquires: 'Why did Goya avoid [depicting] his surroundings in order to concentrate only on the aspect of portraiture? Why did both Boccherini and Goya ignore part of the environment that surrounded them?' (194). While Tortella wisely does not produce an answer here, he has posed a question that needs to be asked, especially as regards Boccherini's marked, lifelong (and un-Goya-like) resistance to incorporating identifiably 'Spanish' elements in his compositions. Similarly, after regaling us with a highly entertaining, longish quotation from Casanova's *Memoirs*, which goes into some detail about the risqué nature of the fandango, Tortella asks in honest perplexity, 'How can it be that Boccherini, a profoundly religious man, serious and somewhat circumspect, opted to use this supposedly lascivious rhythm?' (302). Here one is moved to reflect on the juxtapositions of sacred and secular, serious and frivolous, high-minded and absolutely vulgar, all characteristic of the age (and while not only in Spain, perhaps especially sharply delineated there). What seems worth suggesting here is that this might not have seemed all that incongruous to Boccherini; after all, Casanova himself tells us that the fandango was explicitly permitted by no less than the King's First Minister, the Conde de Aranda!

This biography is at present available only in Spanish, though Tortella hopes to translate it into other languages, including English. I hope that an English-language press will see fit to ask him to do this in the near future. I hope this selfishly, of course, as I am an aficionada of this composer. But I also hope it because



I think Boccherini offers a valuable opportunity to the current discipline of musicology. The composer lived and worked during the period still generally identified as ‘Classic’ and generally conceived of as located in and around Vienna. But he chose to live his life in a place that had precious little to do with Vienna (although he had spent time in that city as a young man) and, furthermore, his work’s greatest strength lies in musical and cultural values that have precious little to do with Classicism (although he certainly knew the styles that have since come under that rubric). Boccherini offers us a chance to develop a new, much more diverse perspective on a crucial period in Western musical history, a period which in my opinion has suffered from an exclusive focus on certain values. In order to engage in this delicate operation on his behalf, we need accurate information about the man, his life and his milieu, and we need more of it. Jaime Tortella’s book is a really significant advance in this direction.

ELISABETH LEGUIN



EDITIONS

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FIESTA DE NAVIDAD EN LA CAPILLA REAL DE FELIPE V: VILLANCICOS DE FRANCESCO CORSELLI, 1743

ED. ÁLVARO TORRENTE

Madrid: Patrimonio Musical, 2002

pp. 347, ISBN 84 381 0377 4

This volume contains seven sacred *villancicos* by Francesco Corselli (or Courcelle), born in Piacenza in 1705 of French parents. Corselli moved to Madrid in 1733, where Isabel de Farnese, a former pupil of his father, reigned with Felipe V, and became Maestro de la Capilla Real in 1739. In addition to 137 *villancicos* tabulated in this edition, his output also included some thirty masses, many psalms, lamentations, motets and so forth, as well as oratorios and operas, but of his instrumental works only a concertino and seven violin sonatas seem to have survived. The volume under review is an attempt to present six of the *villancicos* performed during the matins for Christmas Day in 1743, with one from 1748. It is the first publication of any of Corselli’s works.

The purpose of the volume, as explained in the Introduction, is to present the sacred *villancicos* as a unified series rather than as individual compositions. Álvaro Torrente considers Corselli to be on a par with Handel, Soler and Scarlatti, reflecting the existence of a cultural unity in Europe. This is in direct contradiction to how he was perceived by Spanish historians, including Soriano Fuertes in 1859 and Rafael Mitjana in 1920; as a non-native Spanish composer he has generally been discredited by Spanish musicologists as a *foreign* mediocrity who had worked in Parma (from which city the Queen hailed), a fact that ignores the success in the peninsula of such luminaries as Boccherini and Scarlatti.

The first chapter of the comprehensive Introduction presents biographical details about the composer and also includes a table with extensive information about the resources of the Capilla Real between 1701 and 1749 under the maestros Durón and José de Torres, who preceded Corselli. (Innovations in this period include the introduction of violas, violoncellos, fagotto and tromba.) From the graph tabulating the chronological distribution of manuscripts by Corselli we can see that the *villancicos* featured only between 1738 and 1750, while the Latin works covered almost his entire creative life (1726–1778).

The second chapter assesses the development of the sacred *villancico* and its cultivation in the Capilla Real. Of particular interest is the detailed table giving the structure of the matins of Christmas over three



nocturnos or blocks, as found in one of the books of Gregorian Chant copied for use in the Capilla Real between 1752 and 1758 and covering all of the requirements for the liturgical year. The seven *villancicos* included in this edition are spread over the three nocturnos, confirming their interludial character. This particular matins used to take place over several hours, with ten complete psalms, nine readings and traditional homilies, so the interpolation of musical interludes would have provided welcome relief! Contrary to the practice in the majority of cathedrals, there was apparently no *villancico* after the eighth responsory.

The following section deals specifically with the *villancico* output of Corselli; it may seem strange that his works were chosen for such a volume, as he was not a native Spaniard and produced *villancicos* only during the first thirteen years of his position as maestro. All of his works are preserved in the Archivo General de Palacio. The third table gives details of the two services (Reyes and Navidad) from these years that included *villancicos*, identifying the locations of the manuscripts and the printed sheets that survive; the works for Reyes in 1740, 1743, 1744 and 1747–1749 are missing, as are those for Navidad in 1745 and 1747. A fourth table gives a complete listing of all of the 137 *villancicos* by Corselli; in alphabetical order of first line, the table also includes the number of the printed sheet and the service (in addition to Navidad and Reyes, Corselli also composed for Santísimo Sacramento), the position during the service and (where known) the year for which it was composed. A full description of one sheet, Navidad 1743, is also given, and the next section in Torrente's volume deals with the music for Navidad 1743. Of the seven *villancicos* listed, the seventh, a Pastorela, has not survived; a similar work composed originally for Navidad in 1748 was therefore chosen for this publication. Useful information concerning the Italian background to Corselli's compositions and its integration with native forms is particularly enlightening; this is precisely what aroused the ire of native theorists such as Nassarre, de Sayas and Feijóo y Montenegro. A short table lists the other feasts to which the *villancicos* under discussion were also assigned. A detailed study of each *villancico* comprises formal analysis and explanation of the structure and resources required.

In the penultimate section the sources of the individual works are listed in detail, and described in full; one table gives the manuscripts in which the work is found and collates the resources required for each piece, and another lists the principal copyists of the Capilla Real between 1706 and 1771. The texts of each work are given in the following section, enabling us to see at a glance the different forms that are used: the second, third and fifth *villancicos* employ only the *recitado* and aria, more typical of the Italian cantata, while the first and fourth prefix these with an *estribillo*. Numbers six and seven are in the traditional Spanish structure of *estribillo* and *coplas*.

The musical text covering pages 61 to 347 is clearly printed, with the different families of instruments and the grouping of the vocal parts either by choir or by voice indicated clearly by a bracket. This does mean, however, that each printed page covers only five or so bars. No realization of the harpsichord part is given, players being presumed to have sufficient skill to improvise in a tasteful style; a reading through the *regras* by José de Torres (Corselli's predecessor as maestro at the Capilla Real until just before his death in 1738) would be an ideal preparation for this task. The music itself is most attractive, with skilful alternation and overlapping of choirs and demanding passagework for both violins and both oboes, especially in the fast *estribillos*, providing a pleasing contrast of timbre. The arias offer perhaps the most varied music, melodically and rhythmically, with many wide leaps, and diminished and augmented intervals. In the first *villancico* the aria is for soprano; marked Allegro, it has demanding passages in semiquavers that require most careful phrasing and breath control, certain parts being in unison with the first violin. There are occasional points where vocal semiquavers contrast with instrumental triplets and sextuplets. The aria in the third *villancico* is written for a tenor solo against a full orchestra including trumpets, and although at Andante it is not a virtuoso piece, it is still demanding. The fourth *villancico* has a most interesting solo for soprano; marked *Afectuoso* in triple time, it is full of surprises. The solo in the fifth is given to the bass; after a dramatic *recitado* starting in D minor and finishing in F sharp minor, the triple-time aria (*Vivo Con Spirito*) contains many cross-rhythms against the orchestra and wide arpeggiated leaps for the voice. The final *villancico*, originally set in 1748, contains an *estribillo* and *coplas* in a gigue-like 6/8 with both dotted and even quavers in all parts.



