

MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING; OR, COSÌ FAN TUTTE IN THE ROMANTIC IMAGINATION: A COMMENTARY ON AND TRANSLATION OF AN EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY EPISTOLARY EXCHANGE

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ABSTRACT

Among the gems buried in Johann Friedrich Reichardt's short-lived Berlinische musikalische Zeitung is a 'Musikalischer Briefwechsel' that appeared over three volumes in September 1805. The text, cast as an epistolary exchange between the fictional characters Arithmos and Phantasmus, argues the merits of Mozart's Così fan tutte. (The opera had recently returned to the Berlin stage after a thirteen-year absence.) The exchange has received little scholarly attention, and yet it is a remarkable document for the glimpse it gives both into Berlin's musical politics and, most of all, the reception history of Mozart's opera.

The authorship of the 'Briefwechsel', which appeared pseudonymously, has been attributed to Georg Christian Schlimbach, a frequent contributor to the journal. This article, in contrast, argues that Reichardt himself makes the more likely author: the correspondence more closely reflects his personality, his ambitions for the advancement of opera in the Prussian capital and his theory of art. Indeed, arising from his defence of Mozart's opera is an extraordinary claim in the history of Così's reception: that the work exemplifies romantic irony. E. T. A. Hoffmann is famous for his terse praise of the opera's 'ergötzlichste Ironie'. Reichardt, however, goes further by showing how the opera amalgamates, in quintessentially romantic fashion, the opposing forces of the comic and serious. Employing a Shakespearean conceit, he argues that Mozart's music amounts to more than 'much ado about nothing'.

Reichardt's move is the more significant given that he builds his reading not on Da Ponte's libretto but on German adaptations by Bretzner and Treitschke, translations that modern scholarship has widely faulted for lacking the original's subtlety. Thus, although Così fan tutte has generally been viewed as a work that runs counter to romantic tastes, Reichardt's 'Briefwechsel', along with some newly discovered material, provides a basis for revisiting that claim about the opera's place in nineteenth-century thought.

Ancient art and poetry spring from a strict separation of the dissimilar; the romantic, in contrast, delights in indissoluble miscegenations. All oppositions – nature and art, poetry and prose, the serious and the comic, recollection and anticipation, spirituality and sensuousness, the earthly and the divine, life and death – it amalgamates in the most intimate way.

Die antike Kunst und Poesie geht auf strenge Sonderung des Ungleichartigen, die romantische gefällt sich in unauflöslchen Mischungen; alle Entgegengesetzten, Natur und Kunst, Poesie und

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Prosa, Ernst und Scherz, Erinnerung und Ahndung, Geistigkeit und Sinnlichkeit, das Irdische und Göttliche, Leben und Tod, verschmilzt sie auf das innigste mit einander.²

For the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, life was short but its reach into art long. Founded by Johann Friedrich Reichardt in 1805 only to fold the following year, the journal represented the Prussian capital's first serious, albeit halting, venture into music criticism. Reichardt set himself an ambitious agenda: he wanted to do more than chart the city's musical life from week to week; he wanted to direct its course. His self-appointed mission of educating the musical amateur mostly involved winnowing out the exemplary artist from the pedestrian one, all with the goal of cultivating a distinctive German repertory on the stage and in the parlour.³ To draw international attention and prominence to Berlin's local scene, Reichardt's journal culled reports from all over Europe and solicited contributions from some of the region's finest minds: Achim von Arnim, the theologian Karl Gottlob Horstig, Christian Friedrich Michaelis, and Johann Friedrich Werneburg, professor of philosophy at Göttingen. Leafing through its pages, one comes across reports, anecdotes and minor controversies as well as sustained discussions in areas like ethics and aesthetics.

Among its gems is a 'Musikalischer Briefwechsel' that ran over three issues during September 1805. The text, cast as an epistolary exchange between two fictional figures corresponding via a third, argues the merits of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, which had recently returned to the Berlin stage after a thirteen-year absence.⁴ On the one side stands Arithmos, who reproaches the work; on the other is Phantasmus, who writes on its behalf. (Humanus, from whom we do not hear, is the pretended intermediary between the two supposed rivals.) There is nothing quite like this commentary in the opera's reception history, whether in length – its sixteen columns of text make it the longest critical essay on the opera before Jahn – style or judgment. Even so, it has remained largely hidden in the chronicles of Mozart reception. A footnote in Jahn briefly summarizes and then quotes a paragraph from the exchange; Abert keeps the summary but drops the quotation; Deutsch does not mention any of it at all.⁵ Perhaps the neglect is a reflection of the scope of the exchange: like the rest of the journal, the correspondence about *Così fan tutte* has more to do with local musical politics than with independent aesthetic judgments.

Yet the commendation of *Così fan tutte* as a worthy candidate for admission into Berlin's operatic repertory brings forth an argument of far wider historical and geographical import. The exchange defends the opera by placing it under the rubric of romantic irony. To appropriate Mozart the composer for

2 August Wilhelm von Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur*, volumes 5 and 6 of *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. Eduard Böcking (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1861; reprinted Hildesheim: Olms, 1971), lecture 25, volume 6, 161. This passage comes from a lecture on Shakespeare.

3 Martina Lang, ed., *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung, 1805–1806*, Répertoire International de la Presse Musicale (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1990), ix–x. This volume indexes the entire run of the journal. The journal itself is reproduced as Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* (Berlin: Frölich, 1805–1806; reprinted Hildesheim: Olms, 1969).

4 *Eine machts wie die andre; oder, die Schule der Liebhaber* was first performed at Berlin's National-Theater on 3 August 1792. The libretto, probably by Wenzel Mihule, is based on the translation used for the Prague production during the 1790–1791 season. See Manfred Schuler, 'Eine Prager Singspielfassung von Mozarts *Così fan tutte* aus der Zeit des Komponisten', *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1991 (1992), volume 2, 895–901. Brachvogel gives this summary of the opera's reception at that time: 'Musical connoisseurs were charmed, the public remained cold but everyone condemned the execrable plot' ('Die Musikkennen waren entzückt, das Publikum blieb kalt, Alle aber tadelten das erbärmliche Sujet'). Albert Emil Brachvogel, *Die Königliche Oper unter Freiherrn von der Reck und das National-Theater bis zu Iffland*, volume 2 of *Geschichte des Königlichen Theaters zu Berlin. Nach Archivalien des Königl. Geh. Staats-Archivs und des Königl. Theaters* (Berlin: Otto Janke, 1878), volume 2, 309. Incidentally, Fiordiligi (Charlotte) was played by Ambrosch's wife, Wilhelmine. One wonders if this fact of public life coloured the conception of Fiordiligi and Ferrando.

5 Otto Jahn, *W. A. Mozart* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1856–1859), volume 4, 497, note 8; Hermann Abert, *W. A. Mozart*, eighth edition (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1975), volume 2, 531, note 16; and Otto Erich Deutsch and Joseph Heinz Eibl, *Mozart: die Dokumente seines Lebens*, second edition (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1981). The exchange is mentioned in slightly more detail in Edmund J. Goehring, *Three Modes of Perception in Mozart: The Philosophical, Pastoral, and Comic in 'Così fan tutte'*, Cambridge Studies in Opera (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 8–10.



Romanticism was a somewhat early but not unprecedented move. Placing this particular opera, however, within Romanticism's compass is all but singular in what we know of its reception history. Only E. T. A. Hoffmann (also via pseudonym) approaches the outer boundaries of such a position when he famously praises the genuinely operatic libretto for helping to produce a musical work of 'the most delightful irony' ('Die ergötzlichsste Ironie').⁶ Hoffmann's primary aim, however, is to ally *Così fan tutte* with the 'classical' opera buffa, which has withstood 'the unholy attempt to carry over the tearful play even into opera' ('Der heillose Versuch, das weinerliche Schauspiel auch in die Oper zu übertragen').⁷ The 'Briefwechsel', in contrast, uses the concept of romantic irony to develop an expansive and subtle *apologia* for the opera's morally and aesthetically compelling coherence. What is more, the exchange bases its argument not on Da Ponte's text but Treitschke's German adaptation, which was (and typically still is) regarded as deeply deficient. To borrow a phrase from the colloquy itself: the music does much more with the text than make much ado about nothing. It is an exacting realization of the situation. Sustained defences of the opera's textual/musical compatibility would not resurface until the late twentieth century.

