



NEWSLETTER

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On Mozart's Masetto

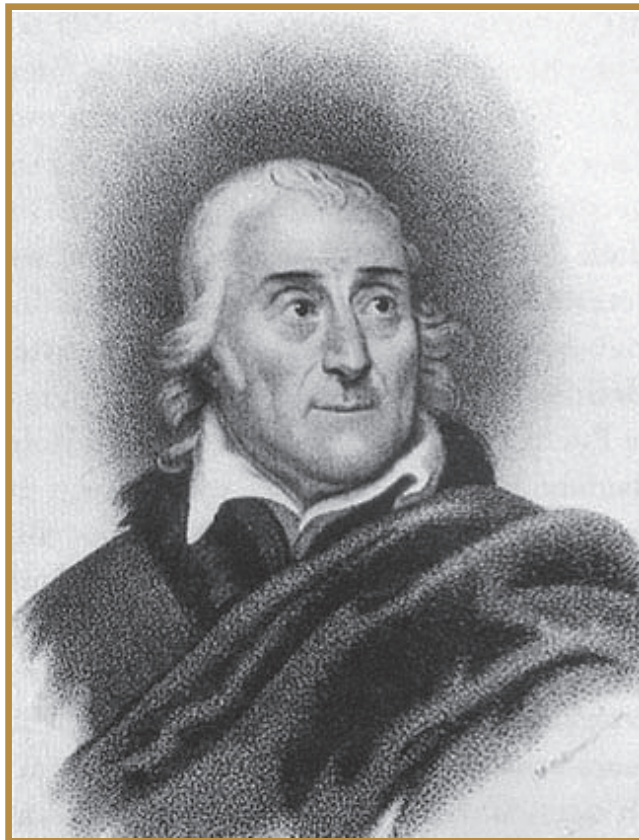
Danielle Bastone

In 1913, Edward Dent had little to say about Masetto, the excitable peasant betrothed to Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The first edition of his masterful commentary, *Mozart's Operas*, categorized—or perhaps pigeonholed—Masetto as a stock *buffo* character whose dramatic function is exclusively comedic. Thirty-four years later, though, the second edition (1947) would offer a different perspective: “Masetto is a more interesting character than audiences generally realize. His aria [“Ho capito, signor, sì”]...has more than a touch of that indignation and revolutionary feeling that appears in Figaro's arias and is, of course, the social background of that whole opera. Da Ponte and Mozart were men of their own time, and we must not forget that *Don Giovanni* has no less ‘social significance’ than *Figaro*; that is indeed the sole purpose of Masetto and Zerlina in the dramatic scheme” (Dent 1947, 161–62).

Dent's change of heart belongs to a mid-twentieth-century trend that cast Masetto as an emblem of the egalitarian Enlightenment and a harbinger of the French Revolution. This interpretation oftentimes relied on the premise that a lineage can and should be drawn from Figaro to Masetto, the peasant endowed with the barber's contempt for an ignoble nobility. Typically, two events in *Don Giovanni* are cited as evidence for this claim. The first is Masetto's only aria, “Ho capito, signor, sì.” It is an explosive reaction to Don Giovanni's successful bid for Zerlina in Act I and often compared in sentiment to Figaro's “Se vuol ballare.” The second is the armed band of peasants that Masetto leads to murder Don Giovanni in Act II (notwithstanding the subsequent beating Masetto receives at Giovanni's hands). Thus, in his outward defiance of the aristocrat, Masetto resonates with the social and political turbulence of the historical reality in which Mozart and Da Ponte created him, even if on a smaller scale than his more accomplished brother-in-arms, Figaro.

Dent's commentary is perhaps the best known of its kind, but it is far from the most extreme example. Writing in 1940, Pierre Jean Jouve remarked that Masetto's aria conjures up “the spirit of

a people and the tendency of an age...[it] is nothing less than the herald of the upheavals of the French Revolution” (Trans. Smith 1957, 31). And in 1967 Robert Moberly would add: “Mozart was sympathetically aware of the social and political overtones of [Masetto's] aria. More openly than Figaro's ‘Se vuol ballare’ it is a document of feelings that smoldered in *ancien régime* Europe...it is *allegro di molto*, full of the tread of revolutionary feet” (Moberly 1967, 182–83).



Lorenzo Da Ponte

Many late-twentieth-century authors quelled this exegetic tendency; they restored and confined Masetto to his *buffo* mold and echoed Dent's initial opinion that Masetto is little more than comic relief. In *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart*, Wye Allanbrook proposed that Masetto's peasant group, far from igniting an uprising, is merely “hunting down an outlaw” and only serves the dramatic need for more *buffo* material (Allanbrook 1983, 261). If in *Figaro* it is the servant who threatens to uproot society, she argued, then in *Don Giovanni* it is the aristocratic title character who challenges the moral structure to which everyone else—including the peasants—so desperately clings. To set Figaro and Masetto together is to set them in relief.

One wonders if anyone would have suggested a “revolutionary” Masetto had *Don Giovanni* preceded *Figaro*. That is to say, would there have been an impetus to understand Masetto as waging a class war if Figaro had not already existed? To accept Masetto as a *buffo* role and nothing more is not difficult. His aria is in F major, the *buffo* key, with predominantly diatonic harmonies and short, simple phrases that he incessantly repeats. It is hardly the sophisticated contest of “Se vuol ballare.” He suffers the comical beating by Don Giovanni in Act II, and, outside of his ensemble numbers, does little more than bear witness to Zerlina's sweetest moments. Yet even though today we resist marking Masetto as a portent of the French Revolution, we may still be tempted to compare his indignation with that of some late-eighteenth-century members of the lower class. In an opera of such seemingly endless ambiguity, the characters of which have inspired pages upon pages of interpretive possibilities, is it not also

continued on page 11

From the Editor

The SECM Newsletter is published twice yearly, in October and April. Submissions in the following categories are encouraged:

- News of recent accomplishments from members of the society (publications, presentations, awards, performances, promotions, etc.);
- Reviews of performances of eighteenth-century music;
- Reviews of books, editions, or recordings of eighteenth-century music;
- Conference reports;
- Dissertations in progress on eighteenth-century music;
- Upcoming conferences and meetings;
- Calls for papers and manuscripts;
- Research reports and research resources;
- Grant opportunities.

Contributions should be submitted as an attachment to an e-mail message (preferably in Microsoft Word format) to the SECM Newsletter editor (alisoncdesimone@gmail.com). Submissions must be received by July 1 for the October issue and by January 1 for the April issue. Claims for missing issues of the Newsletter must be requested within six months of publication. Annotated discographies (in the format given in the inaugural issue, October 2002) will also be accepted and will be posted on the SECM web site. Discographies should be sent to mknoll@steglein.com.



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New Member

Denis Collins

A Message from the President

Janet K. Page

Eighteenth-century music is becoming ever more accessible in its original form. Libraries such as the Morgan Library & Museum in New York, the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, and the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek now offer many scores online in high-quality facsimiles, some with enhancements such as photographs of the watermarks. Several organizations devoted to the work of specific composers are well along with digitization projects: at the C. P. E. Bach Complete Works website, for example, digital facsimiles of works in Harvard University's collection are available; a selection of works by J. S. Bach is available at www.bach-digital.de. If you're looking for music by a less famous composer, finding what's available can be challenging. I wonder if SECM could help somehow? I'll be looking into this over the next few months, and investigating ideas and funding possibilities. I welcome your input.

The next SECM meeting will take place February 25–28, 2016, in Austin, TX, where we will be hosted by the Butler School of Music, University of Texas at Austin. Guido Olivieri is in charge of local arrangements. We are planning a pre-conference visit to the San Antonio missions on February 25. See "Calls for Papers" on next page for more details.