The use of two unequal choirs produces some fine duets and solos passed between the parts without pausing between the *coplas*.

This edition is the fruit of much painstaking research and is extremely well produced. There are, however, certain shortcomings that must be mentioned. Firstly, the informative and valuable Introduction, offering a concise background to the style and period as well as an analysis and summary of each of the works, is only in Spanish; it should be recognized that not all non-Spanish researchers and performers are fluent in the language, and that even a summary in English would have been most welcome. Secondly, this publication is presumably meant as a scholarly work and fulfils this function admirably, but those ensembles and choirs stimulated to study and perform these works will require either a set of volumes or a copyist! Given the small number of bars printed on each double-page spread, problems of page turning are also inevitable if this edition is used for performance.

These cavils notwithstanding, Álvaro Torrente is to be congratulated for publishing a volume that offers an invaluable insight into the compositional production of an almost completely unknown composer; it would be marvellous if an 'Obras completas' or even 'Obras escogidas' of Corselli were to follow.

JOHN COLLINS



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HAYDN, 6 STRING QUARTETS, OP. 20

ED. SIMON ROWLAND-JONES

London: Edition Peters, 2001

pp. xviii + 101, ISMN M 57708 356 8

HAYDN, 6 STRING QUARTETS, OP. 33

ED. SIMON ROWLAND-JONES

London: Edition Peters, 2002

pp. xxii + 90, ISMN M 57708 357 5

Of all Haydn's instrumental music the string quartets have enjoyed the most consistent history of performance in the two centuries since the composer's death; to a far greater extent than the symphonies, and certainly more than the piano sonatas or the piano trios, they have been a permanent part of the repertory. They were the earliest works by Haydn to be presented in a uniform edition, the *Collection Complète des Quatuors D'Haydn* prepared and printed by Pleyel (c1800), a notable act of canonization that also had the adverse effect of numbing successive generations of scholars to the authenticity of certain works and to the accuracy of Haydn's musical text in general. Only in 1964 was Op. 3 discounted as the work of Haydn, and unlike those of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, the quartets as a whole never figured in an 'old' complete edition. It was not until the 1970s that the 'new' complete edition (the *Joseph Haydn Werke*) rectified this embarrassing deficit, initiating a series of volumes that to date (2004) has offered often revelatory editions of all but thirteen of Haydn's quartets. Almost in parallel with this enterprise, but completed earlier, was an edition issued by Doblinger (prepared by Reginald Barrett-Ayres and H. C. Robbins Landon).

The new Peters edition by the former viola player of the Lindsay Quartet, Simon Rowland-Jones, is, therefore, the third modern edition in the last quarter century. Rowland-Jones nowhere explains why a third edition should be necessary, though the fact that it is published by Peters is clearly significant: it is meant to replace the old Peters edition long – and, alas, still – used by quartets around the world for their



performances. The edition is emblazoned with the word *Urtext*, a term that seeks to imply authority and superiority but is so problematic as to be meaningless, rather like ‘organic vegetables’. For his editions of the Op. 20 and Op. 33 quartets Rowland-Jones has traversed the same ground as Georg Feder in the *JHW* edition and Reginald Barrett-Ayres in the Doblinger edition, as his prefatory material and critical commentaries make clear. Where these editions seek to be different is that they are aimed primarily at performers. Both volumes have prefaces presented in three languages (English, French and German) which offer historical background, notes on performance (drawing usefully on such modern authorities as Clive Brown, Bernard Harrison and Robin Stowell) and, in the Op. 20 volume, definitions of certain terms and annotations used by Haydn in that set, such as *al rovescio*, *capriccio* and *per figuram retardationis*. The editor could have added translations of the unusually effusive votive remarks appended by Haydn to Op. 20, an indication of the creative fervour that needs to be captured in any performance.

When it comes to the musical text itself, Rowland-Jones clearly intends to adopt a scholarly approach that is authoritative and transparent, one in which editorial intervention is signalled and amplification given in the Critical Commentary at the end of the volume. In an attempt to encourage performers and score readers to consult this Critical Commentary, he annotates the music with numbers from one to six, denoting six categories of alterations or alternatives (general, pitch and duration variants, slurs and ties, staccato marks, ornaments, and dynamics). This becomes cumbersome and self-defeating; instead of one, nominally bar-by-bar, list, the reader is confronted with multiple lists for each movement. Locating the reference is not, therefore, as easy as it could be; running heads in the Critical Commentary might also have helped the inquisitive reader. A further drawback for the performer is that the scores are littered with these reference numbers which, despite being typographically differentiated, can be momentarily confused with other numbers, bar numbers, a rhythmic grouping (triplet or sextuplet) and the composer’s own fingering.

Rowland-Jones’s decision to base his editions on the same sources as other modern editions and with a broadly similar hierarchy of discrimination not only duplicates in intent, if not in actual result, the efforts of others but also represents something of a missed opportunity, particularly in Op. 20. For these works all six autographs are extant; Rowland-Jones has also consulted five printed editions from the eighteenth century, by Chevardière, André, Hummel, Blundell and Artaria. As the editor makes clear, the first four cannot be related to Haydn but the title page of the last one and a couple of contemporary announcements in the *Wiener Zeitung* claim that it was prepared and approved by the composer. The extent of his involvement is not clear, and certainly the musical text does not seem to represent a revision of that found in the autograph. But the text is a product of its time and place – Vienna c1800 – and, as the editor states, it has performance indications characteristic of that period rather than 1772, the date of composition. The *JHW* has already produced a clean edition based on the autograph; Peters could have provided a valuable service by making Artaria the prime source.

As it is, Artaria joins Chevardière, André, Hummel and Blundell as a source for variants that the editor deems interesting in some way. The result is a composite edition, indicating trivial and significant differences that may or may not be traceable to the composer. The editor compounds the problem by added occasional references to the more familiar texts presented in the old Peters edition and in the Eulenburg edition (both derived from the Pleyel *Collection Complète*).

For both sets Rowland-Jones takes a commendably common-sense view of certain recurring issues, such as providing editorial dynamics at the beginning of movements where Haydn has none and providing slurs for brisk trill figures that have a written-out *Nachschlag*. On the other hand, his scores do not indicate the obvious continuation and, therefore, cessation of a performance marking such as the slurred staccato for the accompanying quavers in the first movement of the ‘Bird’ quartet (Op. 33 No. 3). His reading of Haydn’s slurs is often at variance with the editor of the *JHW* in particular, generally favouring shorter, more articulated groupings (for instance 2 + 2 rather than 4, and 1 + 2 rather than 3). Elsewhere his policy on indicating slurs is unclear, as in bars 7 and 35 of the Menuet of Op. 20 No. 2, where the first violin semiquavers and second violin quavers have slurs; the second violin is given as a crossed slur but the first violin slur is uncrossed, even though the autograph shows that this line too is unslurred. In bars 8–9 of the same



movement the three-crotchet figure in the second violin is slurred, while *JHW* and Doblinger clearly show this as editorial. More problematic is the interpretation of an ambiguity in a source that is not explained in the Critical Commentary. For instance, at bars 12 and 41 of the slow movement of Op. 33 No. 3 the music approaches the dominant of C via a Neapolitan sixth. The old Peters edition and the Eulenburg score have a D \flat as the last note for the first violin in each of these bars (part of the Neapolitan chord); the *JHW* gives D \sharp as an editorial change (while recording the D \flat of the Peters and Eulenburg in the *kritischer Bericht*); and the Doblinger has D \flat but notes it as an editorial change. Rowland-Jones follows *JHW* but does not indicate the D \sharp as editorial and provides no remark in the Critical Commentary.

The confidence of the reader in the editorial process is not helped by the above average number of careless errors in the prefatory material and the Critical Commentaries, particularly in the Op. 20 volume. 'Eulenberg' as well as 'Eulenburg' are found; there are bar references in the Critical Commentary but no actual commentary; several footnotes refer to p. 000; and an explanation of the Helmholtz system of pitch annotation and the editor's use of crossed slurs and square brackets appears only in the Op. 33 volume.