The reading of *Così fan tutte* against romantic thought marks the exchange's primary contribution to the history of ideas, and it is the main reason for giving a full translation of it here (I have also included relevant portions of the 'Vermischte Nachrichten' of 17 September 1805). Yet the exchange did not materialize out of an idle moment of aesthetic reverie; it is foremost a piece of rhetoric intended to shape public taste in a leading cultural centre. The 'Briefwechsel' variously coaxes, cajoles, exhorts or otherwise contends with rival critics, a lumpish public, vainglorious actors, profit-seeking impresarios, timorous editors and – given that the text is almost certainly by the irascible and mordant Reichardt himself – the author's own personality. The first task will therefore be to look at the 'Briefwechsel's' rhetorical properties, its voice and style, to understand how Mozart's last opera buffa could be seen as running true rather than contrary to a romantic imagination.

Authors feigned and real

To a reader removed from Berlin's musical life in the early 1800s, the 'Briefwechsel' seems reasonably successful at covering over its authorial tracks. None of the three pseudonyms (Phantanus, Arithmos and Humanus) appears anywhere else in the run of the journal, nor are they aliases for the regular contributors to the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, in the way, for example, that Florestan and Eusebius offer their services as Schumann's *noms de plume*. The exchange is more forthcoming about the number of authors: one, assuming two personas, with Arithmos as a straw man set up, and then taken down, by the same person who speaks as Phantanus. An addendum – really a disclaimer – by Schlimbach confirms this reading. It assures any excitable reader that Arithmos's attack on Mozart does not reflect the view of the true author but instead burlesques a certain kind of fictional critic (94/294).⁸ Elsewhere, hints supporting the single-author hypothesis appear more by accident than design, above all in instances where the single author fails to keep his characters distinct. For example, late in his last entry Phantanus extends an olive branch to Arithmos in agreeing that *Così fan tutte* is not in truth an opera but an exemplary concert piece (103/305).⁹ Phantanus

6 David Charlton, ed., *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: 'Kreisleriana', 'The Poet and the Composer', Music Criticism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 203; E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Die Serapions-Brüder*, ed. Carl Georg von Maassen (Munich: Winkler, 1963), 91.

7 Hoffmann, *Die Serapions-Brüder*, 91; Charlton, *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, 203.

8 The parenthetical references cite the page number of the following translation, then the page number of the text as it appears in the original edition.

9 One of the referees for this article generously pointed out that concert versions of Mozart's finales were popular on the German stage at this time. A brief announcement in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, for example, notes a performance of 'das schöne Finale' from *Così fan tutte*, and such a practice must have encouraged the revival of a staged performance of the entire opera. 'Nachrichten', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3/27 (30 March 1803), 455. The aesthetic stakes in denying *Così fan tutte* the status of an opera are discussed in Goehring, *Three Modes of Perception*, 9–10.



seems to have forgotten the source of this evaluation, because Arithmos never makes such a claim. It does, however, appear in the ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’ of 17 September 1805 (104/302). This confusion suggests that all three characters – Arithmos, Phantasmus and the author of the ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’ – come from the same pen. At the very least, the author of the ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’ must sympathize with, if not belong to, Phantasmus’s party because, by the end of the report, he has decisively sided with Berlin’s progressive faction. His closing congratulations to Bernhard Weber for improving the quality of the operatic repertory, the taste of the public and Berlin’s standing within Germany step in line with Phantasmus’s musical politics (105/302).¹⁰ Arithmos, for his part, chides Berlin for granting Phantasmus too much sway over the capital’s musical direction (91/293).¹¹

Determining the number of authors still leaves open, of course, the identity of the solitary man behind the curtain. That it turns out to be Reichardt himself would not likely have surprised anyone acquainted with Berlin’s artistic scene, for I would suggest not only that the exchange bears the stamp of his personality but that he *wanted* to be identified as the author. This attribution parts ways with that of Martina Lang, who identifies Georg Christian Schlimbach as the author (presumably on the basis of the *Zusatz* from the first entry provided in the text).¹² While one cannot completely disallow Schlimbach as the author (or yet another figure close to Reichardt), Lang’s position asks that we not take Schlimbach at his word. His addendum specifically disowns authorship and claims instead that he only edited the exchange in the absence of the true author. Fantastical epistolary exchanges about opera were not Schlimbach’s bailiwick; his signed writings for the journal did not venture beyond categories like pedagogy and church music. What is more, Schlimbach himself goes on to name Reichardt as the genuine author.

Positing Reichardt as the author has the further advantage of clarifying areas of the exchange that would otherwise remain opaque. For example, Arithmos, after reproaching Phantasmus’s hyperbolic language and his idolatry of Mozart (themselves traits recognizable in Reichardt), turns to the gravamen of his main objection, which is a political one: that, as mentioned above, Phantasmus exerts a deep and largely unfortunate influence over Berlin’s artistic activity. Arithmos could easily be describing Reichardt. As Adolph Weissmann points out, Reichardt led a small Berlin faction of ‘serious musicians’, who, in striving against a larger but putatively less refined party, tried to improve the operatic repertory and, along with it, public taste.¹³ A prominent member of Reichardt’s party was the very Weber whom Phantasmus (and also, one will recall, the ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’) praises for promoting the works of Gluck and Mozart. Phantasmus, if he is not Reichardt, at the very least asserts his allegiance to Reichardt’s faction in the contest over the direction of Berlin’s musical life.

If the musical connoisseurs unfurled the banner of Gluck and Mozart on the battle plain, around what works did their adversaries marshal themselves? The exchange itself names many of them, and not in flattering terms. Phantasmus likens his adversaries’ reputedly trivial, superficial works to fiends who hide in caves and, with any luck, will stay there (103/306). Phantasmus certainly knew which were the most prized targets, because one of the works cited, Friedrich Heinrich Himmel’s *Fanchon das Leiermädchen*, happened to be the standard-bearer of the opposing party, as well as one of the most popular operas of its day. (Only

10 In 1792 Bernhard Anselm Weber was appointed, along with Bernhard Wessely, joint musical director of the National theatre in Berlin. Weber and Reichardt shared similar artistic tastes, and Weber had a prominent role in establishing Gluck and Mozart as ‘the pillars of the repertory’ (‘Die Säulen des Repertoires’). Adolf Weissmann, *Berlin als Musikstadt: Geschichte der Oper und des Konzerts von 1740 bis 1911* (Berlin and Leipzig: Schuster & Loeffler, 1911), 104.

11 The main obstacle to seeing all three personas as the projection of a single author comes in contrasting accounts they give of the success of Mozart’s opera. According to Phantasmus, *Così fan tutte* had a tepid reception, evidence enough that Mozart’s sophisticated blend of sympathy and satire was beyond the ken of the common viewer (103/305). The ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’, in contrast, reports a more enthusiastic initial reception (104/301).

12 Lang makes this claim only in the electronic version of her commentary. See Martina Lang, ed., *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, <www.ripm.org/journals/BMZ.php>, accessed 24 January 2008.

13 Weissmann, *Berlin als Musikstadt*, 99–100.



the *Magic Flute* registered more performances on the Berlin stage from 1796 to 1814.)¹⁴ The campaign between Reichardt and Himmel was long lasting and took place on several fronts. One involved their respective merits as composers. The following epigram, for example, sang the victory of Reichardt and his *Rosamonda* (1801) over Himmel's works with an untranslatable pun on Himmel's name:

Als Reichardt sprach zu Rosamunden 'Werde',
Da fiel der ganze Himmel auf die Erde.