News from Members

The Works of Monsieur Noverre Translated from the French: Noverre, His Circle, and the English Lettres sur la danse (Wendy Hilton Dance & Music Series, no. 19), ed. Michael Burden and Jennifer Thorp (New York: Pendragon, 2014) features essays by SECM members **Bruce Alan Brown** and **Michael Burden**, including "Weiß und Rosenfarb: The End of Noverrian Ballet in Vienna and the Beginnings of the Wienerischer Musenalmanach" (Brown, 103–36) and "Regular Meetings: Noverre and Gallini in London, 1756–1795" (Burden, 137–56).

Bruce Alan Brown's edition of Christoph Gluck's *L'Arbre enchanté, ou Le Tuteur dupe* (Vienna, 1759) is appearing imminently in *Gluck, Sämtliche Werke*, IV:10 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2015).

Beverly Jerold has recently published the following in the Dutch Society for Music Theory's new journal: "Diderot (Part I)—Authorship and Illusion," *Music Theory & Analysis* 1, Nos. 1 & 2 (2014): 38–60.

Jane Schatkin Hettrick's essay "The Holy Spirit and Music" was published as a chapter in the book *Holy Spirit: Unfinished Agenda*, ed. Johnson T. K. Lim (Singapore: Genesis Books and Word N Works, 2014). Her article "Problems in Church Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Vienna and Their Relevance for Catholic Church Musicians Today" appeared in the journal *Sacred Music* (vol. 141, no. 4, winter 2014, pp. 28–38). She also gave a paper, "A Lutheran Contribution towards Understanding Mozart: Friedrich Brinkmann's Edition of the Works for Spieluhr" at the conference "Lutheranism and the Classics III: Lutherans Read History," Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Oct. 2014.

Adam Shoaff (PhD candidate, University of Cincinnati) is traveling to Germany to complete a five-month research grant awarded by the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst

(DAAD), where he will be conducting research for his dissertation exploring the aesthetic foundations for German opera in Leipzig, 1763–1775. He will be in Germany from February 23 until August 3. He invites you to come on by if you're in the neighborhood!



Student Perspectives on the Eighteenth Century

Bethany Cencer

Editor's Note: This is a new newsletter column in which graduate students focusing on eighteenth-century music topics are invited to write about their research, their methods, their archival studies, or the state of the eighteenth-century from the student's perspective. If interested in contributing, please email me at alisoncdesimone@gmail.com.

I am currently writing a dissertation titled "Come Friendly Brothers Let Us Sing: London Partsong Clubs and Masculinity, 1750–1820." The idea for this project was triggered by a July 2012 visit to the British Library, where I came across composer John Wall Callcott's essay "On the Catch Club" (Add. MS 27646). Callcott was a member of this prominent all-male club, founded in 1761 and still in existence today. As I learned more about this club and others like it (Madrigal Society, London Glee Club, Academy of Ancient Music, Concerts of Antient [sic] Music), I thought it would be productive to explore intersections between the social and performance traditions of all-male singing clubs and eighteenth-century understandings of gender identity. In four chapters, I address questions related to performance practice, the emergence of an English canon, commemorative songs, and ideals of femininity and masculinity. The interdisciplinary nature of my work has led me to view an astonishing array of primary sources, including commonplace books, almanacs, penmanship guides, funeral sermons, club minutes, and even a collection of ladies' folding fans. Additional archival research at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Huntington Library, New York Public Library, Bodleian Library, and British Library have provided a more sophisticated understanding of how the procedures and musical activities of partsong clubs derive from broader cultural and social practices.

Though the database Eighteenth Century Collections Online is certainly a blessing and has informed my dissertation, I believe it is necessary for students in this field to "get their hands dirty" by working directly with archival sources. For one thing, many sources are often not included in online search catalogs. For example, at the Clark Library, I leafed through portions of the card catalog and discovered several sources relevant to my research that had not been digitally catalogued. During my 2012 visit to the British Library, I quickly learned that computers cannot trump the specialized knowledge of library curators. Through a simple conversation with the music curator, I learned of an entire collection of sources pertaining to the Catch Club, which was catalogued only via a paper finding aid. During a return trip in 2014, she introduced me to a society with which I was not familiar—the London Melodists' Club. Similarly, at the Huntington Library, a curator happened to notice that I reserved several volumes of catches and glees. He informed me of a relevant source acquired only a week previous, and provided me with free admission to an upcoming Los Angeles

antiquarian book fair so that I could speak with the bookseller in person. It turned out that the bookseller is English, and had been invited to one of the Catch Club meetings. Through him, I was able to connect with the current secretary of the club when I visited London a few months later. Finally, perhaps the highlight of working with archival sources is their ability to bring history to life. As trite as that sounds, I obtained great satisfaction in turning the pages of Catch Club music manuscripts, bespattered with candle wax and wine stains. In one of these manuscripts, I even discovered what could possibly be an eighteenth-century sewing needle, inserted into the bottom of a page. At this point, I have viewed and gathered enough primary source materials, and am now focused on writing.

I find that this is a good time for musicology graduate students to explore eighteenth-century topics. The field is attracting broader attention from musicologists of both earlier and later periods. In recent years, AMS and other conferences have featured a broader range of eighteenth-century musics and contexts, especially non-canonical repertoires from Britain, Iberia, and the Americas. Upon joining SECM, I was pleased to meet many fellow graduate students, as well as a supportive network of senior scholars. There are also plenty of opportunities for sharing one's research. For example, I participated in an SECM workshop for dissertations in progress at AMS, where I shared my research and received constructive feedback from senior scholars. Students are also eligible for a travel grant to alleviate the cost of attending the biennial conference. The field of eighteenth-century music studies is certainly growing, but with so many sources and stories to tell, there is always more work to do.

You may reach Bethany Cencer at: Bethany.Cencer@stonybrook.edu.



Calls for Papers

The Society for Eighteenth-Century Music will hold its seventh biennial conference at the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas, Austin, February 25–28, 2016. We invite proposals for papers and other presentations on any aspect of eighteenth-century music. Presentations may be traditional papers of 25 minutes (35-minute slot), work-in-progress presentations of 10 minutes (20-minute slot), panels (45 minutes) or lecture-recitals (up to 45 minutes). Preference will be given to those who did not present at the 2014 meeting. All presenters must be members of SECM.

Several period keyboard instruments will be available. For information, please contact local arrangements chair Guido Olivieri (olivieri@austin.utexas.edu).

Submit your proposal (250 words) as an e-mail attachment to the chair of the program committee, Dianne Lehmann Goldman, at secm2016@gmail.com. The deadline for proposals is September 15, 2015. Only one submission per author will be considered. Please provide a cover sheet and proposal in separate documents. The cover sheet should contain your name, e-mail address, phone number, and proposal title. The proposal should contain only the title, abstract, and audio-visual requirements. The committee's decision will be announced in mid-October.

Students are encouraged to apply for the Sterling E. Murray Award for Student Travel; the application form and information may be found at www.secm.org. The application deadline is November 1, 2015. The SECM Student Paper Award will be given

to a student member for an outstanding paper presented at the conference.

Further information will be available soon at www.secm.org

Theatre in the Regency Era: Plays, Performance, Practice 1795–1843

Downing College, University of Cambridge, July 29–31, 2016

Conveners: Michael Burden, Michael Gaunt, Marcus Risdell,

Vanessa L. Rogers, Barry Sheppard

For all of its influence, the Regency period in Britain only technically lasted nine years, from 1811 to 1820, when King George III was declared unfit and his heir ruled by proxy as Prince Regent. But the man who became George IV exerted his influence for many more decades after his death in 1830, and his interest in theatre and the arts characterized the period. This is the era of an astonishing proliferation of new theatres, catering to a wider audience than ever before. New forms of entertainment appeared (equestrian, military, melodramatic), and theatrical amusements grew more diverse as managers, authors, and performers dealt with changes in contemporary taste and preoccupations, an increased awareness of social issues, and technological innovations, among other developments.

To reflect the interdisciplinary nature and commercial motivations of theatre in the Regency Era, the conference invites papers by scholars exploring the period's dance, music, and drama from a range of historical and methodological perspectives.