Clearly the new Peters edition represents an improvement on the old one but, at the same time, it has many unnerving problems of its own. Score readers are best served by looking at the *JHW* volume and associated *kritischer Bericht*, which have the fundamental advantage of adhering steadfastly and accurately to editorial principles that are clearly articulated and expedited. But, disappointingly, parts are not yet available from Henle for these two sets. Scores and parts of the Doblinger edition are available, but not the promised Critical Reports. Nevertheless, performers who (understandably) do not have time to negotiate the *JHW* score for these two sets would be advised to turn to the Doblinger edition rather than the new Peters one.

DAVID WYN JONES



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JOSEPH MARTIN KRAUS, KEYBOARD MUSIC
SONATAS IN E FLAT MAJOR, VB195, AND E MAJOR, VB196 (AE398); ZWEI NEUE
KURIOSE MINUETTEN, VB190; RONDO IN F MAJOR, VB191; SVENSK DANS, VB192.
THEMA CON VARIAZIONE IN C MAJOR, VB193; LARGHETTO IN G MAJOR, VB194,
AND FIVE CHORALE PRELUDES FOR ORGAN, VB197 (AE400)

ED. BERTIL VAN BOER

Wellington: Artaria Editions, 2002

pp. iv + 48, v + 21; ISBN 1 377231 63 0, 1 877231 64 9

Even among many comparable cases of later eighteenth-century composers, the fate of Kraus has been a curious one. He has long been a figure to reckon with in German-speaking Europe – a focus for this reputation is provided by the activities of the Internationale Joseph Martin Kraus-Gesellschaft, based in the town of Buchen where he grew up – and of course Sweden, where from 1781 he was in the service of the court of Gustav III. In English-speaking countries, on the other hand, he perhaps registers even less than many other figures of his time who have been overwhelmed by the Viennese Classical juggernaut. This may owe much to the fact that he was above all a composer for the stage. Hence he left relatively few works in those instrumental genres that would have been most likely to prompt scholarly engagement (at least until recent times) – the string quartet and symphony. To those who know any of this music, however, the generally muted reception seems especially curious: Kraus clearly offers the intellectual substance that is so often (wrongly) thought to be lacking in much of the musical production of his times. And he is demonstrably an individualist, again in an era often (wrongly) characterized as one of acquiescence and conformity.



Yet of all instrumental types it is probably solo keyboard music that allows the readiest accessibility, the easiest handle to a compositional style – and Kraus's works for keyboard have effectively been unknown until the appearance of these two editions. It is a small output: two sonatas, a rondo, a set of variations and several smaller pieces, together with a set of five chorale preludes for organ. Some other works, though, appear to have been lost – including a set of six pieces (VB206) that was stolen in 1778 by a Dutch sea captain! For editor Bertil van Boer the limited keyboard production suggests that this was not Kraus's major instrument; he draws a comparison with Haydn, who was also a competent rather than a virtuoso keyboard player (AE398, iv). Yet the stunning quality of the best of this music belies any sense of relative creative diffidence. As also with Haydn, in fact, any executive limitations seem only to have prompted a particular inventiveness with texture and sonority, one that surpasses what we find in the music of many of the more celebrated pianist-composers of the time.

If the eloquent use of register forms an important part of this, one also finds evidence in the pervasively detailed markings and articulations of the pieces, suggesting a precisely imagined keyboard rhetoric. If they confirm our wider understanding of the central importance of varied declamation to the music of the time – our term 'articulation' carries unfortunate implications of a subordinate status – many such details in Kraus are decidedly unexpected. They suggest a desire to work against the grain for an individualistic affect. For example, slurs often cut across the natural groupings of a passage. In the sequentially constructed three-quaver units of a 6/8 bar in the slow movement of the E flat Sonata, bars 121 and 123, slurs are placed over the first two pairs of notes, while a more natural distribution would see the second slur shifted to cover the fourth and fifth quavers of the bar. An even more striking phrasing across the musical sense occurs in bar 10 of the E major Sonata's third movement. Here the appoggiatura B# ought to be joined to its resolving C#, but instead the C# is slurred with the following group to form a parallel with the melodic unit from 8–9, so that two types of grouping are in conflict. Interestingly, this tension created by articulation alone is partly resolved when the material returns from bar 222. While such cases remain exceptional, they point to the extreme fine-tuning of Kraus's keyboard writing. This also encompasses such features as a penchant for long-held pedal notes (suggesting that he was familiar with instruments that had considerable sustaining powers) and an apparently consistent distinction between the implications of dots and strokes. Indeed, the exactitude of the composer's notation might even seem precious if it were not backed up by such evident craft in the deployment of texture and register.

Since Kraus is so interesting in this regard – to the extent that one is not always sure whether to trust the evidence of one's own eyes – it is frustrating that the current editions do not offer the full editorial equipment, in the form of a critical report and indications of editorial intervention in the score. These are 'practical' editions, and further details must await the publication of the critical Complete Works that will also appear with Artaria, under the editorship of Boer and Allan Badley. In the current prefaces Boer notes the correction of an occasional evident wrong note, but also states that 'some of the slurrings have been regularized according to parallel passages where such do not appear to have been deliberately varied' (AE398, iv). While this suggests due sensitivity to the particularities of Kraus's writing here, one longs to know more, given the frequent volatility of detail. However, the degree of variety that has been allowed to stand – and that enables one to grasp the composer's *modus operandi* in the first place – suggests a justified editorial credibility. Before exploring the works further, I offer a list of details that struck me as dubious.

- 1 Variations in C. In Variation 5, bar 82, the demisemiquaver beam presumably belongs on the third rather than the fourth note.
- 2 Sonata in E flat major/i. The second tenor note in bar 65 should read g^1 rather than a^b^1 .
- 3 Sonata in E flat major/ii. The run in the right hand from bar 42 into bar 43 jumps from a c^3 to an e^b^3 and seems awkward without the addition of a d^3 passing note that might have been editorially indicated. Although on paper one can see that bar 42 represents a supertonic harmony above a prolonged tonic pedal, thus justifying the terminal c^3 at the end of the bar, the ear remains unsatisfied.



- 4 Sonata in E flat major/iii. In bar 56 one wonders whether the first left-hand note should be B \flat rather than B \flat . This note creates false relations with the right hand's B \sharp on the second quaver – although such chromatic twists, hard for the ear to grasp, seem characteristic of Kraus in these sonatas (they are often found in conjunction with sequences). Compare bar 60, a variation on bar 56, where B \flat is indicated in the left hand but B \sharp would also be possible. A nearly comparable detail is found a few bars later with the A \flat marked in the left hand on the second beat of bar 63; this might just as plausibly be an A \sharp .
- 5 Sonata in E major/i. In bars 12 and 177 the last left-hand quaver should presumably be A, not G \sharp .
- 6 Sonata in E major/iii. Should the small-note A \sharp s in the left hand at bars 93 and 96 be A \sharp s? In a later passage, it is not clear whether the upbeat quaver at the end of bar 148 should be played as the last third of a triplet to fit with prevailing triplet rhythms of this Adagio section. An editorial bracketed '2' would be helpful if this is not the case. Similarly, should the initial dotted upbeat to the section, in bar 144, be played as written, or is a triplet execution of the last quarter of the beat understood? (This is of course a familiar notational ambiguity of the time.) Later, in bar 160, is the soprano's G \sharp a misprint? If it is possible as a brief lightening of the E minor mood, shouldn't there then be a cautionary G \sharp in the next bar?

Indeed, more cautionary accidentals might be called for altogether, especially in those passages where chromatic complications mean the player-listener can struggle to keep up with the harmonic state of play. In the E flat Sonata/iii, bar 91, for example, a natural sign would help clarify the identity of the first note, d 3 , after the winding chromatic path of the previous dozen bars. For all that, these editions offer an admirably clear window on to the many striking details of Kraus's style.

If the details reviewed so far suggest a composer working against the grain, what is remarkable is that he matches this on a much larger scale. Kraus is conspicuously interested in form as such, and in how form and affect can interweave. In this respect as well he may be aligned with the practice of Haydn. Both embody the emerging modern sense of form as an entity that is potentially separable from the larger affect and hence can be viewed in a detached way. It can also become a vehicle for communication in its own right.