As Reichardt said to Rosamunde, 'Abound',
There came Heav'n crashing to the ground.¹⁵

The controversy also took a personal turn, and here Reichardt's personality, not just his ideas and politics, impresses itself on the 'Briefwechsel'. Widely acknowledged as a skilled composer and insightful thinker, Reichardt never drew corresponding kudos for comity. So sharp was his tongue that James Parsons wonders whether Reichardt's personality hindered the diffusion of his thought and music: there was not a major thinker of the time he seems not to have offended.¹⁶ Thus the journal *Der Freimütige*, which was edited by Kotzebue (who happened to be the librettist for *Fanchon*), scolded Reichardt for an injudicious editorship of the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*: 'For all of the recognition due the celebrated editor of this music periodical, one nonetheless misses in him a spirit of sympathy and humanity. There is no excuse for injustices such as those directed against Himmel's *Fanchon* and *Urania*' ('Bei aller Anerkennung für den berühmten Herausgeber dieser musikalischen Zeitung vermisse man doch an ihm den Geist der Schonung und Humanität; Ungerechtigkeiten, wie die gegen Himmels *Fanchon* und *Urania* dürfe man sich nicht zu schulden kommen lassen').¹⁷ The 'Briefwechsel' itself bears witness to a spirit that provoked and perhaps offended: the complaint about Franz's diction (93/294), the somewhat impious suggestion that a work of Mozart could be a failure (103/305), the condescension towards the public and its taste for trivial works like *Fanchon*, the overall hauteur – all are consistent with Reichardt's journalistic personality. To be sure, Reichardt was not the journal's only correspondent to malign the poster child of Himmel's party. Reporting on the première of *Fanchon* at Hamburg's German theatre, Kirchner attributes the applause that a few numbers drew exclusively to the wit of the text. The music, for its part, had little to distinguish itself ('wenig Ausgezeichnetes').¹⁸ But such an objection comes off as the height of discretion in comparison to references to cave-dwelling creatures.¹⁹

The hypothesis of Reichardt's authorship also sheds light on how the 'Briefwechsel' relates criticism to art. The recourse to pseudonyms serves Reichardt in two ways. First, in representing his adversaries through Arithmos, Reichardt can be seen as pulling his polemical punches. As the old justification runs, satire offends less when directed at a type instead of an individual. Second, and more audaciously, Reichardt, through the alter ego of Phantassus, advances himself as the model of the ideal critic. Hence, Phantassus's riposte begins not with a defence of Mozart's opera but with raillery directed at Arithmos and his kin – not a malicious laughter, but one that would approach 'even the most terrifying seriousness of life with an inner smile'

14 According to Fetting, *Fanchon* had seventy-three performances during this time, *Die Zauberflöte*, eighty-one. Hugo Fetting, 'Das Repertoire des Berliner Königlichen Nationaltheaters unter der Leitung von August Wilhelm Iffland (1796–1814) bei Berücksichtigung der künstlerischen Prinzipien und kulturpolitischen Wirkungsfaktoren seiner Gestaltung' (PhD dissertation, Greifswald: Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität, 1977), 103–104.

15 Cited in Weissmann, *Berlin als Musikstadt*, 101.

16 James Parsons, review of *Der lustige Passagier: Johann Friedrich Reichardt – Erinnerungen eines Musikers und Literaten*, ed. Walter Salmen, *Music & Letters* 85/1 (February 2004), 102–104.

17 *Der Freimütige* (1805), cited in Weissmann, *Berlin als Musikstadt*, 104.

18 'Vermischte Nachrichten. Hamburg den 10ten Aug.', *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* 1/69 (1805), 274.

19 This would not have been the first time that Reichardt, and not just one of his agents, attacked *Fanchon*. In an earlier entry in the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, Reichardt inveighs against *Fanchon* without the cloak of a pseudonym. In 'Beantwortung einer Anfrage in der Berlinischen Zeitung die Operette *Fanchon* betreffend' (*Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* 1/3 (1805), 12), he opines that the praise given to Himmel's work is disproportionate to its artistic merit.



(94/299). This detachment, something like a Stoic disinterestedness, is precisely what Phantasmus will find and commend in *Così fan tutte*. The exchange links its own critical temperament to the character of the opera it interprets. *Così fan tutte*, through Don Alfonso, is to its overly earnest lovers what Phantasmus is to critics like Arithmos.

As this commentary turns to the topic of romantic poetics in the exchange, it is useful to note that the reading of Mozart's opera via romantic irony itself constitutes further support for Reichardt's authorship. The 'Briefwechsel' was not the first time that the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* claimed Mozart as a romantic. Its inaugural editorial, which bears Reichardt's signature, tosses off praise for the 'brilliant, romantic' ('genialische, romantische') works of Haydn, Mozart and their followers as if it were uncontroversial fact.²⁰ Still, it is one thing for a critic of this time to label Mozart a romantic, quite another to advance *Così fan tutte* as a romantic work, and the following will elucidate his claims about *Così fan tutte* as an exemplar of romantic irony.

Così fan tutte and romantic irony

Così fan tutte or *Mädchentreue*?

What did Reichardt mean when referring to *Così fan tutte*? As the 'Vermischte Nachrichten' notes, *Così fan tutte* had last appeared on the Berlin stage in 1792.²¹ The 1805 version kept some of the original cast (Joseph Carl Ambrosch and Johann Christian Franz played, respectively, Fernando and Doktor Alfonso) but substituted a new text: Georg Friedrich Treitschke's *Mädchentreue*, itself a reworking of Bretzner's widely used adaptation of 1794.²² Although some more recent forms of criticism identify competing authorities in the hybrid form of opera (especially those between composer and librettist), the 'Briefwechsel' does not draw such distinctions. Reichardt places the text under Mozart's direct authorial governance, so that the opera's success is gauged by how thoroughly Mozart is perceived to have kept control over his musical/poetic creation. Reichardt reads Treitschke as Mozart.

As a theoretical approach, Reichardt's position is noteworthy enough, since just about every other interpretation of the time (and later) observes, mostly with dismay, competing textual and musical voices in the opera. The stance is even more remarkable from a practical, analytical point of view, given Treitschke's radical alterations to Bretzner's relatively unabridged translation. Mostly, the changes involve clear-cutting large swathes of the opera. A partial tally of casualties in the Berlin production includes 'Smanie implacabili', 'Un'aura amorosa', 'Prenderò quel brunettino' and 'Una donna a quindici anni'. Matters of economy alone did not guide Treitschke, however; he imposed on (or found in) the opera a particular ethos. This character can be economically summed up in a single word that Treitschke (and Bretzner) folds into the translation: 'der Scherz', which will hold a central place in Reichardt's romantic reading of Mozart's opera.

Da Ponte's *Così fan tutte* derives its ethical vision largely from Stoicism.²³ Although a Stoic call for disinterestedness inheres in the opera's patterns and structures, it receives its most direct and authoritative

20 'Etwas zur Einleitung', *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* 1/1 (1805), 2.

21 See note 4, above.

22 Only the arias and ensembles of the Berlin production made it into print, in *Arien und Gesänge aus dem Singspiel 'Mädchentreue'* (Berlin, 1805). The Viennese *Mädchentreue* (Degen, 1805) differs not only in including the dialogue but also in dropping numbers, like 'È la fede delle femmine', that the Berlin production retains.

23 My chapter on the philosophical mode in *Three Modes of Perception* insufficiently acknowledges the opera's ethical debt to Stoicism. Although he does not deal directly with *Così fan tutte*, Derek Beales provides a rich account of the interaction of Stoicism, philosophy, the Enlightenment and Catholicism in the Vienna of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. See Derek Beales, 'Christians and "Philosophes": The Case of the Austrian Enlightenment', in *History, Society, and the Churches: Essays in Honour of Owen Chadwick*, ed. Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 169–194.



voice in the opera's central character, Don Alfonso. That the philosopher also calls himself a comedian only strengthens the bonds tying him to a Stoic outlook. Like Democritus, from whom he descends, Don Alfonso uses laughter as a means for achieving worldly detachment. His defence of a comic view of things reaches the level of a creed in the opera's envoy, which is a hymn to *apatheia*:

Fortunato l'uom che prende
 Ogni cosa pel buon verso,
 E tra i casi e le vicende
 Da ragion guidar si fa.
 Quel che suole altrui far piangere
 Fia per lui cagion di riso,
 E del mondo in mezzo ai turbini
 Bella calma proverà.