Please submit your abstracts of around 500 words for your 20-minute paper to the conveners by 15 February 2015: regency@str.org.uk. The conveners welcome proposals for both individual papers and fully formed panels of three related papers.

www.regencytheatre2016.com

Clementi and the British Musical Scene: 1780–1830

Organized by Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini (Lucca) in collaboration with *Ad Parnassum: A Journal of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Instrumental Music* and the Italian National Edition of Muzio Clementi's Works.

24–26 November 2015 in Lucca, Complesso Monumentale di San Michele

The period from circa 1780–1830 was once considered the “dark age” of British music. The presence of non-British composers was acknowledged, as was musical activity in general, but the assumption that native British composers produced little of significance forestalled sustained research into the period. More recent scholarship, assisted by a more multivalent, less “composer-centric,” approach to musical history, has largely overturned this view. The series of Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies and other major publications have charted the rise of training institutions, the acceleration in music publishing, the development of instrument technology, and complex interactions have been traced between composers, publishers, instrument manufacturers, and business entrepreneurs, all responding to the dynamics of social and economic change wrought by the industrial revolution. At the same time, the importance of geographical centers apart from London has been acknowledged; and finally, the compositional output of native British composers or European figures active in the British arena has become more accessible through recordings and scholarly editions.

One figure central to these developments has been Muzio Clementi (1752–1832). With his multi-dimensional career as com-

poser, teacher, instrumental manufacturer, publisher, and (until about 1790), performer, Clementi, based in England for much of his life, encompasses the rich and multi-faceted world of early nineteenth-century British music; and with business ventures extending in numerous international directions and through his sustained contribution to the evolution of instrument technology, Clementi embodies the enterprise and dynamism of the Industrial Revolution. As a composer, Clementi produced a body of solo piano and chamber compositions and various pedagogical works that culminated in the multi-volume *Gradus ad Parnassum*. Particularly after 1800 he also produced a substantial number of (now largely lost) orchestral works. During the years that Clementi developed his business interests as publisher and instrument manufacturer he was also preoccupied with musical education, leading to his collaboration with figures like Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755–1824) in an initial attempt to establish an Academy of Music in London. The recent publication of Clementi's correspondence, edited by David Rowland, has shed new light on Clementi's ever-expanding network of contacts with almost the full range of eminent musicians on the British scene and beyond.

Stimulated by and with the aim of building on recent scholarship, this conference examines British musical life at the turn of the nineteenth century, encompassing the rise of institutions such as the Philharmonic Society and the Academy of Music; the dynamics of music publishing and instrument technology and the crosscurrents of European and British compositional styles. With Clementi at the center, the conference examines the contributions of late eighteenth-century figures like Viotti, but also moves forward in time to encompass William Sterndale Bennett (1816–1875), whose bicentennial falls in 2016. The aim is to build on recent research into Clementi and early nineteenth-century British music more generally, stimulated by initiatives like the conference Muzio Clementi: Cosmopolita della Musica (Rome), and the Italian National Edition of Muzio Clementi's Works, in motion since 2008. A mixed methodology is encouraged, and in particular, comparisons with the activities and compositional output of native British composers.

The official languages of the conference are English and Italian. Papers selected at the conference will be published in a miscellaneous volume. Papers are limited to twenty minutes in length, allowing time for questions and discussion. Please submit an abstract of no more than 500 words and one page of biography. All proposals should be submitted by email no later than Sunday, 12 April 2015 to conferences@luigiboccherini.org. With your proposal please include your name, contact details (postal address, e-mail, and telephone number) and (if applicable) your affiliation.

www.luigiboccherini.org/clementiconf.html

German Song Onstage 1770–1914

12–14 February 2016, Royal College of Music, London

Recent years have seen an explosion of interest in the public musical concert as an artistic, cultural, and social phenomenon. The purpose of this conference is to explore the role a largely private genre—German song—played within these public events. Concert programmes are littered with cryptic mentions of ‘Lied’ or ‘Gesang’, and although the specific songs are rarely listed, song seems to have played a small but essential role in the makeup of public concerts alongside the more obvious symphonies, concerti, overtures and even arias. Furthermore, as William Weber has argued,

it was the inclusion of song which upset the eighteenth-century hierarchies of concert genres, leading to a change in concert programming over the century. Alongside this was the gradual emergence of the practice of singing complete song cycles beginning in the 1850s, and the even later concept of the dedicated song recital.

We invite researchers to submit proposals exploring the following questions:

What function did German song have within the public concert and how did this shift during the century?

Which venues and cities both inside and outside the Austro-German realm were particularly significant in the emergence of German song as a recital-worthy genre?

Who were the singers of German song both inside and outside the Austro-German realm, and what role did song play within their wider repertoires?

How did the notion of song accompaniment emerge, and how did multifaceted musicians like Liszt, Clara Schumann, or Brahms respond to this work?

How was German song in concert received by critics and the public?

How did performers approach programming strategies in concerts and how did this evolve?

We welcome abstracts in English and German of no more than 250 words for

Paper presentations (max. length 20 minutes)

Panel presentations (max. length 1.5 hours including questions): please submit a general abstract of 250 words and individual abstracts of 250 words for each named speaker.

Lecture-recitals (max. length 40 minutes)

All abstracts should be accompanied by 250-word biographies of all participants.

A special feature of the weekend is the reproduction of three historical concerts by senior students at the Royal College of Music. These concerts will be open to the public and will take place in the College's Parry Rooms, Britten Theatre and Concert Hall. All prospective presenters are therefore strongly encouraged to propose a concert programme of particular historical significance, such as the first performance of a major cycle, or a 'pedagogical' concert, or a miscellaneous programme in which German song plays a substantial role. Concert proposals should include the following where possible:

The date, time (if possible), venue, and performers of the concert

The complete programme of music performed

The original programme leaflet

A 250-word rationale from proposing the concert

Concert proposals will be evaluated jointly by the committee panel and the Artistic Planning Group of the Royal College of Music.

Abstracts, biographies, and concert proposals should be sent to Natasha.loges@rcm.ac.uk by 29 May 2015. Presenters will be advised as to their acceptance or otherwise by 29 June 2015. Following the conference, selected presentations will be published in an edited volume surveying the history of German song onstage, and presenters may wish to keep this in mind.

Organizers:

Natasha Loges, Royal College of Music

Laura Tunbridge, Oxford University

This event will take place in collaboration with the German Historical Institute, London.

The Serenata and the Festa Teatrale in 18th-Century Europe

Deadline: March 31, 2015

June 26–27th, 2015

Queluz National Palace, Portugal

Organized by

Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal

Scientific Committee:

Manuel Carlos de Brito (Portugal), Paologiovanni Maione (Italy), Annarita Colturato (Italy), Cristina Fernandes (Portugal), Iskrena Yordanova (Bulgaria)

Keynote speakers: Andrea Sommer-Mathis (Austria), Annarita Colturato (Italy)

The CEMSP is organizing, from 26 to 27 June 2015, an International Colloquium at the National Palace of Queluz, dedicated to the Serenata and the Festa teatrale at the courts of Europe in the 18th century.

Investigating the distinctive character and contexts of the Festa teatrale and the Serenata at a time when musical theatre was an integral part of the ceremonial of the court and was a privileged ritual of *repraesentatio maiestatis*, implies an approach to these works full of metaphors and symbolic allusions that takes into account the multiplicity of aspects that involve the context of celebration and the choice of themes, its textual and musical structure, the dramaturgical forms, the vocal and instrumental ensembles, and the various options with regard to the stage apparatus. With this Colloquium, the CEMSP aims to encourage dialogue concerning the production and circulation of the Serenata, one of the principal musical genres performed at the Palace of Queluz during the 18th century, and to focus attention on the Portuguese contribution to the European musical circuit of the time.