This much is apparent in the Rondo VB191. Its *Larghetto* theme is exquisitely polished yet 'natural', with a predominance of treble register and a pronounced symmetrical syntax. We have never quite settled on a name for this familiar keyboard manner of the time; 'galant' is far too all-purpose. Perhaps the best term is that suggested by Wye J. Allanbrook to describe its incarnation in Mozart: the 'sensitive style'. As an expressive stance it can be 'intense yet demure' but can also involve 'music-box' characteristics ('Two Threads through the Labyrinth: Topic and Process in the First Movements of K 332 and K 333', in *Convention in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Music: Essays in Honor of Leonard G. Ratner*, ed. Wye J. Allanbrook, Janet M. Levy and William P. Mahrt (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon, 1992), 155, 145 and 147). If Kraus proves to be a wonderful purveyor of the style, the remarkable feature of the piece as a whole is the contrast between the expansiveness of the retransitions (each made up of a seemingly endlessly repeating rhythmic module, and each dramatic in its own way) and the miniaturism of the returning theme. They expose the stylistic premises of the theme, almost rendering it incongruous – after the momentum of the preceding music, there is an abrupt gear-change back to the courtesies and restraint of periodic syntax. The first retransition (bars 38–52) is extravagantly long. There was an increasing predilection for such effects, of course – we associate them above all with Haydn rondos – but this one is different. It features the increasing fragmentation of a repeated melodic unit, fading away dynamically, but the tessitura is abnormally high, and the left hand's b \flat ² runs into the right hand's b \sharp ² to complicate the aural picture. Then, just when the passage has reached its most fragmented, it starts to build up again, first rhythmically, then dynamically, and finally through an expansion of the tessitura that takes us smoothly back to that of the refrain. Thus Kraus leaves his imprint on this effect, which normally just peters out into silence. Further, the beginning of the build-up uses the device of anticipating an element of the rondo theme, but again the implied model is deformed: what is anticipated here is not the initial element of the rondo theme so much as the dotted-rhythmic repeated note of the subsequent bar 3.



Another kind of distancing characterizes the Variations VB193 (London, 1785). Again the theme owes its basic conception to a common gambit – here spoofing the simplicity and innocence associated with C major. Labelled ‘Scherzo’, it is played *pp* by the right hand alone and is based almost entirely on horn calls. (For some reason this later became a popular hymn.) The very saturation by the topical signal is itself relatively unusual; nearly comparable is the Minuet of Dittersdorf’s Quartet No. 4 in C major (1788). The subsequent variations offer the expected glittering diminutions plus the equally expected dips into the minor, all deliciously managed (registers are again predominantly high, in ‘music-box’ style). Kraus’s most common strategy – which undermines the expected process just as the retransitions did in the Rondo – is to pull back at the cadence points of each half, abandoning the brilliant figuration to recall the original horn-call material, often *subito piano* to underline the effect. This comments humorously on the typical figurative patterns that customarily take over a whole variation, by returning to the ‘naive simplicity’ of the opening.

However, the most intriguing conjunctions of formal manipulation and expressive effect are found in the two sonatas. In the central Andante con variazione of the E flat Sonata the variations are not marked as such. After the tick-tock regularity of the theme’s 2/4 quavers, the first variation moves straight to demisemi-quavers. Although such immediate acceleration is unusual enough, it is put in the shade by a second variation that is marked Minuetto and in 3/8! Midway through the first phrase the bass, with its quicker note values, begins to take over as the principal voice. Sudden spurts of activity from the left hand, often involving a gradual assumption of melodic leadership, turn out to be one of Kraus’s fingerprints in these sonatas – as if to show a detachment from textural routine, that the bass or left hand is always alive. This is also a decidedly odd procedure in a variation; it upsets the expectation of textural consistency (Schoenberg’s ‘motive of variation’) and the expectation that figurative and melodic interest will be concentrated in one part of the texture. Further confusing the formal and generic picture, each half of this minuet has a *veränderte Reprise*, much more brilliant and barely to be thought of as minuet style at all. This clearly links up with the dazzling figuration heard in the first variation. The fourth variation is another Minuetto, but while being a fairly faithful melodic variation, it is in the dominant! The following variation is an exact reprise of the third – in other words not a variation at all. But it clarifies the function of variation four as a trio or second minuet. This yields the extraordinary phenomenon of a self-contained ternary movement within a set of variations. It also gives us two for the price of one in this three-movement work, tracing the features of both a minuet and a slow movement.

Variation six is a *minore* (not marked as such) in B flat minor. But it does carry the tempo *Larghetto*, and the metre is now 6/8. As it offers in addition the traditional relative melodic freedom of a *minore* vis-à-vis the theme, it starts to suggest another formal perception – that it will function as the B section of an overall ternary form. The seventh variation brings us back to Andante and 2/4. Its consistent demisemi-quavers return us to a typical embellishing function, and the particular figuration clearly takes off from that found in the altered reprise of the second section of Minuetto I, creating a further cross-relation that steers us away from variation form. The eighth and penultimate variation is an Adagio – a nod to another common generic practice. But whereas this would lead us to expect the most intensive, even extravagant melodic variants, this particular specimen is easily the most straightforward melodically that we have heard. With a very clear tracing of the theme throughout, while the left hand murmurs an Alberti bass, this is really the first variation to build on and intensify the opening ‘sensitive’ manner (although the second Minuetto does this to an extent). A varied reprise of the second half dissolves into a final literal reprise of the theme, where for once Kraus allows a traditional formal element to stand unmolested. This movement offers the kind of rethinking of variation from the ground up that we still associate with Beethoven, and works like his Variations in F major, Op. 34. Yet the ‘characteristic variations’ of that work are already present in our Andante, and Kraus repeats the procedure, if with less formal ambiguity, in the finale of his E major Sonata. However, the current movement is not just remarkable for its virtuoso treatment of formal and generic expectation: the material is captivating throughout.



The same applies to the Adagio of the E major Sonata. Its very elevated style, more freely 'rhetorical' than lyrically 'sensitive', may well, as Boer suggests, invoke C. P. E. Bach, but the 'noble speech' of many a Clementi slow movement should also be borne in mind as a point of reference. The Adagio clearly evokes the trope of inspired improvisation, with frequent irregularities of register, dynamics and syntax. Even the sequences found in bars 10–12 and 40–42 do not provide melodic regularity so much as an opportunity to raise the emotional temperature still further. When this A major movement reaches V of E at bar 43, followed by a pause, this suggests the common enough plan of an incomplete slow movement that leads directly into a finale. And indeed a gracious Allegretto in E major enters which seems to meet this model. This is easily extensive enough to make the eventual breakdown of syntax after a tonic reprise deeply surprising. A fantasia-like swirl of arpeggios then takes us, after some hesitation, to the opening Adagio material in A major. So perhaps the Allegretto is now to be understood as a central section in the dominant (a trio?). Fairly quickly, however, we move into an extended, specially designated, 'Arioso' section of such sublime expression that the reprise seems to have been a phantom. The final few bars of the movement, with gravely rocking left-hand octave figure and lingering right-hand thirds, express a reluctance to say farewell that one associates more with the avowedly 'poetic' keyboard writing of the earlier nineteenth century. The finale too drifts away into poetic musings, if not without a certain wry humour at the very end, with the 'poignant' chromaticism followed by a very plain final cadence. Here, extraordinarily, the composer makes no attempt at a rounded, satisfying close that the syntax of variation form positively demands. One of the fascinations of both movements, once more, is the interaction of a restless formal sense with a searching expressive character; at times the relationship is symbiotic, while at others form and expression seem incompatible and mutually contradictory.