Happy is he who takes everything on its good side and in all events and trials lets reason be his guide. That which only makes others weep is for him a cause of laughter, and amid the world's storms he will find perfect peace.

Treitschke's adaptation does not quite erase this view of the opera and its central character. To be more precise, it shifts the emphasis from comedy to jesting. Thus, at the end of 'Una bella serenata', 'Far vogliamo al dio d'amor' becomes 'Ja durch scherzen, küssen, trinken / Wollen wir der Freud' / Lieb uns weihn' ('in jesting, kissing, and drinking, we'll dedicate ourselves to love/joy'). Nanette (Despina's German alter ego) concludes 'In uomini, in soldati' ('Bei Männern, bei Soldaten') with 'Nehmt, liebe Mädchen, / Das wohl zu Herzen, / Ach nur zum Scherzen / Taugt lieb allein' ('Take this to heart, dear ladies: Love is good only for jesting'). (This text replaces her singing syllables and 'Amiam per comodo / per vanità' – 'let's love for convenience and vanity'.) Most of all, the very end of the opera turns Da Ponte's appeal to Stoicism into an invitation to jest:

Selig, wer im Liebesbunde
 Sanft an des/der Geliebten Munde,
 In der frohen Söhnungstunde,
 Leicht vergißt der Untreu Schmerz.
 Eifersucht mag ängstlich wachen,
 Weg mit Angst, wir scherzen, lachen,
 Sich das Leben froh zu machen,
 Braucht man nur ein leichtes Herz.

Happy is he who, in the bond of love, gently to the lover's mouth, in the early hour of forgiveness, easily forgets the pain of infidelity. Jealousy can anxiously awaken; away with fretting; we'll joke and laugh. To make life happy, all one needs is a light heart.

It is difficult not to see such changes as a loss to rather than improvement upon Da Ponte's original, and that is the usual verdict handed down, then and now. For example, Brandstetter, in an excellent study of several early German translations (including Bretzner's), holds that the peril found in Da Ponte's original becomes frivolity in the adaptations.²⁴ Particularly lamentable from this point of view are the soldiers' words of forgiveness at the end of the tale. Treitschke's soldiers meet the sisters' plea for pardon with another invitation to jest: 'Gern, ach! will ich dir verzeihen, / Denn die Probe war nur Scherz' ('certainly I will forgive you, as the test was all a joke'). With the loss of the words 'Te lo credo, gioia bella, / Ma la prova io far non vo' ('I believe you, my joy, but I don't want to make a test of it'), Treitschke arguably makes the tale's moral

24 Gabriele Brandstetter, 'So machen's alle: die frühen Übersetzungen von Da Pontes und Mozarts *Così fan tutte* für deutsche Bühnen', *Die Musikforschung* 35/1 (1982), 43.



vision unintelligible; unquestionably it severs the original's connection with Ariostan epic and its episodes that rebuke not those who fail tests of fidelity but those who make them in the first place.

But this is not Reichardt's view of the adaptation. He sees in Treitschke's emphasis on *Scherz* a topic that is coherent, rich in meaning and subtlety and in full accord with Mozart's intentions. Far from representing a rococo bauble or dusty enlightenment philosophical treatise, Mozart's *Mädchentreue*, German translation and all, is for him an archetype of romantic art.

Life and art in Reichardt's Romanticism.

The first couple of columns of Phantásus's rejoinder lay out the groundwork for Reichardt's romantic understanding of *Così fan tutte*. By 'romantic', Reichardt does not resort to clichés like the rejection of reason for passion or a liberation from the shackles of convention. Nor does he advocate a subjectivity that leaves critical judgment entirely to the reader's discretion. After all, a main task is to debunk a certain kind of critic. (Overall, the exchange lends weight to Dahlhaus's contention that a psychological aesthetic, which gauged art by its emotional impact on the listener, reflects an eighteenth-century viewpoint against Romanticism's metaphysical aesthetic.)²⁵ The thought that best clarifies the 'Briefwechsel's reasoning stems from early romantic figures like Schelling and the Schlegels. Their critical theory rests on a distinction between ancient and modern art. More than supra-historical conceptual categories, these terms registered what was seen as a seismic change, taking place in history, in the relationship between life and art. Ancient art, on the one hand, enjoyed a complete harmony with life. To use Phantásus's language, it was a time when 'life itself grew into art' (95/300). So intimate a union was possible because the Greeks did not know the ideal *as* the ideal: the distinction between the ideal and the real did not even impinge upon the Greek consciousness.²⁶

Matters are different, and more complicated, in the modern, which is to say romantic, world. Here, a keen and ineradicable awareness of the gulf between the ideal and the real haunts (or invigorates) the artist and critic. Early Romantics cite various causes of this division. August Schlegel makes 'Christian' roughly coterminous with 'romantic' and 'modern' to express the Romantic's consciousness of the distance separating the ideal from the real. The result is his famous distinction between a poetry of joy for the ancients and of desire for the moderns – desire either for the past or the future.²⁷ Other writers locate Romanticism in an opposition to the modern world's emphasis on the individual or in the growing authority of a scientific, mechanistic understanding of nature. (The unhappy triumph of science over art seems to be what Arithmos represents for Reichardt, which is why Phantásus faults Arithmos for, among other things, trying to measure the Medici Venus with rulers and quadrants (95/299).) Whatever debate there may be about the source of this rupture, all concur that the ancient world is irrecoverable.

An ancient harmony may perpetually elude the grasp of the modern artist, yet it is still possible to reconcile the ideal and real and 'blend them indissolubly together' ('... mit einander auszusöhnen und unauflöslich zu verschmelzen').²⁸ In the area of art criticism, such abstract theoretical language informs the very practical activity of genre analysis, and, indeed, Reichardt's understanding of *Così fan tutte* turns on the interaction of the comic and serious in the opera. Like his fellow Romantics, Reichardt locates the strict separation of the comic and tragic in the ancient world; the two great representatives of tragedy and comedy are, respectively, Sophocles and Aristophanes (95/300). The Romantic, inescapably conscious of living in a

25 Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 89.

26 Kierkegaard draws a similar distinction in discussing the erotic in *Don Giovanni*. The sensuous, understood psychically as opposed to spiritually, found its 'most perfect expression', he says, in Greece, where the sensuous was 'not contrast or exclusion', as it would be under Christianity, 'but harmony and consonance'. Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 1:62.

27 August Wilhelm von Schlegel, *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, ed. and trans. John Black (London: H. G. Bohn, 1861), lecture 1, 26–27; Schlegel, *Vorlesungen*, volume 5, 15–16.

28 Schlegel, *Lectures on Dramatic Art*, 27; Schlegel, *Vorlesungen*, volume 5, 17.



defective world, cannot retrieve this prelapsarian poetics, so Romanticism abandons the neo-classical separation of genres. The modern path to an authentic art requires, instead, an integration rather than separation of the comic and the tragic. Joining Sophocles and Aristophanes in Phantásus's Pantheon, now as the two great representatives of syncretic, romantic art, are Shakespeare and Mozart.

In naming Mozart as an exemplary Romantic, Reichardt speaks of Mozart the artist – not the child Mozart, not the tragic Mozart. In a text that itself relies on pseudonyms, it is ironic that Reichardt does not see 'Mozart' as a fictional *persona* but as an artist who, through *Così fan tutte*, can be seen as wrestling with certain problems of artistic representation. Even so, the idea of an artwork as a kind of utterance (instead of as an object) accords with Reichardt's larger romantic theory and indeed helps to clarify one of the 'Briefwechsel's' more impenetrable passages. In laying out the distinctions between ancient and modern art, Reichardt notes that romantic art springs not directly from life, but from a *mirror* of the life of the ancients (95/300). The image of the mirror does not mark a retreat to neo-classical aesthetics; nor is the sought-after 'indissoluble disharmony' of romantic art organic, since this art is once removed from life. Instead, Reichardt is trying to say that unity results from the mind of the artist.²⁹

By sidestepping the trap that would make the artist a passive receptacle for the muse, Reichardt's romantic theory does not, however, fall into a more perilous one of creating a Narcissus-like artist who gazes only at himself and his handiwork. An art content with abstraction, whether the free play of forms or the self-revelation of the artist's own powers of invention, is antiseptic and irresponsible. It is an art without life, and Reichardt is trying to bring life back into the equation of art (without reducing art to life). When Phantásus approvingly insists that Mozart's opera provides practical guidance through life, he does not revert to a position he had earlier derided in Arithmos. Moral relevance is the result of, not the impulse behind, a proper romantic art. Against the claim of the opera as frivolous or immoral, Phantásus predicts that all – old and young, married or widowed, cunning or naive – will discover their images and also their fates engraved on the surface of the work (102/305), and that, with the right perspective, they will be the better for this vision. Despite the occasional reflexive lapse into the histrionics of the isolated soul, Reichardt is admiring *Così fan tutte* in light of an eminently sociable view of art.