The official languages of the conference are Portuguese, English and Italian. Individual Papers are limited to 20 min. Single-topic panels involving joint presentations by three of four authors may also be considered (max. length: 1h30min). Please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words and a short bio (150 words max.)

E-mail: cemsp@sapo.pt

All proposals should be submitted no later than March 31st 2015. Please include your name, contact details (postal address, e-mail and telephone number) and affiliation.

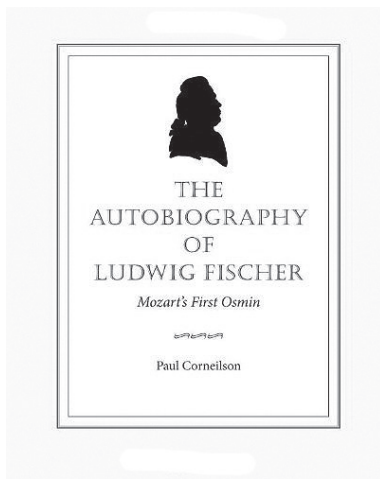
The Scientific Committee will make the final decision on the abstracts by April 10th 2014 and contributors will be informed immediately thereafter.



SECM Charleston papers soon to be published

The volume of papers read at the fifth biennial meeting of the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music will soon appear from Steglein Publishing, Inc. The meeting was held jointly with the Haydn Society of North America and the book will be entitled *Haydn and His Contemporaries II*, following on the successful *Haydn and His Contemporaries* published in 2011 with papers presented at the previous joint meeting of the two societies. The new volume is edited by Kathryn L. Libin and consists of eight of the papers read in Charleston.

Book Reviews



Corneilson, Paul. *The Autobiography of Ludwig Fischer: Mozart's First Osmin*. Malden, Massachusetts: Mozart Society of America, 2011. 127 pp.

Jean Marie Hellner

Paul Corneilson's volume on the autobiography of (Johann Ignaz) Ludwig Fischer yields compelling insight into the life of one of the eighteenth century's most esteemed singers. Fischer (1745–1825) enjoyed a lucrative career as a distinguished bass, performing in operas, oratorios, and concerts throughout Europe. Although 1790 marked the final year of Fischer's autobiography, the information he included offers personal viewpoints from the time of his early training into the midst of his career, noting in particular the challenges and rewards he and other musicians faced in working with various courts and churches, particularly the Mannheim court opera and the National Theater in Vienna.

Prior to Corneilson's publication, availability of Fischer's autobiography was limited to transcriptions in German by H. Theinert (1902) and Adam Gottron (1959), the former being the more accurate of the two, according to Corneilson. The manuscript (Mus. ms. theor. 1215), which is held at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin–Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv, is now reproduced in this immaculate facsimile edition that is highly legible and even retains the size of the original. Corneilson's transcription is extremely accurate, and his translation—which seems to vividly capture the spirit of Fischer's writing style—proves exemplary, given the irregularities of Fischer's spelling and grammar and the challenges involving his idiosyncratic use of abbreviations and punctuation.

What makes this volume especially valuable are the amount and type of additional information Corneilson so judiciously and meticulously provides. An introduction to the facsimile, transcription, and translation constitutes a summary of Fischer's life, description of his voice, a brief review of what is known about the relationship between Fischer and Mozart, and a history of the autobiography. Information relating to Fischer's life concentrates on his musical training and early career. A rich picture of the cultural life during the second half of the eighteenth century emerges, which involves Fischer's work with other famous performers, traveling troupes, composers, and patrons. Especially notable political issues concern the painful termination of the production of German opera in Vienna, as authorized by Emperor Joseph II. Reviews and

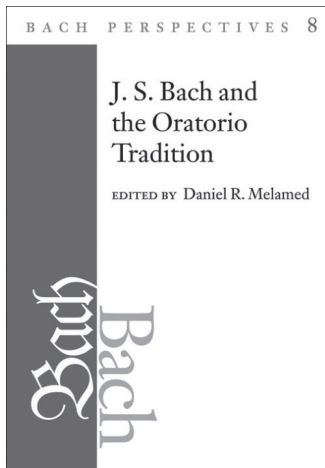
descriptions of Fischer's voice tell of his extraordinary range of two-and-one-half octaves, the colors of his voice, which spanned from the darkness and depth of a bass to the lightness and agility of a tenor, and the keys that Fischer seemed to prefer. He also was praised for his exceptional acting ability, which must have appealed greatly to Mozart and his contemporaries. In his autobiography, Fischer wrote only one comment about Mozart, briefly mentioning a concert the composer had scheduled (pp. 39–40). Corneilson admits that “the composer is mentioned only once in passing and *Die Entführung* is not mentioned at all in the autobiography” (p. 7); thus, most of the information in this section treats Mozart's perception of Fischer and the composer's careful attention to detail in creating the role of Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. Other historical information addresses the time when Mozart first heard Fischer, which was likely in Mannheim in 1777 (p. 10). Consistent with his copious attention to detail, in an endnote Corneilson notes the possibility that Mozart may have heard Fischer initially in Mainz in 1763, but at that time Fischer would have been a choir member rather than a soloist (p. 18, endnote 18). The introduction concludes with a discussion of early resources, namely biographical information on Fischer, including an entry written by Johann Friedrich Reichardt on Fischer and his wife in his *Musikalische Monatsschrift*, which Corneilson surmises Reichardt commissioned (although without the author's customary documentary evidence).

Following Corneilson's translation, whose endnotes inspire further research into culture, politics, and music during Fischer's lifetime, are three appendices. The first consists of early biographies of both Fischer and his wife, Barbara Fischer (née Strasser), that were written by Reichardt and Ernst Ludwig Gerber. A comprehensive appendix of the roles Fischer performed in operas and oratorios from 1772 to 1805 follows. The last appendix features the texts, translations, and music of the arias for which Fischer was famous (including one he composed himself), making study of the scores easy. When specific passages from these arias are discussed in the introduction (pp. 8–10), references in the text or in footnotes to the applicable page numbers in the appendix would make cross-referencing efficient so that the reader does not have to turn to the Table of Contents or peruse through the appropriate appendix to find the applicable aria. Aria texts and translations would be more usable if they were printed immediately before or after each composition rather than collectively preceding the music and if the English lines were aligned in a column to the right of the German and Italian texts. Instead the poetic translations are printed below the foreign texts in a prosaic format. What is helpful is that a new line in English coincides with the beginning of each of the stanzas of the German and Italian texts.

Given that the Mozart Society of America published Ludwig Fischer's autobiography, it is understandable that the subtitle highlights this singer's most famous role. Yet Corneilson effectively and succinctly provides so much additional valuable information in this volume that the subtitle warrants a broader scope. After all, being one of the most famous basses in the second half of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries granted Fischer opportunities to interpret and develop all kinds of characters, albeit most notably Mozart's Osmin, one of the most beloved scoundrels in operatic history.

Jean Marie Hellner holds a PhD in Musicology from the University of North Texas. Her dissertation considered narrative strategies in Rob-

ert Schumann's D-Minor Symphony, and she has presented papers and lecture recitals throughout the United States and Europe on works from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.



Melamed, Daniel R., ed. *J.S. Bach and the Oratorio Tradition*. *Bach Perspectives*, vol. 8. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011. 152 pp.

Mark Nabholz

Four of the six essays in this thought-provoking volume were presented at the American Bach Society's 2008 conference at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the 101st Bethlehem Bach Festival. In the words of editor Daniel Melamed, the full volume "approaches Bach's oratorios from a variety of perspectives."

Christoph Wolff's offering, "Under the Spell of Opera? Bach's Oratorio Trilogy," compares and contrasts the liturgical function of Bach's oratorios and passion settings, places them in chronological and cultural context, and argues that the oratorios and passions should be viewed as a unified whole, a "large-scale musical cycle on the story of the biblical Jesus," particularly in light of the post-1735 passion revisions. Most interesting is his detailed discussion of Bach's heavy borrowing from his own *drammi per musica* in the creation of all three oratorios, transferring worthy music from works of immediate obsolescence to these timeless staples of the repertoire.