The Arioso section in the Adagio in fact has a counterpart in both outer movements of the E flat Sonata. Within a few bars of the development section of the first movement we hear a remarkable extended passage marked *parlando* in the right hand. The abrupt move from F major to F minor harmony seems to signal this more personal style. Its effect is that of an interior monologue after the grace and worldly brilliance of the exposition. Dynamically it is built as a single large-scale crescendo, over surprisingly shifting harmonies. But the first harmonic surprise here is actually the failure of the F minor harmony first heard at bar 78 to shift at all. This encourages the sense of introspective melodic expression (augmented once more by some unusual articulative indications). At the point of climax there is a return to the brilliant alternating bars of figuration from the exposition, but they are poetically transformed, especially the right hand's solo triplets, which manifestly take on their own *parlando* character. What had been outwardly directed figuration now becomes personalized. The equivalent point in the finale (from bar 76) presents another kind of free vocalizing, like a purely melodic cadenza in pathetic style.

The other pieces could hardly present a stronger contrast. The *Svensk Dans*, based on a perpetual-motion dance from Vingåker, seems to constitute a rare gesture towards musical nationalism, even if the A minor episode from bar 29 is more reminiscent of *alla turca* style. The Larghetto *vb194*, an apparently fragmentary sixteen bars, prefigures the manner of the chorale preludes for organ, which are full of ecclesiastical suspensions and 'affecting' chromatic passing notes. Their flavour of Protestant religiosity will remind the listener of Mendelssohn.

These editions reveal a keyboard oeuvre the significance of which is out of all proportion to its size. The two sonatas in particular represent a major addition to the repertory; one only hopes that they can penetrate the inertia that still characterizes the collective view of music from this time and will receive the intensive study and frequent performance they richly deserve.

W. DEAN SUTCLIFFE





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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART, EINZELSÄTZE FÜR VIOLINE UND ORCHESTER, KV 261, 269, 373; KLAVIERAUSZUG

ED. WOLF-DIETER SEIFFERT; PIANO REDUCTION SIEGFRIED PETRENZ; FINGERING, BOWING, CADENZAS, LEAD-INS KURT GUNTNER.

Munich: Henle, 2002

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Mozart's well documented skills as a performer and composer of keyboard music have tended to eclipse the fact that he was also an accomplished violinist. During the years 1773 to 1779, while living in Salzburg, Mozart composed a sizeable body of solo violin music. In addition to five concertos (K207, 211, 216, 218 and 219), the *Concertone* (K190) and a *Simphonie Concertante* (K364), there are four serenades (K185, 203, 204 and 250) that include movements in which the solo violin emerges from the ensemble in the manner of a concerto. Completing this inventory are three single movements for violin and orchestra: the Adagio in E major (K261), Rondo in B flat major (K269, often referred to as 'rondo concertante') and Rondo in C major (K373). All three were composed especially for the Salzburg Konzertmeister, Antonio Brunetti (c1735–1786). The present edition of these works in piano reduction under the careful editorship of Wolf-Dieter Seiffert complements Henle's earlier publication of the five concertos.

Thanks to autograph sources and references in the Mozart family's correspondence, the twin thorns of authenticity and dating that plague the study of much eighteenth-century music do not pose a serious obstacle to the reconstruction of this repertory. Both K261 and K269 are preserved in autograph scores. The inscription 'Di Amadeo Wolfgango Mozart, 1776' appears on the title page of the Adagio, and, while the Rondo is undated, its style of handwriting suggests the same general time period. On 25 September 1777, in a letter to his son, Leopold Mozart refers to 'the Adagio and Rondo which you composed for Brunetti'.

The autograph of the Rondo in C major has disappeared, but it is reported to have included the date '2 April 1781'. Here again, letters of the Mozart family prove helpful. Writing to his father from Vienna on 8 April 1781, Mozart mentions that his new 'rondo for a concerto for Brunetti' had been performed that very day at a concert for Prince Rudolph Joseph Colloredo (1706–1788). There seems little reason to doubt that this rondo is K373. In light of the missing autograph, André's first edition of 1800 (Op. 85), whose title page claims it was 'faite d'après la partition en manuscrit', is the most reliable source.

Uncertainties still remain, however, as to where Mozart intended to employ these three musical torsos. The general assumption has been that each of them was designed as a substitute movement for a concerto. While this may be true, the documentation that might establish uncontested links to specific concertos remains elusive. Thus, while Mozart tells us that he composed the rondo K373 for a concerto for Brunetti, he fails to identify the specific concerto. The search for a possible recipient among the five Salzburg concertos proves fruitless. The rondo's key of C major precludes serious consideration that it could have been intended as a replacement movement in any of Mozart's known violin concertos. Perhaps the rondo was to be part of a concerto that he had not yet completed and eventually abandoned when two months later his association with the Salzburg court was severed. Indeed, Mozart may have been intending to rescue part of this work when the following year he reused the rondo's refrain theme in ballet music (K299c) that itself was to remain incomplete and unnamed. Although feasible, such a theory, admittedly, seems unconvincing. Thus we are left with two plausible alternatives – that K373 was composed as a replacement finale for a concerto Mozart had previously written for Brunetti for which no source has survived, or that it was a movement that was to be added to a concerto by another composer that Brunetti was going to play.

A similar situation colours the uncertainty surrounding the intent of K261 and K269. When, in a letter to his son dated 9 October 1777, Leopold refers to 'the Adagio you wrote specifically for Brunetti, because he found the other one too artificial' he is most certainly thinking of K261, but again, as with K373, we are left in the dark concerning the identity of 'the other one'. The only concerto among the five whose key scheme



might accommodate a middle movement in E major is the Concerto in A major, K219. Although shorter than the Adagio of the concerto, it is difficult to imagine how the rich chromaticism and poignant expressivity of K261 could be considered simpler or 'less artificial'. Moreover, one must also at least entertain the notion that 'the other one' in this context may refer to another independent Adagio movement or even a *concertante* movement from a serenade.

The rondo K269 has been identified as a possible replacement for the sonata-form finale of Mozart's first violin concerto, K207, the only one of the five violin concertos not to conclude with a rondo. The assumed intent here was to avoid having both of the concerto's outer movements in sonata form. A similar argument has been advanced for the consideration of the keyboard Rondo in D major, K382, as a replacement movement for K175.

Of course, all of this remains conjecture. The fact is that at present we do not have enough information to determine for certain which – if any – concertos these three movements were designed to join, a situation not unlike that of the Andante in C major for Flute and Orchestra, K315 (285e), and the Rondo for Piano in A major, K386.

Seiffert provides a detailed and helpful preface to his edition, where, in addition to establishing editorial procedures, he reviews with clarity and logic the situation with regard to source material and compositional background. Of particular interest are his comments concerning the soloist's participation in tutti sections, an issue of continued debate among performers and scholars. For Seiffert the two autograph scores present conflicting interpretations with regard to this matter. The autograph of K261 supports the interpretation of the soloist playing along with the tutti by including *colla parte* instructions at the beginning of each tutti section that are then retracted just before the solo section. On the other hand, not only does the score for K269 lack any *colla parte* instructions, but in the tutti sections Mozart actually moves the orchestral violins to the staff reserved for the soloist, effectively negating any possibility of notating the soloist within the texture of the tutti section. From this Seiffert concludes that the solo violin 'was intended to fall silent' during the tutti 'since it is neither notated nor mentioned'. To Seiffert this situation seems 'to imply that the soloist should *not* join the tutti' (vi).

Although Seiffert's argument seems plausible, conditions peculiar to the layout of the score of K269 suggest at least the possibility of a contrary interpretation. Mozart began notating this rondo on paper that already contained the incomplete opening of another composition, forcing him to adjust the layout of his score in order to accommodate the desired instrumentation to the number of staves remaining on the page. As a result, the soloist was omitted from the notated score in the opening tutti beginning at bar 9 on the first page and continuing to the next. This tutti passage is not written out again, Mozart preferring instead to employ a 'dal segno' shorthand. Thus all of the tutti sections are concentrated into the first two pages of the score where the composer is struggling with limited space. It could then be argued that the omission of the soloist in tutti passages in K269 may reflect more accurately the composer's economical use of paper than his artistic intent. Unfortunately, neither reading of the source brings us closer to a conclusive resolution, and the issue of solo participation in tutti areas remains a vexed question.

The musical text itself is clear and readable. Seiffert takes great care to remain faithful to his sources. For example, his attention to details of articulation leads him to retain the distinction that Mozart makes between dots and strokes. As he explains, 'in general, Mozart used the stroke (not to be confused with the "wedge", which was not part of his vocabulary) on isolated notes surrounded by slurs, and dots on several notes in succession' (vi). This is a distinction not necessarily made by other composers of the period.