What is this proper perspective for Reichardt? That of the romantic ironist. The term 'irony' has numerous meanings, of course, not all of them compatible, but Reichardt's is rooted in a carefully articulated body of romantic theory. The 'Briefwechsel' conceives irony at its most basic as a concept that governs the interaction between opposing forces or agents. The pairings exist at various levels: between Reichardt and his adversaries, *Così fan tutte* and its audience, Doktor Alfonso and Despina and the lovers, comedy and seriousness. Irony is therefore not quite the same as comedy, at least in the classical Hobbesian sense of an assertion of superiority. True, Phantásus laughs at Arithmos, but, as he puts it, it is a child-like laughter totally devoid of malice (94/299). It is equally hard to see Phantásus as the archetype of the classical ironist: his is not the sophistry of what were deemed vulgar, coarse characters.³⁰ For a more precise description of the possibilities and meanings found in romantic irony in general and Reichardt's use of it in particular, the following summation from Siegbert Praver is useful:

Aesthetic distance, free play of the mind, relativizing, self-criticism within the actual work of art, the teasing and mystifying of potential readers, conscious experimenting with form and modes of expression, shifting tone, multiple reflections through tale within tale – these are but some of the shapes in which we encounter irony in Romantic writing.³¹

29 Ernst Behler, *German Romantic Literary Theory*, Cambridge Studies in German (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 90.

30 Behler, *German Romantic Literary Theory*, 144.

31 Siegbert Salomon Praver, ed., *The Romantic Period in Germany: Essays by Members of the London University Institute of Germanic Studies* (London: Weidenfeld, 1970), 7. See also Morton L. Gurewitch, *The Comedy of Romantic Irony* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 63.



Praver speaks of literature, not criticism, yet his accounting is easily reconciled with Reichardt's critical exchange, with its advances and retreats, its assertions and recantations, its varying perspectives.

It would misread Praver and Romanticism, however, to see these 'shapes' of romantic irony as mere accessories to an argument or work of art. The ironic mode comes out of critical necessity, from a recognition that no single framework can adequately apprehend art. The kind of person to understand this world cannot, therefore, be the philosopher, if by philosophy one means a quest to systematize the world. Reichardt's 'Briefwechsel' deflates this view largely through the figure of the arithmetic Arithmos, whose rationalism is based on the erroneous assumption that truth refers to a possession instead of an activity. But Reichardt and his romantic coterie also had positive archetypes at hand, including ones drawn from antiquity (although not pragmatic Rome but instead more contemplative Greece). The main one was Socrates; that is, Socrates the philosopher-as-ironist, not philosopher-as-systematist. Socrates might also be more immediately present in the 'Briefwechsel' in the form of an unattributed quotation. At one point, Phantastus ventures that 'somewhere a writer once said: so long as we don't understand humour, just so long will the genuinely serious be distant from us' (95/300). He is quite likely citing *The Laws*: 'A man who means to form his judgment can no more understand earnest apart from burlesque than any other contrary apart from its contrary'.³² (It is hard to imagine, though, that Reichardt would have forgotten the source of this quotation, or what purpose would be served by deliberately concealing Socrates' name.) In any case, the early romantic habit of turning certain vices, or at least defects, into virtues reaches a high point in the celebration, via Socrates, of buffoonery. Friedrich Schlegel's forty-second Fragment sums up the importance of buffoonery in romantic irony with a remarkable reference to Italian comic opera:

There are ancient and modern poems that are pervaded by the divine breath of irony and informed by a truly transcendental buffoonery. Internally: the mood that surveys everything and rises infinitely above all limitations, even above its own art, virtue, or genius; externally, in its execution: the mimic style of an averagely gifted Italian *buffo*.

Es gibt alte und moderne Gedichte, die durchgängig im Ganzen und überall den göttlichen Hauch der Ironie atmen. Es lebt in ihnen eine wirklich transzendente Buffonerie. Im Innern, die Stimmung, welche alles übersieht, und sich über alles Bedingte unendlich erhebt, auch über eigne Kunst, Tugend, oder Genialität: im Äußern, in der Ausführung die mimische Manier eines gewöhnlichen guten italiänischen Buffo.³³

And, of course, there is Hoffmann's later recommendation of *Così fan tutte*, which takes place in the context of a discussion about opera buffa. One can start to see the appeal of *Così fan tutte* to the romantic imagination in its complex intertwining of sympathy and ridicule, of involvement and detachment, all under the guidance of the philosopher as comedian/buffoon. The buffoon is better equipped to handle dissimilar elements, as if he were a jester, juggling life and art, or the comic and the serious.

The 'Briefwechsel's saturation in early romantic aesthetics extends from tone and argument even down to the stratum of specific words. Such is the case with the 'inexhaustible idleness' ('ein unermüdlicher Müßiggang') that Arithmos and his type are said to lack, to the clouding of their critical judgment. Like

³² Plato, *Laws*, book 7 (816d–817a), in Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato, Including the Letters*, ed. Edith Hamilton, Bollingen Series (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 1386. This Platonic sentiment would later be taken up by A. W. Schlegel, in his eleventh lecture on dramatic poetry and literature: 'All opposites can be fully understood only by and through each other; consequently we can only know what is serious by knowing also what is laughable and ludicrous' ('man könne alle entgegengesetzten Dinge nur durch einander, also auch das Ernsthafte nicht ohne das Lächerliche gehörig erkennen'). Schlegel, *Lectures on Dramatic Art*, 146; Schlegel, *Vorlesungen*, volume 5, 180.

³³ Peter Firchow, trans., *Friedrich Schlegel's Lucinde and the Fragments* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 148; Ernst Behler, *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* (Munich: F. Schöningh, 1958), volume 2, 152. See also Behler, *German Romantic Literary Theory*, 147–149.



buffoonery, idleness makes for an improbable virtue and, when modified by ‘inexhaustible’, an oxymoronic one, as well. Translating ‘Müßiggang’ as ‘leisureliness’ brings some clarity by highlighting the term’s ancestry in Aristotle’s *scholé*, but at the high cost of sapping the power of Reichardt’s intentional paradox.³⁴ Reichardt’s argument is that idleness, somehow, some way, generates creative energy. The inspiration for this use of the term likely comes from a novel, Friedrich Schlegel’s famous (and also notorious) *Lucinde* (1799). Two different episodes from the section ‘An Idyll to Idleness’ (Firchow’s rendering of ‘Idylle über den Müßiggang’) illustrate the meaning of this term and its relation to Reichardt’s criticism. In the first, Julius, the protagonist, finds himself in a setting, reminiscent of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, of a secluded area by a brook, where he sings in praise of idleness. The erotic surroundings tempt him to pursue a self-indulgent, Narcissus-like ‘beautiful egoism’ (‘schöner Egoismus’). Julius’s unselfish disposition and practical nature ultimately prevail, however, as he directs himself to the common good (‘das allgemeine Gute’).³⁵