Daniel R. Melamed's extensive footnotes in "Johann Sebastian Bach and Barthold Heinrich Brockes" provide fertile sources for additional pursuit as he traces the significant, though often overlooked, influence of the popular *Brockes Passion* on Bach's own libretti. He also ties in the use of Brockes's text in the passion settings of Telemann, and postulates that both Telemann and Bach were "motivated by the pervasive influence and popularity of the Brockes text" (p. 40). Despite the widespread belief that Bach's work and the *Brockes Passion* are different in construction and theological outlook, Melamed makes a convincing argument that BWV 245 is fundamentally "a Brockes setting using John's narrative," and that the *St. Matthew Passion* "may be a Brockes setting once removed" (p. 21).

"Drama and Discourse: The Form and Function of Chorale Tropes in Bach's Oratorios," by Markus Rathey, introduces a

densely detailed structural analysis of Bach's use of the formerly archaic chorale trope by considering the contemporary expectations for unity of time and space in dramatic works. He summarizes, "[i]f the drama was a reflection of reality, the means used had to conform to reality as well" (p. 43). After laying this groundwork, Rathey sympathetically explores Karol Berger's assertion that Bach's passions and oratorios bear striking similarities to *opera seria* of the time; he then examines the notable exception of the chorale tropes, which "provide reflection from beyond time" (p. 44) and embrace a juxtaposition of doubt and confidence reflective of Bach's own theology and that of his Lutheran community.

In "Oratorio on Five Afternoons: From the Lübeck *Abendmusiken* to Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*," Kerala Snyder also emphasizes time, particularly the performances of both Buxtehude's Lübeck *Abendmusiken* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* over the course of several weeks. She also explores the *historia* genre as "sacred opera" and the likely influence of Bach's exposure to opera in Dresden, speculating on the music that may have been employed by Buxtehude in the lost *Abendmusik* programs.

Early in "The Triumph of 'Instrumental Melody': Aspects of Musical Poetics in Bach's *St. John Passion*," Laurence Dreyfus states his aim to strip away the "vener of misplaced respect attached to Bach's compositions"—and he proceeds to do so in a manner reminiscent of performing surgery with a garden scythe. Bach was, in Dreyfus's words, "a composer whose musical praxis both obscures and undermines a straightforward translation of literary ideas" (p. 96). Comparing Bach's textual treatments with those of Handel, he makes a reasonable case that Bach did indeed flout the expectations of his day by placing the text in a subservient role to instrumental techniques. However, his discussion of Bach's construction of "Ach, mein Sinn" in terms of "serious violence to the text," which shows "so little respect for the structure as to make one wonder why a poem with a meter and rhyme scheme was necessary in the first place" (p. 107), hardly entices the reader to sympathize with his point of view. We must place his goal of looking past the "post-Wagnerian, romanticized reception of Bach" within the context of Dreyfus's impressive scholarly diversity encompassing both Bach and Wagner, as well as acknowledge the brief glimmers of respect in his discussion of Bach's theological and catechetical motivations. However, I am left with the impression that Dreyfus is frustrated with the iconic status accorded to Bach and would like to have a hand in taking him down a peg or two.

In the concluding essay, "Bach's *Ascension Oratorio*: God's Kingdoms and Their Representation," Eric Chafe leads his readers through a fascinating and detailed discussion of the theology of Christ's ascension and the import of contemporary theological views on Bach's *Ascension Oratorio* (c. 1735). He contains extended theological discussions in expansive footnotes to avoid bogging down the primary focus, which is to study the theological and musical aspects of the work in a coordinated approach.

Though small in dimensions, this volume delivers large on its promise and deserves a place in university and private library collections. I look forward to reporting on Volume 9 in the series, *J. S. Bach and His German Contemporaries* (2013), in the next issue of this newsletter.

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Gluck Conference review

Eleanor Selfridge-Field

The tercentenary of the birth of Christoph Willibald [Ritter von] Gluck (1714–1787) was marked by a festival (“Gluck and the Map of Eighteenth-Century Music”) organized by Brian Locke and Anita Hardeman at the University of Western Illinois (Macomb) on October 17–19, 2014. The festival consisted of a three-day conference and two evening concerts. Bruce Alan Brown gave the keynote address (discussed below).

The profile provided online for the *Gluck Gesamtausgabe* (<http://www.gluckgesamtausgabe.de>) credits the composer with 41 authentic operas, with performances given in more than 80 theaters and sources surviving today in more than 250 libraries. The spread was not a sign of aimlessness: Gluck knew, especially after 1750, where his interests would be best served and showed great agility by moving from place to place as conditions for opera changed. The bitterness of Gluck’s career—its unending succession of people and places—is paralleled by quick changes in emphasis and approach. Did he write for castrati in Paris? Was the aim of the Parmese production of *Orphée* to help love-sick noblewomen enjoy the sorrows of love? Maria Theresia, in Brown’s terms, suffered an “apoplexie d’amour.” How did writing for an Italian public differ from writing for a French or an Austrian one? Or, similarly, how would expectations differ between court and public audiences? In what ways did the travels of singers at mid-century introduce changes in performance style? How was the music of Gluck influenced by that of Jommelli, Traetta, Vinci, Caldara? How was it influenced by various librettists? How did Gluck’s peripatetic example influence later composers? These and many other questions were probed in a succession of excellent papers which, it is anticipated, will be collected in a book. The fact is that producing a comprehensive view of Gluck’s achievements is problematic. He is one more composer known mainly for a single composition in numerous versions—*Orfeo e Euridice* (Vienna, 1762) but also (with modifications) for Parma (1769), London (1770), and Paris (1774). Together with two other operas, this work constituted the musical evidence of Gluck’s “reform.” Yet his life was hardly limited to the stimulation of a celebrated impulse towards musical classicism. He was not oriented towards churning out new works according to a fixed formula. Taste was too variant from place to place, reign to reign, and season to season.

An appreciation of the riches of Gluck’s artistic achievement was greatly enhanced by two remarkably good concerts directed by Richard Hughey. A reconstruction (from ten musical fragments) of Gluck’s *La caduta de’ giganti* (London, 1746), prefaced by the surviving sinfonia from Gluck’s *Ipermestra* (Venice, 1744), was ably aided by no fewer than six current students and recent graduates of regional music programs, several of whom have established international careers. Four sopranos—Amy Prince, Bethany Worrell, Maureen Batt, and Alison Huntley—were complemented by the mezzo-soprano Jessica G. Peritz and the tenor Thomas Heise. On the first night, Stephan Schardt, former concertmaster of Musica Antiqua Cologne, appeared as a guest soloist in Mysliveček’s fifth violin concerto. The most substantial item was Gluck’s own shortened version of his ballet *Don Juan* (Vienna, 1761), performed in 13 movements beginning with a sinfonia. The program was introduced by the overture to *L’innocenza giustificata* (Vienna, 1755) and closed with the chaconne from Mozart’s *Idomeneo, re di Creta*

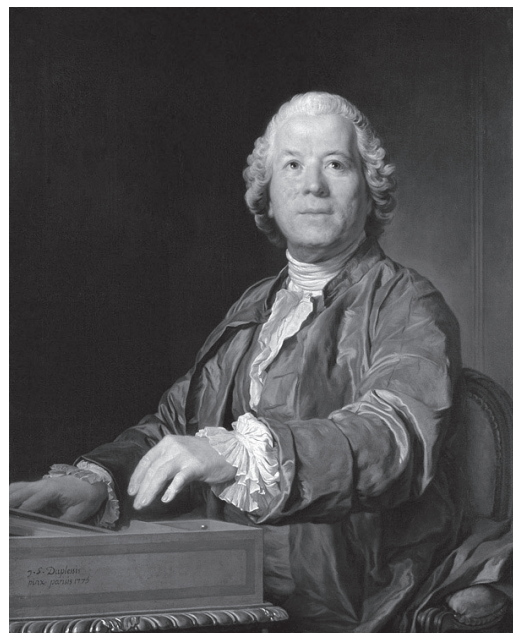
(K. 366; Munich, 1781). Many attendees commented on the proficiency of the student orchestra, which was notable for its precision and enthusiastic engagement with the music.

