



From January 2018 the proceedings of these events have been freely available online at www.stilegalante.org, together with critical editions of scores and scholarly texts of various kinds; in the course of this year texts relating to the years 2015–2017 will be added. In order to draw more students into the projects undertaken by Stile Galante, from 2017 five bursaries have been made available towards participation in the masterclasses that are linked to the conferences. The next scholarly events planned by Stile Galante will take place in Naples, and will focus on the singing of Farinelli.

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THE CRITICAL EDITION OF VIVALDI'S WORKS: AN UPDATE

While the twentieth century witnessed Vivaldi's music re-emerge from the shadows into the light through performances, recordings and publications, we are nearly two decades into the twenty-first century and still lack critical editions for the majority of his works. This is the challenge that the *Edizione critica delle Opere di Antonio Vivaldi* (formerly known as the *Nuova edizione critica delle opere di Antonio Vivaldi*) has addressed over the past four decades. The underlying causes for the existing patchwork state of Vivaldi editions include a revival of the composer's music that has proceeded in fits and starts, changing attitudes about which genres were worth reviving, difficulties in accessing sources across geopolitical boundaries during the earlier part of the Cold War era and the sheer quantity of the composer's creative output. The result was a number of false starts, abandoned projects and occasional publications of selected works.

It was against this background that the most extensive project to publish Vivaldi's music, prior to the *Edizione critica*, came to occupy pride of place. Begun in 1948 and completed in 1972, *Le opere strumentali di Antonio Vivaldi* was published by Ricordi on behalf of the Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi and included practical editions of 529 of Vivaldi's instrumental works (there are 530 numbers, but volume 505 was withdrawn after the work was determined to be spurious). These volumes, which ignore close variants of works, are still the only commercially available editions for much of the music. Each was prepared by one of nine contributing editors under the general editorship of Gian Francesco Malipiero. While the so-called Malipiero edition can be both praised and criticized on many fronts, its main limitations are incompleteness and the lack of a critical apparatus. With respect to the latter charge, the series was never intended as a critical edition per se, but instead tried to ensure that as many works reached the public as quickly as possible. This resulted in a curious admixture of efforts towards source fidelity, textual accuracy and performance suggestions tailored to mid-century aesthetics. As for completeness, the omission of vocal works (only partially remedied by the appearance, from 1971 to 1972, of a group of twelve sacred works prepared under essentially the same auspices and editorial criteria) and the questionable reliance on a single source for each work (regardless of completeness, authority or the presence of significant variants) were stronger motivating factors for a new editorial project. Further urgency was provided by the discovery of additional works – a factor that continues to play a significant role in the publication schedule of the *Edizione critica*.

Plans for the new edition were developed at the Vivaldi tercentenary conference in 1978, and the first volumes, published by Ricordi on behalf of the Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi and overseen by an international scholarly committee, appeared in 1982. (The Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi has amassed a trove of microfilms, CD-ROM files, photographs and photocopies of Vivaldi source materials from libraries



across the globe, and its parent organization, the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, provides bursaries for short periods of study, having already assisted several scholars – the present writer included – to explore this archive in situ.) Certain aspects of the Malipiero edition were retained, such as publishing each work (no matter how brief) in an individual volume prepared by one of the contributing editors and encouraging ‘practical’ use of each volume through the provision of continuo realizations, occasional separate instrumental parts and performance suggestions. But the *Edizione critica* additionally provides an extensive critical apparatus for each volume and accounts for distinct versions of works that may have resulted from Vivaldi’s changed intentions. According to the stated editorial norms, a primary source is used for each text, with additional sources used to clarify or correct readings in the primary source only when the differences are clearly intentional on the composer’s part. Variants stemming from Vivaldi’s second thoughts are usually recorded in the critical commentary or – in a few more substantial cases – presented in an appendix.

Initially the goal of the enterprise was to offer critical editions of sacred works, solo cantatas and instrumental works (except incomplete ones) not already represented in the Malipiero edition. Already in the 1980s and 1990s, though, new research and interest from performers and scholars prompted the release of critical editions of a few works already available in the Malipiero edition, such as the *Four Seasons* (incorporating information from the newly discovered Manchester partbooks). Most of the sacred works were newly edited, even if they had been previously published. Since the start of the twenty-first century, intensifying interest in Vivaldi’s operas, along with the increasingly apparent limitations of the Malipiero edition, has steered the *Edizione critica* in several new directions. Currently efforts are underway to produce critical editions of the operas and serenatas (several have already appeared, alongside Vivaldi’s only surviving oratorio, *Juditha triumphans*) and to reissue critical editions of incomplete works, formerly published by Studio per Edizione Scelte on behalf of the Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi. Particular emphasis is currently being placed upon works published in Vivaldi’s lifetime: Opp. 2, 3 and 6 have all appeared thus far, available as a single bound volume for each published collection.

Among the great benefits of the *Edizione critica* are the extensive, peer-reviewed research that informs each volume and editorial standards that provide a well-articulated basis for establishing reliable texts. Yet there are some drawbacks to the new edition, primarily affecting its usefulness as a performance resource. As anyone trying to perform from (or follow along with) one of the scores will have noticed, it is very inconvenient to have to turn the page as often as every two, three or four bars, especially in fast movements. Likewise, the cost of the volumes, even considering production expenses, is often strangely disproportionate to the length and scope of the music. While this encourages institutional subscribers, who are crucial supporters for publication projects such as this one, it does tend to discourage wider dissemination and exploration of less familiar works. These are both problems shared with the Malipiero edition, and it is unfortunate that they have not been consistently solved in the *Edizione critica*, despite the availability of twenty-first-century digital tools.

To say that the *Edizione critica* is an improvement over the Malipiero edition is akin to saying that the computer is an advancement over the telegraph. The new edition provides access to more data in one place than was previously possible. However, in terms of access to scholarly texts of Vivaldi’s works, significant repertoires are still covered only by ‘telegraph editions’. Despite this situation, we are fairly close to having modern editions of Vivaldi’s complete oeuvre. It is therefore to be hoped that the *Edizione critica* further expands its scope in the years to come.

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