What are the fruits of such non-labours? They are, remarkably, the attainment of a neo-classical ideal: Julius’s ‘greatness in repose’ (‘Größe in Ruhe’)³⁶ is an obvious permutation of Winckelmann’s ‘noble simplicity and quiet grandeur’ (‘eine edle Einfalt und eine stille Grösse’). What separates the romantic mode of thought from the neo-classical, then, is not so much the goal as the way one gets there. Neo-classicists work too hard, and the fruits of their labours thus have, as Phantastus puts it, the deadening weight of iron and the smell of sulphur found in a Gluckian fury scene (94/299). For a less noisome image of the proper relationship between art and industry, one can turn to the second episode from Schlegel’s ‘Idylle’. It is a comic allegory, set in a theatre, with an enchained Prometheus on one side, a deified Hercules on the other and, filling in the rest of the space, youthful, cherubic figures who nonetheless resemble ‘the devil of the Christian painters and poets’.³⁷ Two labourers, but the one tormented because work was an end in itself, the other, Hercules, recast as Aristotle the Olympian, because his toil had the ultimate goal of attaining a ‘sublime leisure’.³⁸ Earlier, as the various cherubic devils comment on Hercules’s greatness and Prometheus’s penury, one of them formulates a theory of criticism that captures much of Reichardt’s aspirations in the ‘Briefwechsel’ – the tone, substance, the rhetoric, the politics: ‘He who can’t despise, can’t admire. You can only do both infinitely [not each separately], and proper form consists in toying with humanity. Isn’t a certain kind of aesthetic malice, then, an essential part of a well-rounded education?’ (‘Wer nicht verachtet, der kann auch nicht achten; beides kann man nur unendlich, und der gute Ton besteht darin, daß man mit den Menschen spielt. Ist also nicht eine gewisse ästhetische Bosheit ein wesentliches Stück der harmonischen Ausbildung?’).³⁹

Text–music relations in *Così fan tutte*.

Reichardt’s account stands out not just for its claims but for thinking of the opera both as a score and as a performance. His sophisticated theoretical perspective works in tandem with a sharp eye for the theatre. Such is the case with his commentary on Doktor Alfonso, which arises largely from a curiosity specific to the Berlin production: Franz’s diction. Apparently, Franz lisped his S’s and Sch’s, an affectation frowned upon by Phantastus (97/301) and Arithmos (93/294). The verbal tic reflects an error of judgment that turns Doktor Alfonso into a crudely comic character, when he should, according to Phantastus, be the ‘personification of irony’ (97/300). In Phantastus’s view, Alfonso is neither ‘rogue nor scoundrel’ but instead ‘benevolent and

34 For the Romantic appropriation of *scholé*, see Gisela Dischner, *Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde und Materialien zu einer Theorie des Müßiggangs* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1980), 177–185.

35 Firchow, *Schlegel’s Lucinde*, 64; Dischner, *Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde*, 61.

36 Firchow, *Schlegel’s Lucinde*, 65; Dischner, *Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde*, 61.

37 Firchow, *Schlegel’s Lucinde*, 67; Dischner, *Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde*, 63–64.

38 Firchow, *Schlegel’s Lucinde*, 68; Dischner, *Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde*, 64.

39 Firchow, *Schlegel’s Lucinde*, 67; Dischner, *Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde*, 64. I’ve slightly altered Firchow’s translation of this passage.



kind' (97/301). This understanding veers widely from the more common interpretations of Mozart's philosopher, which run from cool cynic at one end to *diabolus ex machina* at the other. Reichardt also offers a favourable and therefore atypical judgment on Despina, usually considered Don Alfonso's lab assistant in his misanthropic experiment. About the pair, he finds the vitality and meaning of the entire piece issuing from their roles. The 'Briefwechsel' does indeed finger a heartless rationalist, but he is not to be found in Mozart's opera. He is Arithmos, with his critical utility belt of rulers and quadrants.

It is one thing to revisit the role of Don Alfonso, a matter that concerns the opera's tone. It is quite another to reinterpret the sisters' roles, a matter that goes to the opera's very coherence. Arithmos, as plaintiff, presents the charge of incoherence by arguing that a gap exists between the opera's text and its music. Like many later critics, he speculates that the cracks developed under a less-than-attentive authorial eye: in equating Mozart with the avaricious Despina (93/294), Arithmos implies that Mozart did not have his heart in the text, that the opera sprang from financial desperation rather than a mindful creative engagement. Arithmos thinks he can argue his case without much difficulty – all one need do is rehash the plot. For Arithmos, the opera's musical/textual incoherence peaks in the sisters' parts in the first-act sextet and finale. Their words and deeds, which he judges trivial, cannot shoulder the inordinate musical weight placed upon them. Hence, his verdict that the opera makes much musical ado about nothing (92/294).

Phantásus responds in part by substituting his own telling of the tale for Arithmos's ungenerous synopsis. The strategy of rewriting might seem pleonastic, but it serves two functions. The first is practical. In offering a more poetic, sympathetic summary, Phantásus is trying to generate greater public interest in the opera. Second, his rewriting scores a critical point by showing that the problems of the opera inhere in the subject who takes the wrong perspective, not in the object. Fortified with a proper romantic outlook, Phantásus is able to see contrast and conflict not as signs of incompetence or bad faith but as products of an artistically coherent and ethically viable authorial intention. (Again, it is hard to overstate the singularity of this approach. The few favourable reviews from the time usually read the opera as a triumph of the music *over* the text: a shared victory is not a thought that occurs to most critics.) Reichardt offers his unusual defence by citing a core tenet of Romanticism, which is that an object is inaccessible and incomprehensible except through comparison with its opposite. For example, in explaining the apparent earnestness of the music of the poisoning scene, he argues that

Only through the comic can such seriousness again be elevated to serenity. [Mozart] cannot convey his enormous contrasts in any other way. In such cases, comedy's first effect is always the elevation of the tragic impression, which yet later loses itself and reverts to its true effect of instilling calm. (101/304)

How does Phantásus interpret the contested section in the first-act finale? For him, the passage crowns the work as an essay in irony. One can see why. Da Ponte's original projects three simultaneous perspectives: for Don Alfonso and Despina, pure amusement; for the soldiers, amusement diluted by doubt; for the sisters, unadulterated rage. True, Treitschke strips away one layer of this irony by having *all* of the men speak as one, and, in part, with words grafted on from Don Alfonso's recitative of Act 1 Scene 4: 'Nun das Lustspiel ist possierlich, / Und sie spielen sehr natürlich' paraphrases 'La commedia è graziosa, e tutti due / Fan ben la loro parte' ('the comedy is graceful, and both are playing their parts well').⁴⁰ Yet even though Treitschke's version loses a layer, the central question remains of how to interpret the sisters' rage. To Arithmos, the fury does not suit the circumstances. That is precisely the point, counters Phantásus: there is a conflict, authorized

40 The rest of the men's text reads 'Ew'ge Schwüre, ew'ge Treue / sind nur Einbildung und Scherz. / Bald siegt Liebe über Treue / Und vergessen ist der Schmerz' ('Eternal oaths, eternal fidelity are just vanity and play. Soon love will conquer fidelity and pain will be forgotten'). Excised is the soldiers' 'Ma non so se finta o vera / Sian quell'ira e quel furor. / Né vorrei che tanto foco / Terminasse in quel d'amor' ('I don't know if this rage and fury are real or feigned. I would not want such fire to end up turning into love'). This particular alteration belongs to the adaptation's larger strategy of shifting the opera's moral instruction away from the soldiers and onto the sisters.



by Mozart, between what a character says and how that character is presented.⁴¹ Phantus himself agrees that the women do not mean what they say, or, better, that their clamour betrays anxiety instead of conviction:

In this place above all Mozart had to portray the alleged nothingness as something substantive, for this reason: even though I myself fully believe that the women's hearts aren't actually the way they believe them to be, all the more faithfully must they present themselves publicly. Mozart is thereby completely justified in having them break out with this extraordinary cry of rage and pain, of anger and vengeance. Thus the noise – and perhaps the bombast – with which Arithmos reproaches this most skilled of artists. (101/305)

Where Arithmos sees meretricious pomp, Phantus sees the necessary expression of characters trying to be what they are not. As Despina, with characteristic economy, tells the sisters, beset by the worry that they will not be able survive without their lovers: 'vi par, ma non è ver' ('it might seem that way, but it isn't true' (1.8)). So, what Hoffmann asserts, that the music *and* text of *Così fan tutte* exemplify irony, Reichardt demonstrates. The harmonious opposition of text and music is a necessary function of an opera that probes the boundaries between truth and appearance, sympathy and ridicule.