The keynote speech, “Near and Far with Gluck and Ditters,” considered travels during a short period during which Carl Ditters (1739–1799; from 1773 “von Dittersdorf”) and Gluck were acquainted. Ditters had been recruited in 1751 as a chamber musician by Prince Joseph of Saxe-Hildburghausen, whom Gluck served from 1752 to 1760 (though somewhat irregularly: the prince’s official *maestro* was Giuseppe Bonno). The start of the prince’s regency in 1761 caused most of his musicians to move to the Burgtheater, Vienna, under Giacomo Durazzo’s direction. The music calendar expanded into Lent, which gave stimulus to the composition of many new concert pieces.

Ditters met Gluck (1762) soon after the premiere of *Orfeo ed Euridice*. The two traveled together to Bologna (1763), where they attended the first performance of Gluck’s *Il trionfo di Clelia*. According to Ditters’s mostly “self-serving” diary, he himself praised the work, but the Bolognese audience gave it a cool reception.

Locke’s paper on the principles of creating a pastiche in Gluck’s time was one deserving special mention. His point of departure considered how a score for *La caduta de’ giganti* was assembled for the Macomb performance, but its larger aim was to discuss the underlying principles of pastiche creation more broadly. An analysis of the functional requirements of each aria of the drama played an important role in determining what arias would best suit the situation. Katherine Syer’s video-based presentation of methods of staging ballet numbers in period-opera productions today elicited much comment.

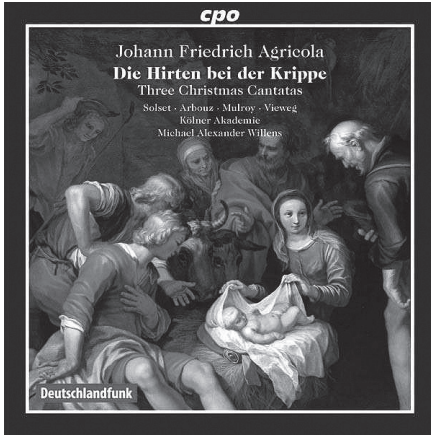
In addition to Brown, Locke, and Syer, each of the other speakers—Michele Cabrini, Paul Corneilson, Estelle Joubert, Hayoung Heidi Lee, Kurt Markstrom, John A. Rice, Eric Schneeman, Analise Smith, Michael Vincent, and myself (plus Margaret Butler *in absentia*; her paper was read by Rice)—complemented the above items. Collectively they traced the wide range of Gluck’s skills and the fluid nature of his musical response to ever-changing circumstances. The topics presented heavily emphasized opera. Gluck’s instrumental music, ballets, *Lieder*, and sacred music await attention from other quarters.



CD Reviews

Bertil van Boer

Johann Friedrich Agricola. *Uns ist ein Kind geboren; Die Hirten bei der Krippe; Kündlich gross ist das gottselige Geheimnis*. Michael Willens, conductor; Berit Solset, soprano; Myriam Arbouz, alto; Nicholas Mulroy, tenor; Matthias Vieweg, bass; Kölner Akademie (period instruments). CPO 777 921 (81:07).



Mention the name Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720–1774) and chances are that one will either look puzzled or somehow dismiss him as one of those students of Johann Sebastian Bach who have sat on the musical sidelines of the period. In reality, Agricola was a full-fledged member of the prestigious Berlin School that gathered about Frederick the Great. In 1741 he arrived in Berlin, where he became a teacher and music critic (under the pseudonym Flavio Amicio Olibrio). In 1750 he finally cracked the court establishment with an opera, *Il filosofo in amore*, and in 1759 he succeeded Carl Heinrich Graun as the director of the court Kapelle, though he was never awarded Graun's title of Kapellmeister. Nonetheless, he was active in Berlin's musical society until his death, earning a reputation for his church music.

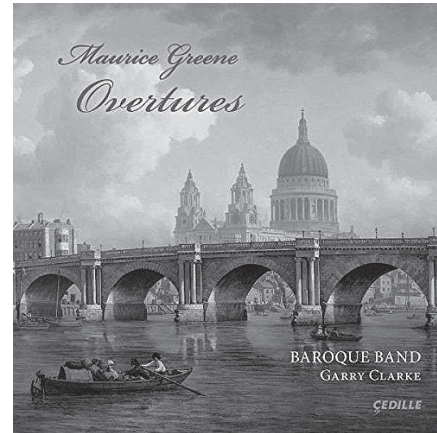
This disc by the Kölner Akademie incorporates three of the cantatas, probably all written later in Agricola's life. This includes the first portion of Carl Ramler's trilogy on the life of Christ, *Die Hirten bei der Krippe*. These all demonstrate the competence and inventiveness that the composer demonstrated. Far from being a lesser musician in the shadow of his teacher and his more renowned Berlin contemporaries, he shows here that his music is solidly written, with interesting orchestration and a style that is completely empfindsam. Only occasionally does he show some older traits, such as the aria "Wie freudig" in *Uns ist ein Kind geboren*, with its Telemannesque solo clarino part. Elsewhere, the music is quite interesting and innovative. Who would have imagined a chorus singing a recitative (as in the movement that follows the aria just noted)? Or consider the opening pastorale of *Die Hirten*, which surrates softly above a drone, with alternating oboes and flutes, laying the work precisely in the appropriate musical manger. This sets up a series of wonderfully flowing and contemplative arias, ending with a jubilant "Ehre sei Gott" with skirling trumpets and a truly unexpected solo organ accompanying the homophonic chorus.

As one might expect from Michael Willens, the tempos are all carefully maintained to bring out the nuances of the music. Berit Solset is light and clear as the soprano, but her colleagues Myriam Arbouz, Nicholas Mulroy, and Mathias Vieweg all match her in

tone and clarity. In short, one could not find a better disc, one that shows off Agricola's wonderful music at its best. Add to this the excellent booklet notes by Tobias Schwinger, and this is a disc that should be in every eighteenth-century collection.



Maurice Green, *Overtures*. Garry Clarke, cond. Baroque Band (period instruments). Cedille 90000 152. 63:05.



Chances are that few have actually heard much about Maurice Greene (1696–1755), who has been largely overshadowed (or even virtually blown off the map of history) by his iconic contemporary George Frederick Handel. Born almost a decade after his famous colleague, he came from a family of substance, and his sole ambition was to become a professional musician. In 1714 he obtained the post as organist at St. Dunstan-in-the-West in London, and over the next two decades seems to have been employed in virtually every possible prestigious job in the capital, including St. Paul's and the Chapel Royal. In fact, he was so well regarded that he was awarded a doctorate and professorship at Cambridge University in 1730, though there is no real evidence that he gave up any of his London posts to move to the countryside. He was sought out as a teacher, with his pupils including William Boyce and John Stanley, and in 1738 was a founding member of what eventually became the Royal Society of Musicians (though initially it went under the less-than-auspicious title of Fund for the Support of Decay'd Musicians and their Families).

Today one tends to regard Greene (if at all) as a slavish follower of Handel, and there can be no doubt that they maintained a close friendship that included playing the organ together at St. Paul's. But during his lifetime, Greene was also well regarded as a composer of sets of occasional works, ranging from Forty Anthems in 1740 (which was a comparative bestseller) to a collection simply entitled Cathedral Music, which included various Episcopal Services (and was published posthumously). Thus, this set of Six Overtures in Seven Parts, published around 1750, fits right in alongside other instrumental works such as Handel's Twelve Grand Concertos. In fact, Greene seems to have outsold Handel by a third when the subscription totals are analyzed.