This edition presents the text of these movements in a keyboard reduction by Siegfried Petrenz. Quite naturally, such reductions are likely to result in variant readings of the original text as a result of the limitations imposed on transcription of an orchestral texture to a keyboard instrument. Indeed, the Preface emphasizes that Petrenz has placed a high priority on creating 'rich but not excessively demanding piano texture that clearly stands out from the well-known reductions patterned closely on the orchestral writing' (vi). The result is the occasional omission of octave doublings (for example K261, bars 1–2, flutes doubling violins) and figures within inner voices that would be awkward to reproduce within a keyboard texture (K261,



bars 5–6) as well as the rendering of repeated notes as sustained notes (K269, bar 17). Wind parts are most often omitted in the transcription (K261, bars 20–24, 28–30). In some instances, such passages are labelled with abbreviations such as ‘+ Fl.’ or ‘+Hrn’. The indications ‘+Ob.’ in K261 (bars 28, 43) and ‘Fl.’ in K269 (bars 220, 224) are somewhat confusing, as neither instrument appears in the autographs of these works. It might also be noted that the care taken in making the solo part reflect the articulation markings of the source does not always carry through to the piano reduction (K269, bars 11–15). These are, however, small points that do not seriously compromise the authority of the text, which for the most part offers an effective rendering of the orchestral original.

Perhaps because they remain single-movement torsos not yet successfully reunited with their intended host compositions, these works have not found the same favour with performers as have Mozart’s other compositions for solo violin. It is to be hoped that offering them in a keyboard reduction will provide greater accessibility to a larger performing audience and encourage the performances they deserve.

STERLING E. MURRAY



RECORDINGS

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CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH (1714–1788)

MATTHÄUS-PASSION 1769

Deborah York and Orlanda Velez Isidro (sopranos), Franziska Gottwald (alto), Jörg Dürmüller (tenor), Klaus Mertens and René Steur (basses) / Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Choir / Ton Koopman, director
ORF Alte Musik, ORF CD 316, 2002; two discs, 55", 47"

Twenty years ago, when I published my dissertation on the instrumental music of C. P. E. Bach, it was possible to disregard his sacred vocal works, most of which had been missing since World War II. With the recovery of sources for most of this music in the archive of the Sing-Akademie zu Berlin (recently retrieved from Kiev), the assumptions that this music was of insignificant aesthetic value and that its performance was unimportant to the composer and poorly carried out can now be tested.

The ‘new’ works include some twenty oratorio passions that Bach presented annually at Hamburg as cantor and city music director during the last two decades of his life. All are pastiches; the only passion previously available had been the last, a St Matthew Passion performed posthumously during Lent 1789. Most of its chorales and gospel narration, including the *turba* choruses, had been used in the composer’s five previous St Matthew passions, including the first one, which is the work recorded here. This work, H782, had also been known in part, since Bach had incorporated most of its original music – about sixty per cent of the whole – into his Passion Cantata Wq233 (H776). That work was never lost, and a serviceable recording exists (*C. Ph. E. Bach: Die letzten Leiden des Erlösers*, La Petite Band, Sigiswald Kuijken, director, Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 77042 2 RG, 1987). Hence the majority of the music on the present CD will be familiar to devotees of Emanuel Bach. Nevertheless, it is good to be able to hear these movements in their original setting as preserved in the newly accessible autograph score and parts for the 1769 passion. (In the interests of full disclosure, I must state that I am a contributor to the new edition of C. P. E. Bach’s works organized by the Packard Humanities Institute, which is credited with providing performance material for the recording.)

Liner notes by Ulrich Leisinger sketch out the relatively unfamiliar tradition of passion music at Hamburg. Leisinger rightly emphasizes the differences between this work and the great passions performed



by J. S. Bach at Leipzig. Yet Emanuel Bach must have conceived the present work as incorporating aspects of both Sebastian's passions and those that Telemann, Emanuel's predecessor, had presented for forty-six years at Hamburg. This work appears to be longer than most of Telemann's, and although its gospel recitative concludes with the crucifixion, reflecting Hamburg tradition, the narrative is continued in the almost Beethovenian *accompagnato* 'Die Allmacht fei'rt den Tod' that follows. In this the work follows the pattern of Ramler's *Der Tod Jesu*, which Telemann and C. H. Graun had previously set to music.

Leisinger suggests that the text of the present work, by Anna Luise Karsch, focuses like Ramler's on the human aspect of Jesus. Yet as the end approaches she inserts a chorus, 'Dann strahlet Licht', that anticipates the Last Judgment; this Bach sets as a burst of triumph in C major, musically portending the miraculous 'Let There be Light' in Haydn's *Creation*. Here, as in the solemn 'Christe du Lamm Gottes' that concludes the work (borrowed from the 1725 version of Sebastian Bach's St John Passion, and ultimately from his Cantata 23), Emanuel Bach seems to have meant to convey some of the mystery and grandeur of divinity. A departure from both the matter-of-fact endings of some of Telemann's passions and the sentimental lamentation at the end of *Der Tod Jesu*, this also suggests a theological concern hard to discern in those other works. I am also not sure that this work is any less dramatic than Sebastian's passions. Certainly it is more theatrical. For instance, the gospel narration is interrupted at the moment of Judas's betrayal by an almost operatic *accompagnato*, introduced by unison strings. In another interruption, the soprano soloist implores 'O Petrus, folge nicht!' – a moment likely to jar a listener accustomed to the more inward character of the madrigalian movements in J. S. Bach's passions.

Perhaps it is owing to limitations of space that the liner notes do not clearly identify all of the borrowed material. Although Emanuel Bach's later passions contain more extensive borrowings, this work is not in fact much more a pastiche than, say, Handel's *Jephtha*. The chorale settings and bits of the gospel recitative are by J. S. Bach, together with most of the duets and *turba* choruses within the gospel narrative. (Two *turba* choruses, 'Weissage uns' and 'Gegrüßet seist du', may be by Telemann, but 'Weissage' cannot be traced to the latter's 1746 Matthew Passion, as has been claimed.) To fashion a coherent composition incorporating such borrowings required skill that listeners today may be better prepared to appreciate than were nineteenth- and twentieth-century commentators who belittled such works. There is no reason why a pastiche passion per se should be ineffective in a liturgical setting, and in concerts or recordings one may rather enjoy than regret the way in which familiar music pops up unexpectedly but not ungracefully in the course of the work. The recurrence of older 'classical' music in the presentation of the traditional portions of the text might even have been a conscious, positive element in the planning of such works.

The present CD follows conventions familiar from current performances of 'early' music. The generally lively tempos and light playing and singing reflect approved trends and prevent the arias from falling into the lugubrious sentimentality that sometimes afflicts the older recording of the Passion Cantata. Yet one occasionally misses the more rhetorical qualities of the latter, which is also sung with greater attention to clear and correct ornamentation. Perhaps some of the inconsistencies of the present CD are the result of its having been recorded in live performances.

After an opening four-part chorale setting (from Sebastian's St John Passion), the work continues with a chorus borrowed from Emanuel's own Magnificat that Burney singled out as being 'for modulation, contrivance, and effects . . . at least equal to any one of the best choruses in Handel's immortal Messiah' (*The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces* (London, 1773), ed. Percy A. Scholes as *An Eighteenth-Century Musical Tour in Central Europe and the Netherlands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 214). Alas, how the work could have elicited such high praise is hard to understand from the present performance, which tends to adopt an emotionally neutral tone. Even the *turba* choruses seem underplayed, despite the anachronistically large forces used. The seeming reticence to interpret the music extends to the chorus's *attacca* at 'Dann strahlet Licht', which enters in a new tempo without any transition from the preceding passage.