The critical tradition of the past two centuries usually identifies *Così fan tutte* as Mozart's most explicit operatic engagement with the Enlightenment – in the psychology of its characters, in its distrust of idealism, in its habit of placing passion under the governance of reason. (Whether Mozart is said to draw attention to the Enlightenment to extol it or, consciously or unconsciously, to damn it is another matter; especially in the twentieth century, the scales of opinion tilt decidedly towards the work as an exposé of the inadequacies of enlightenment psychology.) Along with the internal evidence of text and tone, the penetration of enlightenment thought into the opera is often measured by the widespread hostility that greeted it in the nineteenth century, after the Enlightenment had run its course. Goodness knows ample evidence supports the view of *Così fan tutte* as an opera fundamentally inimical to nineteenth-century tastes: in Reichardt's generation, critics usually derided the opera, directors mutilated it and the public neglected it.⁴²

In some ways, the 'Briefwechsel', instead of altering the shape of the opera's reception, only hardens it. Reichardt promised a follow-up commentary about the second act on the condition that the opera go over well (102/305). The confidence in his hortatory skills (or in the sophistication of public taste) turned out to be misplaced: the opera left the stage after only six performances, and so posterity lost out on a document that would have enriched the annals of Mozart reception. (One wants to know, for example, what Reichardt might have ventured about a number like 'Fra gli amplessi'.) From this perspective, the only substantive point of continuity between the reception of *Così fan tutte* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the acknowledged difficulty of Mozart's work. *Così fan tutte* had a more favourable Viennese reception in

41 That Reichardt solves an aesthetic problem with a psychological explanation of character perhaps reflects trends in theatre criticism, at least concerning Shakespeare, that go back to the last quarter of the previous century. See Brian Vickers, 'The Emergence of Character Criticism, 1774–1800', *Shakespeare Survey* 34 (1981), 11–21.

42 See, for example, Goehring, *Three Modes of Perception*, 1–15; Bruce Alan Brown, *W. A. Mozart, 'Così fan tutte'*, Cambridge Opera Handbooks (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), especially 165–171. Rosen sums up the opera's distance from nineteenth-century psychology thus: 'The psychological viewpoint [of a leveling view of human nature] was one that the nineteenth century found outdated, and yet so recently overthrown as to be distasteful: the opera was, in fact, the very end of a tradition and had to deal with a changed atmosphere from the start. Soon after its first performance it was already being censured as immoral and trivial, and for the next hundred years only exceptional critics, like E. T. A. Hoffmann, understood the warmth and irony that the libretto enabled Mozart to achieve.' Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*, expanded edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 315.



Mozart's day than is generally recognized,⁴³ yet it never rivalled the success of a work like Martín y Soler's *Una cosa rara*.⁴⁴ Mozart's music captured the connoisseur, but Martín y Soler's reeled in just about everyone else.

Yet, in showing a deeper aesthetic affinity between Mozart's opera and certain modes of nineteenth-century thought, the 'Briefwechsel' might also point the way to a more amenable critical environment for the opera than has been previously identified. A series of reviews, some of them newly uncovered, brings to light successful productions from the second decade of the nineteenth century. The most remarkable of these is an account of a previously unknown Viennese production from 1819.⁴⁵ According to the report, *Mädchentreue* was produced at the Kärntnertortheater on 24 July as part of a larger project that brought all of Mozart's operas out onto the stage (see Figure 1).⁴⁶ According to the reviewer, a measure of the performance's overwhelming success could be taken by the long curtain call and tumultuous applause that greeted the entire cast, an enthusiasm that also spilled over into the next day's performance (758). Were this applause directed to the cast alone, then the report would be of interest primarily in the history of performance. The reviewer, however, explicitly rejects the conception of opera, at least of Mozart's opera, as the performer's rather than the composer's art: for just as certain kinds of opera aim to scale 'the heights and depths of the throat' for the benefit of the singer, so do Mozart's operas 'scale the heights and depths of the soul' – and for the benefit of the listener.⁴⁷ The performers are seen as servants of art. They do not obscure Mozart's opera in vocal display, they reveal it. Thus, Grünbaum and Wranitzky, respectively the production's Fiordiligi and Dorabella (Laura and Isabella), draw admiration for realizing

their fairly treacherous dramatic roles with much intelligence and decorum; for one cannot deny that, had the actors shown less care and had less artistic accomplishment, these parts could have become very flat, partly because the opera leaves little room to develop the character's motivation, partly because its plot leads to many an improbability, which we are no longer able to change in this opera.

Die zwey Damen Laura und Isabella (Mad. Grünbaum und Dlle. Wranitzky) bewegten sich in den etwas gefährlichen poetischen Charakteren mit vieler Klugheit und Anstand, denn man kann es nicht läugnen, daß durch weniger Vorsicht und künstlerische Bildung dieselben sehr herabgezogen werden könnten, weil theils die kurze Zeit der Oper wenig Motivirung zuläßt, theils die Geschichtsfabel sie in manche Unwahrscheinlichkeit verwickelt, welche wir in dieser Oper nun nicht mehr ändern können. (758)

To be sure, the Viennese review does not draw on Reichardt's Romanticism, not to mention the concept of irony. Points of agreement are found, instead, at a broader level, in a shared concern about propriety and decorum. Whereas Reichardt admires Mozart's deft juggling of the comic and the serious, the Viennese

43 Dexter Edge, 'Mozart's Reception in Vienna, 1787–1791', in *Wolfgang Amadè Mozart: Essays on His Life and His Music*, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), especially 82.

44 On the popular/esoteric divide between Martín y Soler and Mozart, see especially Dorothea Link, 'The Da Ponte operas of Vicente Martín y Soler' (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1991), 194–199.

45 'Schauspiel', *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode* 92 (3 August 1819), 756–758.

46 The Theaterzettel does not name an author, but the characters are almost identical to those in Treitschke's *Zauberprobe* (only the Despina part is different: Rosina in *Mädchentreue*, Celerio in *Die Zauberprobe*). As one of the referees for this article graciously pointed out, the 1816 Frankfurt production of *Die Zauberprobe* was called, serendipitously for this present study, 'eine romantische Oper'. (Perhaps the inclusion of magical elements accounts for this designation, however.) There was also an 1823 Frankfurt production (now called *Die Zauberspiegel* and also a 'romantische' opera) with an identical cast to the 1819 Viennese one (except it calls the Despina part Rosine instead of Rosina).

47 'in solchen Opern, deren höchstes Verdienst darin besteht, daß sie alle Höhen und Tiefen der Kehle bey den Sängern in Anspruch nehmen, so wie Mozarts Opern im entgegengesetzten Falle alle Höhen und Tiefen der Seele – bey der Zuhörern' (757).



precision of characterization and gilded with the loveliness and charm of grace' ('Dieses richtige Verhältniß der Schwere auf allen Punkten, diese Enthaltbarkeit des Schmuckes bey nackter Schönheit, dieses Vermeiden der vermischten Gattung, endlich diese Nirgends zu viel und zu wenig waltet nun aber in so hohem Grade in Mozarts Werken als beseelendes Princip, als lebendiges Ideal. Deßhalb diese komische Feinheit in *Così fan tutte*, gepaart mit aller Schärfe der Charakteristik, und verschönert durch alle Lieblichkeit und Anmuth der Grazie' (757)).