As to the works themselves, there is a certain sense of conventionality that pertains throughout. Four are in the Italian three-movement format, while the remaining two overtures have four movements, which conforms more to Baroque practice. The scoring is not especially novel or modern, for in addition to the usual

strings and continuo, he only requires a bassoon and a pair of woodwinds (flutes or oboes). This, however, doesn't detract from Greene's rather interesting use of texture (though a pair of horns might not have been amiss). The first overture has a cheery D major Allegro that sounds quite modern, and galant in style, even with some occasional imitational entrances. He uses his oboes here as foils for the energetic strings. The second, in G major, opens with a rather sprightly fugue that one would like to think old-fashioned but which includes episodic material of varying textures, showing off a hint of modernity that peeps through the counterpoint. In the andante of the fifth overture, the lilting minuet has echoes of Telemann in the steady tempo accompanying some interesting harmonic shifts that poke through a more mundane diatonic texture.

To fill out this disc, the Baroque Band has incorporated three "Pieces" from his Lessons, all of which seem like short sonatas for harpsichord, as well as a pair of overtures that are the only things on this disc that even reflect Handel at all. In short, this is a great collection to show what real native English music in the mid-eighteenth century was like. The Baroque Band is spot on in terms of tempos and intonation. There is a nice restless energy in their performance, and the prominence of the woodwinds indicates that the ubiquitous strings know instinctively when to pull back. Well played, not to mention interesting music, all of which makes this a disc well worth acquiring.



Theresia Youth Baroque Orchestra Live in Bolzano. Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, Symphony in D major Fk 64; Franz Joseph Haydn, Cello Concerto in C major Hob. VIIb:1; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D major K. 211; Joseph Martin Kraus, Symphony in E minor VB 141. Claudio Astronio, cond. Theresia Youth Baroque Orchestra (period instruments). Nuovo Suono 01 (77:40).



Italy seems to be the happening place currently for the formation of new period instrument ensembles of considerable talent. This has increased the scope and variety of musical performances, and along with it, offers possibilities for resurrecting repertory that has long stood in the shadows. The Theresia Youth Baroque Orchestra is just one such group, created by harpsichordist Mario Martinoli and sponsored corporately. They debuted in 2012 and in the intervening couple of years have become an established part of

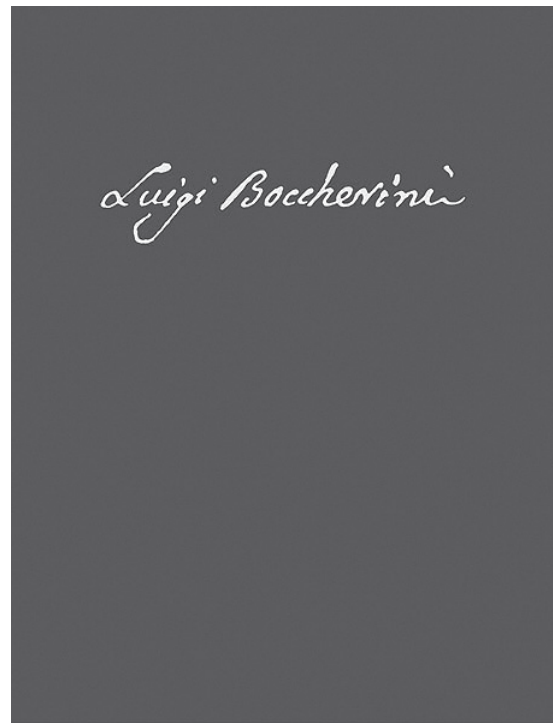
the early music scene in northern Italy, especially near their home base of Rovereto.

This disc is a concert selection, which includes two works that are quite interesting by Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and Joseph Martin Kraus, the former containing some interesting twists and turns and the latter filled both with *Sturm und Drang* tension and lyrical peace (in the second movement). Complementing them are two standard repertory staples, Haydn's C major Cello Concerto with its tour de force finale, and Mozart's lesser performed D major violin concerto (K. 211). The former features the blazing technical skills of cellist Magdalena Dür, and the latter the smooth and dexterous violin of Esther Crazzolarà. All of these works have been recorded before, and as noted, some are ubiquitous, but this is an excellent opportunity to hear unfettered by editorial emendations just how precise and energetic this ensemble sounds under the capable hands of Claudio Astronio. The tempos are all matched with the music, the intonation is excellent, and the ensemble moves as one, allowing the musical nuances to shine forth. Even the applause is a nice treat, though of course as they move forward, this bit of live theatre will vanish in future recordings. It is a great pleasure to welcome this ensemble to the world of Classical music; they will, in Mozart's words, "make a great noise in the world some day." This disc can be obtained via their website at www.tybo.org and it is well worth tracking down.

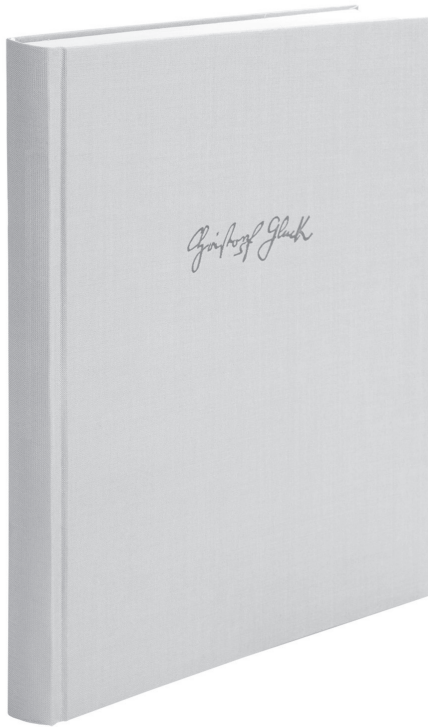


Recent Publications of Eighteenth-Century Music

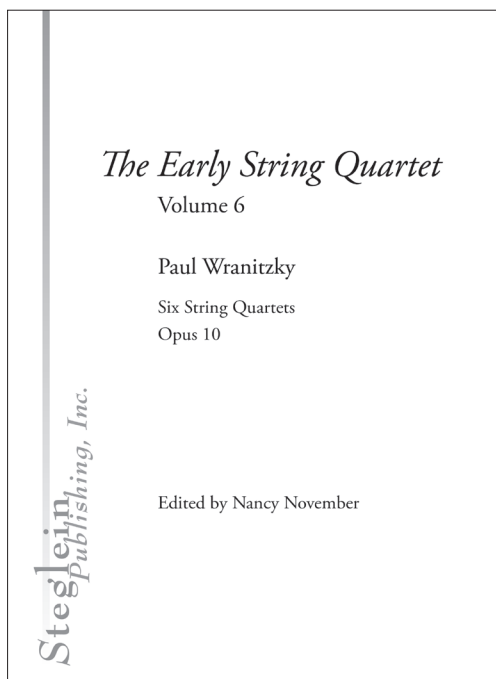
Luigi Boccherini, *6 Trios Op. 1 (G 77-82) for 2 Violins and Violoncello*, edited by Rudolf Rasch and produced as part of the *Luigi Boccherini Opera Omnia* under the general editorship of Christian Speck. 184 pages, cloth-bound hard cover, ISMN: 979-0-2153-2224-0, ISBN: 978-88-8109-485-1, available at www.utorpheus.com.



Christoph Willibald Gluck, *Demofonte, Dramma per musica in drei Akten, Mailand 1743* edited by Tanja Gözl and produced as part of *Christoph Willibald Gluck. Sämtliche Werke*. 324 pages, cloth-bound hard cover, ISMN: 9790006495641, available at www.baerenreiter.com.