The playing and choral singing throughout are very fine, yet the orchestra are as understated as the singers, the violins playing the ritornello in the rousing bass aria 'Donnre nur ein Wort der Macht' with



legato elegance. The flutes sound somewhat colourless by comparison with the full-bodied low-pitch instruments Bach would have known from Berlin, and it is disconcerting to hear the oboes – Emanuel’s substitution for Sebastian’s flutes – dancing merrily in the accompaniment to ‘Lass ihn kreuzigen’. Of the soloists, only bass Klaus Mertens (as Jesus) consistently brings urgency to both arias and dialogue. Jörg Dürmüller is an adequate evangelist and tenor soloist in what was evidently an exhausting part. But the beautiful aria ‘Wie ruhig bleibt dein Angesicht’ is taken too quickly to express the sentiment of its opening line, and he is more shouting than singing at some moments in the angry aria ‘Verstockte Sünder’.

Director Ton Koopman is known for his opposition to the views on eighteenth-century choral scoring associated with Joshua Rifkin. But this recording is a poor advertisement for the enlarged forces used. One might suppose that *turba* choruses would be more powerful when sung by a relatively large chorus. But the clearly documented practice in churches at Leipzig, Hamburg and elsewhere of using just one singer per part, sometimes doubled by a single ripienist, might have encouraged more individualized and dramatic singing of these texts.

The liner includes a photograph of the director and producer looking over the work’s manuscript parts in Kiev. Yet the recording alters both the number and the distribution of individual parts. The extant sources indicate that Bach employed only six male voices, naming the individual singers in some instances. Thus there were two boy sopranos, and the bass roles were divided between Friedrich Martin Illert and one Herr Wrede, the latter also singing some of the tenor solos (his name is visible on the opening page of his manuscript part, reproduced on page 59 of the programme booklet). This arrangement spared the tenor Evangelist from singing all but one of the big solo numbers, and it explains why ‘Verstockte Sünder’ follows another long tenor aria after only a brief recitative: they were for different singers. Although it would be unfair to expect a modern singer to have the same versatility as Herr Wrede, the present tenor might have appreciated the relief that Bach granted the original Evangelist – probably the composer’s long-time copyist, Johann Heinrich Michel. (Details on performers are taken from Reginald LeMonte Sanders, ‘Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Liturgical Music at the Hamburg Principal Churches from 1768 to 1788’ (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 2001).)

The ‘baroque’ choir employed here is a substantial body of twenty-one singers, including adult women sopranos and a mix of female and male altos. The orchestra of twenty-four is not so far from the seventeen called for by Bach’s parts, but it is weighted toward the violins, here numbering nine. Bach’s parts apparently call for just four violinists, but also for four oboists (two sometimes switching to flutes); the two oboe parts in ‘Kreuzige’ evidently were doubled. The use of ripieno oboes might have produced a heavier, more oppressive sound than is heard here; for Emanuel this sound might have been a reminiscence of other movements in Sebastian’s St Matthew Passion, from which he had adapted this chorus. (Emanuel assigns the original vocal parts of one chorus to his singers and the instrumental doublings of the other chorus to his players. As Daniel Melamed has shown (‘The Double Chorus in J. S. Bach’s Saint Matthew Passion *BMV* 244’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57/1 (2004), 3–50), J. S. Bach might have initially conceived the work as comprising concertists and ripienists within a single chorus, as in his St John Passion.)

To what degree does this CD help in the re-evaluation of Bach’s Hamburg church music? Certainly there are moments of great pathos and drama. Some are inherent in the narrative and in the traditional structure of the oratorio passion. But Bach’s choruses, arias and *accompagnatos* are at least as effective as those in passion works by Graun and Telemann. Some of the arias, even the touching duet ‘Muster der Geduld’, may simply be too long, but one wonders how they would sound in more alert performances (the duet is not helped by overextended cadenzas, for which there survive more restrained eighteenth-century examples). It would be unfair to compare the work’s overall effect to that of Sebastian’s great passions, since the latter are structured differently and served a somewhat different purpose. (Emanuel’s were intended for performance throughout Lent; thus the concluding portion does not so specifically invoke the darkness of Good Friday, which contributes to the overwhelming effect of Sebastian’s two works.) I do not sense any problems in the stylistic disjunctions between Emanuel’s music and the borrowings from his father; the two Telemannesque *turbae* do seem out of place, however, in their simpler style and scoring.



Further consideration of Bach's Hamburg vocal music will have to be based on performances that reflect both original scoring and the views on interpretation of a composer who criticized imprecise ornamentation and emotionally uninvolved performance. We have been told repeatedly that performances at Hamburg were poor and understaffed, but, as when confronted by similar assertions about music at Leipzig, one wonders whether the composer truly continued for decades to offer thousands of lame performances. Now that the sources for these works are finally available, one looks forward to hearing those passions and other works whose music has been previously inaccessible, in performances that more closely follow the composer's original material.

DAVID SCHULENBERG

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JOSEPH MARTIN KRAUS (1756–1792)

KEYBOARD MUSIC

ZWEI NEUE KURIOSE MINUETTEN (VB190), RONDO IN F MAJOR (VB191), SVENSK DANS (VB192), THEMA CON VARIAZIONE IN C MAJOR (VB193), LARGHETTO IN G MAJOR (VB194), SONATAS IN E FLAT MAJOR (VB195) AND E MAJOR (VB196)

Jacques Després

Naxos 8.555771, 2003; one disc, 1'19"

SVENSK DANS (VB192), LARGHETTO IN G MAJOR (VB194), SONATAS IN E FLAT MAJOR (VB195) AND E MAJOR (VB196)

Alexandra Oehler

Ars Musici AM 1326 2, 2002; one disc, 1'08"

These two releases represent the first recordings of Kraus's keyboard music, although only the Jacques Després performances are based on the new Artaria edition by Bertil van Boer (reviewed in this issue). Alexandra Oehler's disc, released earlier and thus the true recorded premiere of this music, was made in seeming ignorance of this edition. Instead she bases her less comprehensive survey on older sources. The Sonata in E flat major is played from the original edition published around 1788 in Stockholm by Olof Åhlström, while for the Sonata in E major, rather curiously, she employs an old edition by Hilding Rosenberg (Stockholm: Nordiska Musikförlaget, 1925). Her other performances are based on copies that were made for Kraus biographer K. F. Schreiber held in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.

In other respects too these recordings are quite distinct. Although both players use modern pianos, their creative attitudes may be simply contrasted as traditional (Oehler) and historically aware (Després). Playing from older sources, where they are reliable, is useful only if it prompts a serious engagement with the text, and this is not always apparent in Oehler's renditions. Després takes the notation of his modern edition much more to heart. The real battleground may be located in their respective attitudes to articulation. Oehler overrides many articulative markings, especially slurs, and not just those that seem quite standard but also many of the apparently counterintuitive ones by which Kraus seems to signal a particular individualism of rhetoric. In so doing she creates a legato stream. Of course she is hardly personally culpable in this respect; this is part of the traditional pianistic approach to eighteenth-century music. As Richard Taruskin has taught us, we cannot exactly deny all legitimacy to such an approach. If it has its own kind of authenticity, though, it now seems a tired one – such smooth surfaces ultimately serve a wider view of the musical eighteenth century, especially its latter part, as an idyllic retreat. And it often flatly contradicts the gestures that the composer's notation seems to demand.

This smoothing tendency is apparent on different levels of Oehler's readings. At the outset of the development section in the first movement of the E major Sonata she adds ties to the soprano part in a brief contrapuntal passage, avoiding what must seem the abrupt effect of re-struck notes. In the triplet material first heard in bar 33 of the E flat Sonata's opening movement she ignores Kraus's idiosyncratic slurring in



pairs that Després, on the other hand, is at pains to bring out. This suggests that the material is understood as neutral ‘figuration’ rather than as part of a style where every type of writing has its own specific rhetorical weight. This undoubtedly owes much to those pedagogical traditions that arose in the nineteenth century in which the separate practice of scales and arpeggios was fundamental, making it hard for us now to imagine that any such material we encounter can speak rather than simply sparkle. In fact Oehler’s performances enact the clearest possible line of demarcation between lyricism and figuration, especially in the variation movements of the sonatas (E flat major/ii and E major/iii): she speeds up quite crassly for passages of quicker note values, an elementary but revealing misjudgment. On a larger scale the smoothing tendency creates a vision of the slow movement of the E major Sonata as a restrained elegy, while Després offers a much more dramatic and rhetorically fluid reading.