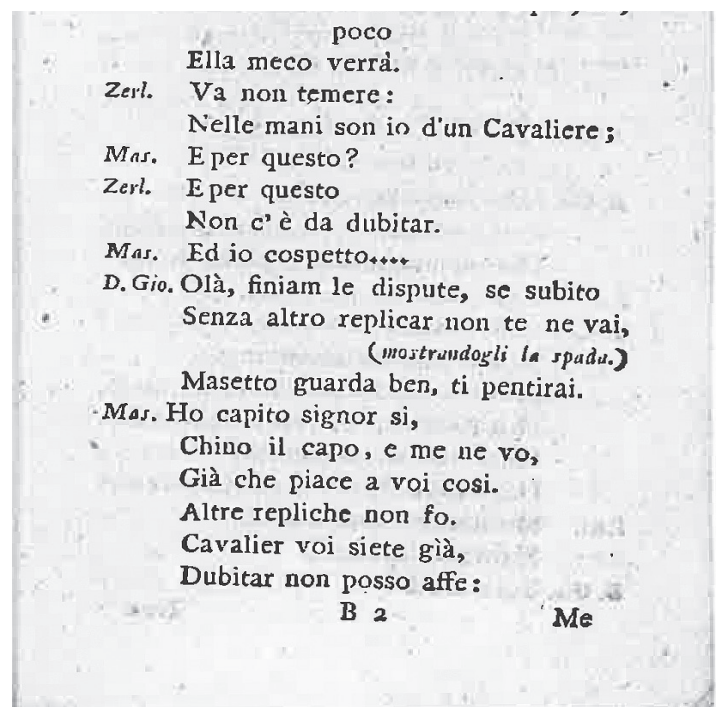
Paul Wranitzky, *Six Quartets, Op. 10*, edited by (SECM member) Nancy November and produced as part of the series *The Early String Quartet* under the general editorship of Cliff Eisen. 188 pages, sewn-bound paper cover, ISBN: 978-0-9819850-6-0, ISSN: 1539-879X, v. 6, available at www.steglein.com



continued from page 1

possible that Masetto signifies beyond the generic comedy of his type? Before we write off the later Dent and his companions, it is worth revisiting their claims. In readdressing the matter of Masetto's character, though, we must look beyond Figaro. Using the barber as the yardstick for revolutionary fervor has only led authors to categorize Masetto in seemingly irreconcilable extremes: seditious renegade or *buffo* caricature. It is necessary to break from the polarizing effect that Figaro comparisons have engendered, as well as to entertain the possibility of a less clear-cut interpretation.

The long theatrical tradition of the Don Juan legend provided Da Ponte with a host of models on which he could draw for his own adaptation. His primary source was a libretto by Giovanni Bertati, *Don Giovanni*, written for performance in Venice in early 1787 and set by Giuseppe Gazzaniga. Indeed, a fair portion of Da Ponte's first act is directly indebted to Bertati's libretto, which itself relies heavily on Molière's play *Don Juan* (1665). Another likely influence on Da Ponte's work was Carlo Goldoni's 1736 play *Don Giovanni Tenorio*. Many authors have commented on the two dramatic components that are mutual to these and most iterations of the story: Don Giovanni must be exposed in some heinous exploit to open the action and he must be brought to justice to close it. What happens between these dramatic pillars is variable. By Da Ponte's time an author could piece his story together—based on his dramatic inclinations and apparatus—by picking and choosing from an arsenal of Don Juan characters and events. For instance, Giovanni's relatives are occasionally woven into the plot, as is a fourth female victim. Before Goldoni, authors usually incorporated a shipwreck, and despite our love for Mozart's glorious second-act trio, the exchanging of identities between Don Giovanni and his servant was never a fixed element in the storyline. It is through Da Ponte's particular selection of such elements, as well as through his alterations of Bertati's text, that the door might be opened—even if only ajar—for a “revolutionary” reading of Masetto.



In Bertati's version, the story's peasant groom is a fellow named Biagio. He appears only once in the opera, within a dramatic sequence later adopted by Da Ponte: a chorus of peasants celebrates Biagio's wedding before Don Giovanni enters and steals his bride. The following aria, Biagio's "A me schiaffi," is the analog to Masetto's "Ho capito." Although Da Ponte rewrote the text, the substance remains the same: with his love and pride at stake, the peasant will not suppress his anger. Yet Biagio reveals a more facile perception than Masetto. After Don Giovanni twice slaps him in the face and orders his exit, Biagio uses the majority of his aria not to confront the aristocrat, but to chastise his fiancée: "I am not as offended by him [Giovanni] as I am by you, fickle woman," he sings in the first stanza, "standing there with that countenance, watching me be so mistreated." He then vows to avenge her betrayal by recounting the affair to her family. In fact, he devotes half of his second stanza to enumerating the relatives he intends to apprise: her mother, her aunt, her grandmother. Masetto, on the other hand, shows a little more savvy and tact. Identifying Giovanni as the guiltier party, he chooses to address the Don directly for more than half of the aria, camouflaging his indignation in sarcasm to avoid a potentially dangerous impertinence. "I make no more objections, you are certainly a cavalier," he insincerely concedes, "I can tell by your consideration for me." Like Biagio, Masetto includes a disparaging pass at his bride, but his accusation is leveled as much at Giovanni, if not more, than at Zerlina.

If we choose Biagio rather than Figaro as Mozart and Da Ponte's model for Masetto, we may be better situated to read some modicum of revolutionary spirit into Masetto's character. Biagio takes for granted Don Giovanni's behavior, and his reaction consequently centers on his betrothed's infidelity. Biagio's aria, which characterizes him as a spineless tattletale, leaves the aristocrat's culpability largely unaddressed. Masetto, although wounded by Zerlina, is also visibly affronted by the abuse of power at play. In his courageous and direct confrontation with Don Giovanni, his words make it known that this supposedly righteous nobleman is actually a philanderer manipulating those below his station. Certainly Biagio would be incapable of such a stand; Da Ponte enhances Masetto with more shrewdness and audacity in comparison. Even if Masetto's defense is futile, perhaps the point is that he still endeavors to make it.

Among the more common plot elements in earlier versions of the Don Juan story is the gathering of a group of armed men in pursuit of the libertine. Da Ponte included this device, but on his own terms. Molière's Don Juan is sought by an armed group of aristocrats. Goldoni twice has his Giovanni chased: first by a band of robbers, the dramatic function of which is only to facilitate Giovanni's encounter with a pretty lady, and second by the noblemen sent to arrest him. Bertati's libretto incorporates no such group. That Da Ponte opted for such an assembly, populated it with peasants, and anointed Masetto as its captain may be no insignificant matter, at least as it pertains to our understanding of Masetto. Of course, the peasants' vengeful quest allows for the comedic element of Masetto's beating, as befits the *buffa* tradition to which he belongs. Yet the group's hunt remains a blatant display of the lower class violently seeking amends from the upper, specifically crafted as such by Da Ponte in a deviation from his primary literary models. It is a theme particularly at home in the late eighteenth century—or, at least, it seems so for us.

Writing on *Don Giovanni*, Charles Rosen remarked: "No one in

1787 (the year when the meeting of the Estates-General echoed over all of Europe) could have missed the significance of ... the wicked exploitation of peasant innocence for dissolute aristocratic vice" (Rosen 1997, 322–23). As the audience witnessed the premiere of *Don Giovanni* in October 1787, were they reminded of the trouble brewing in France? Or are we only reminded of it in hindsight? To be sure, Masetto suits the conventions of *opera buffa*, but in the hands of Mozart and Da Ponte he is more than just a cutout. Masetto is confronted by the inequities of love and class intertwined, and that his response addresses both sides of the coin reflects a certain sensibility in his character. He may not charge an explicitly revolutionary agenda, but the notion that Masetto would at least sympathize with the insurrectionary movement is perhaps not so farfetched. After all, if he had been crafted more like his predecessor, Biagio, he would not have even put up a fight. And it is not so difficult to imagine Masetto a few years later with musket in hand, joining the strains of "Ça ira" and marching proudly alongside the *sans culottes*.

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