Indeed, the sensitivity of Després to the possibilities suggested by the notation leads to performances that are generally livelier in articulation and crisper rhythmically. It can also prompt some imaginative solutions: in the lengthy rising sequence that makes up the second retransition passage in the Rondo in F (bars 117–126), he gradually transforms the repetitions of the unmarked four-note left-hand figure from entirely staccato to entirely legato as momentum and passion build towards the return of the theme. On the whole, one feels he is most at home with the more deliberate and introspective aspects of this music (and often signals this by providing a hummed running commentary). While the distant horn calls that make up the theme of the Variations in C are delightfully deadpan, Variation 9 shows good comic timing through slight irregularities of rhythm and Variation 12 conveys a real spirit of burlesque, elsewhere in this set he seems too careful. The switch to the minor mode in the fifth variation, for instance, prompts a slower tempo and *molto serio* manner, yet its chromatic saturation and incongruous Lombard rhythms surely parody a pathetic style. Similarly, in the middle movement of the E flat Sonata, at such points as Variations 1 and 3, the tone seems rather earnest. The distinctly close recording emphasizes the heavy action of the Hamburg Steinway, both contributing to an intermittently laboured impression. But this can also result from a tendency to overemphasize downbeats so that momentum ebbs. In the first movement of the E major Sonata, for instance, it is arguably Oehler who is more successful at conveying large-scale dramatic shape. She sets in bold relief the contrasts of mass and dynamics that help animate the movement’s alternation between an orchestral overture idiom and rhapsodic triplet passages.

Yet Després certainly finds the right touch for the *Zwei neue kuriose Minuetten*, written in 1780 as a musical joke and sent to J. S. Bach’s biographer Johann Nikolaus Forkel. In the accompanying booklet Bertil van Boer suggests that the first minuet parodies a work from *Anna Magdalena’s Notebook*, while the second is deliberately bad and alludes to Forkel’s own compositions (4). Minuetto II, in addition to its patent difficulties with modulation, certainly contains some very inconsequential details, most notably in the lame bass fillers in the final bar of each half. More generally it evinces an awkward mixture of rhythms and poor continuity – perhaps satirizing the thinking by two-bar units of minuet style, and more broadly the ‘modern manner’ of composition. Després also provides a rollicking account of the *Svensk Dans*, where Oehler is rather diffident. Her expressive uncertainty here in fact finds a counterpart in the notes that accompany her recording. Amidst a number of rather misleading statements Otakar Narek informs us that the first movement of the E flat Sonata is written in ‘abridged sonata form’ (15), which it is not, and that the E major Sonata is ‘written completely “by the book”’ (14). Yet not only is this one of the most original and ambitious works of its time, it is also quite abnormally long, with both current performances clocking in at around thirty-three minutes. It is hard to think of another keyboard sonata of this time that even approaches this duration.

Perhaps both performers, if in very different ways, ultimately show some uncertainty about how to handle this music. Obviously it has yet to develop any specific performance tradition, but Kraus can seem a difficult composer to read: he is clearly not easy to place historically and stylistically, the tone of his writing can be elusive and there is the task of controlling and coordinating abrupt changes of affect and syntactical style, sometimes set out in large blocks. But one can only welcome these early attempts to do so.

W. DEAN SUTCLIFFE



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ANTONIO SOLER (1729–1783)
SONATAS FOR HARPSICHORD, VOLUME 10

Gilbert Rowland

Naxos 8.557137, 2003, one disc, 1'13"

Recent research has uncovered information that the Catalan monk Antonio Soler was at one time called 'el diablo vestido de fraile' (the devil dressed as a monk). Gilbert Rowland has captured wonderfully this roguish side of one of Spain's most important eighteenth-century composers, as well as bringing to life Soler's Spanish style. He gives us eight sonatas on this compact disc (volume 10 in the series of Soler's keyboard music), five consisting of single movements, one of two movements, one of three movements, and one of four. His booklet notes are informative, containing biographical material on Soler and succinct remarks about each work. In contrast to a French-style instrument, the Flemish-style harpsichord used in this recording, with its biting tone, fits this type of music very well, especially the fiery, more aggressive pieces. Rowland plays very articulately and much more to my taste than in several of his earlier recordings of Soler.

Soler's complete extant sonatas have yet to be published in a single critical edition. Samuel Rubio published 120 in seven volumes, Frederick Marvin forty-four in six volumes, Barry Ife and Roy Truby twelve in one volume and Antonio Baciero a solitary one (*Sonata por la Princesa de Asturias*) not found in any of the other editions. The Rubio edition, unfortunately, is laden with errors in printing and/or copying. There are no autograph copies, and only one set of sonatas was published during the eighteenth century, the twenty-seven sonatas given to Lord Fitzwilliam by Soler in 1772. These were published by Robert Birchall in London, around 1796.

Soler came from the tradition of the famed boys' choir school at the Escolania de Montserrat. He studied organ works by Cabanilles, Miguel López and José Elías and in 1752 joined the Hieronymite order at El Escorial near Madrid as organist. Shortly thereafter he was appointed Maestro de Capilla, leading a disciplined life as monk and composer. While at El Escorial, Soler studied with José Nebra and probably Domenico Scarlatti. (He is listed on one manuscript as 'discepolo de Domenico Scarlatti'.) Soler's predilection for the bipartite form reveals the strong influence of the older Italian master. In 1766 Soler became music tutor to Prince Gabriel, son of King Carlos III. The young prince studied with Soler from the age of fourteen until Soler's death, with Soler dedicating several works to him.

Soler's sonatas demonstrate a wide variety of styles, some influenced by Spanish regional dances, some in the mid-eighteenth-century galant style and others closely akin to Haydn, a favourite composer in Spain. Soler's keyboard works require sixty-one and sometimes even sixty-three keys. He had harpsichord, organ and fortepiano to hand. Often it is not clear which instrument is intended; elsewhere it is clarified in the score, for example in the Sonata de clarines, R54, which indicates the reed stops of the Spanish organ. The Sonata in C major, R44, has an obvious pedal part for the contras of the Spanish organ. In some pieces he uses the term *intento*, a contrapuntal work associated with the organ in eighteenth-century Spain. And the texture of several pieces employing Alberti bass accompaniments seems best suited to the pianoforte.

Rowland is very thoughtful and careful in his approach to these works. He assiduously repeats both halves of the binary forms. Many performers repeat the first half and not the second half, or vice versa, according to time constraints or personal preference, but Rowland is consistent throughout. He adds ornaments to notes that are long and otherwise uninteresting without them, as in the Sonata in F sharp minor R78, and fills in obvious missing ties, as in the Sonata in D major R37. Where appropriate he plays with great rhythmic excitement and fast repeated notes that sparkle (Sonata in D flat major R88). On the more expressive side, he has a good sense of rubato and brings out the *rasgueado* (strumming) style of the Spanish guitar, especially in the Sonata in F sharp minor R77.

In the first two movements of the galant work R64 Rowland is playful, with registration changes always demonstrating excellent phrasing and relaxed breaths. In the academic *intento* finale – a double fugue – he



has the requisite energy and drive for this severe counterpoint. In the first movement of the late work R61, Rowland varies the repeats more than in any other work on the CD, and rightly so, as the music would otherwise be a bit hollow and lacklustre. The curious 'revolving minuet' movement presents all the themes again but in a different order, and the finale is dashed off with great abandon, hand-crossings and all.

The two-movement Sonata in C minor is listed as R126. I must confess that I know it only as Frederick Marvin No. 44. In any event, it is an extraordinary piece, the first movement featuring fermata cadences, some of which Rowland improvises upon beautifully in the style, along with lush arpeggiations. The finale is gripping, and Rowland takes this 'chase' *gigue* at a gallop that is most exciting. The enharmonic chord progression in the second half of the bipartite form is stunning, well worth examination by performers and scholars alike.

Gilbert Rowland has succeeded in giving us a glimpse into the varied styles found on the Iberian peninsula in the eighteenth century. His playing is at times fearless, even breathtaking and also pensive, expressive and reflective of the Spanish soul. He is to be commended for taking on this large project of recording Soler's keyboard works, thereby promoting one of Spain's most significant eighteenth-century composers.

LINTON POWELL