A Viennese correspondent for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* also praised this very performance with similar language, even to the point of using Rossini as a celestial counterbalance to Mozart, the former acting as the moon who reflects the latter's sunlight. Then, in a switch of metaphors, other celebrated (but unnamed) contemporary composers are said to look still the worse in comparison to Mozart: they sink to the ground as he ascends Olympian heights.⁴⁹ A brief note in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* reports of an 1814 performance at the Theater an der Wien that also drew hearty applause.⁵⁰

Ultimately, these documents, especially the 'Briefwechsel', show that prior assessments of the opera's nineteenth-century reception had rested on a narrow premise about Romanticism, at least as it shaped music criticism: above all, that passionate subjectivity or great moral earnestness were the only available or valid criteria for artistic judgment. By those standards, *Così fan tutte* could only seem frivolous and incoherent. (Beethoven and Wagner as composers and Wagner as commentator on *Così fan tutte* must have exerted an enormous influence here.)⁵¹ The 'Briefwechsel' reminds us that there were other modes of thought available, especially early Romanticism's deep theoretical and practical involvement with irony. Of course, how much Reichardt's 'Briefwechsel' finally reveals about a critic intent on establishing a viable German repertory in Berlin, or about Treitschke's adaptation of the work, or about larger trends in reception or about Mozart and Da Ponte's opera, will always be difficult to measure with absolute precision; they all interact. Yet the properties so often observed in *Così fan tutte* – its simultaneous presentation of multiple perspectives, its complex mixture of sympathy and ridicule, its sense of authorial detachment – are precisely those that were championed by German Romantics themselves and that allow Reichardt to name Mozart, and even *Così fan tutte*, authentically Romantic.

49 'Nachrichten. Wien. Uebersicht der Monate July und August', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 21/38 (22 September 1819), column 629.

50 'Nachrichten. Wien, d. 1ten Feb. Uebersicht des Monats Januar', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 16/8 (23 February 1814), column 132.

51 See Brown, *W. A. Mozart, 'Così fan tutte'*, 170.

MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING; OR, *COSÌ FAN TUTTE* IN THE ROMANTIC IMAGINATION:
A TRANSLATION OF AN EARLY
NINETEENTH-CENTURY CRITIQUE OF THE OPERA

BY EDMUND J. GOEHRING

BmZ 1/74 (1805), 293–294

Musikalischer Briefwechsel. / (*Così fan tutte* von Mozart.) / Arithmos an Humanus. / 9ten Sept.

Unsere Einwohner lieben seit einigen Wochen viel Musik. Es sind seit langer Zeit nicht so viel Singspiele und Opern gegeben worden, als jetzt. Unserm Freunde Phantasmus ist das recht, und er schwelgt lüstig, wie er sich in seiner Hyperbelsprache auszudrücken beliebt, in dem Meere von Tönen. Seinen Freund und Abgott Mozart kann er nun einmal wieder genießen und verehren. Ich gönne ihm sein Vergnügen und beneide es ihm nicht. Da haben sie einmal wieder das alte Ding *Così fan tutte* (Mädchentreue) hervorgesucht. Ich habe die Vermuthung, es ist auf seinen Antrieb geschehen; denn du kennst leider seinen Einfluß, den er sich bei den Dichtern, Mahlern, Bildhauern, und ganz vorzüglich bei den Musikern hier zu verschaffen gesucht hat. Er spuckt überall hindurch. Ich begreife sonst nicht, wie man dieses beinah ganz verstandesleere Ding aufführen konnte. Ich kenne in der That keine abgeschmacktere Operette. Leerheiten, Unwahrscheinlichkeiten, eitler Bombast, sogenannte Genialitäten, das sind die Materiale zu diesem großen Meisterwerke, zu diesem Kabinett voll lieblichen melodischen Figuren. Ich liebe Mozart allenfalls, wenn er sich gleichsam in das Ueberirrdische verliehrt; er erscheint dann doch wenigstens als ein lebenswürdiger Schwärmer, und so unsinnig auch seine *Zauberflöte*, sein *Don Juan* seyn mögen, so überraschend wirken doch seine kühnen Modulationen in der Geisterscene und dem Pallaste des Sarastro. Nicht also ist es in dem genannten Stück. Hör den Inhalt! Ein Paar Verliebte wollen ihr Leben für die Treue ihrer Mädchen lassen, ein

BmZ 1/74 (1805), 293–294.

Musical Correspondence. / (Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.) / Arithmos to Humanus. / 9 September

During the past several weeks our residents have had a lot of music to enjoy. It has been a long time since as many operas and Singspiels have been offered as now. That suits our friend Phantasmus just fine, and he quaffs lustily, as he likes to put it in his hyperbolic style, from the sea of sounds. Now he can once again enjoy and venerate his friend and idol Mozart, a pleasure I grant and do not begrudge him. Here they have once again trotted out that old thing, *Così fan tutte* (Mädchentreue). I suspect that it happened through his instigation, because you know the unfortunate influence he has gained over poets, painters, sculptors and, above all, musicians. He haunts them all. There is no other way I can fathom why anyone would perform this almost totally inane thing. In fact, I don't know of a more tasteless opera than this one. Vacuity, improbability, empty bombast, meretricious turns of phrase – these are the materials of this Great Masterpiece, this closet full of charming melodic figures. I love Mozart most of all when he loses himself, as it were, in the otherworldly; then at least he appears to be an amiable enthusiast. As nonsensical as his *Magic Flute* and *Don Juan* also might seem, just as surprisingly do his bold modulations work in the Commendatore scene and in Sarastro's palace. Such is not the case with the piece at hand. Just listen to its plot! A pair of lovers wants to stake their lives on the fidelity of their ladies; a cunning professor, who understands the philosophy of the fair sex better than they, heartily mocks them and argues that these lovable and



listiger Doktor, der die Philosophie des schönen Geschlechts besser versteht als sie, lacht sie herzlich aus, und demonstriert ihnen, die liebenswürdigen und so preiswürdigen Geschöpfe würden es nicht besser machen als alle. Sie wetten mit ihm. Er verabredet eine Reise. Die verlassenen Damen wollen vor Kummer und Herzeleid sterben. Ein goldgieriges Kammermädchen verkauft ihre Dienste an den Doktor, und macht sich über ihre untröstlichen Fräuleins lustig. Die verkleideten Liebhaber erscheinen und wechseln die Rollen. Natürlich werden sie von den standhaften Schönen zurückgewiesen, und die standhafteste (Charlotte) singt eine Bravourarie vom Felsen im Sturm und Wetter, die nur so seyn muß. Alle möglichen Mittel, die schwachen Geschöpfe zu verleiten, werden angewendet; bald nehmen die Bösewichter Gift, und liegen in den letzten Zügen; bald soll ein Dolchstoß ihr unglückliches Leben endigen, kurz die armen Mädchen werden ordentlich auf die Folter gespannt, so daß sie endlich vor Mitleiden nicht umhin können, ihnen ihr Mitleiden zu schenken und damit auch ihre Liebe. So ist es wahrlich keine Kunst, auch die standhaftesten zu verleiten. Daß die flatterhafteste von beiden, Julie, mit ihrem neuen Galan dabei in ein abgelegenes Wäldchen geführt wird, ist eine Unsittlichkeit, die ihre unbärtigen Verteidiger finden wird, die ich aber, der die Kunst aus einem höhern Gesichtspunkt anzusehen pflegt, keinem Künstler jemals verzeihen kann. – Das Kammermädchen Nanette, schon vorher als Arzt maskiert, tritt zuletzt auch noch als Notarius auf, und will die Ehepakten abschließen. Da kehren die alten Liebhaber zurück, lärmern und fluchen aus aller Macht, und die beschämten, unglücklichen Mädchen erstehen [294] den Tod. Endlich entdeckt sich der Spaß, alle Männerschwüre und alle Weibertreue werden für Scherz erklärt, und der Untreue und dem Leichtsinn wird eine Apologie gehalten; die Versöhnung kommt zu Stande.

Du siehst, mein Bester, daß ich die Zeit verschwenden würde, wenn ich noch mehr Worte über diese ganz gemeine Farce, wie man sie in jedem Marionettenspiel sehen kann, verlieren wollte. Die Musik hat einzelne schöne Stellen, die man aber von einem gebornen Musiker erwarten muß, und dem Genie nicht angerechnet werden können. Hätte der gute Mozart mehr Studium und Geschmack gehabt, so würde er schwerlich solche Texte gewählt, und wahrscheinlich nicht so viel

praiseworthy creatures would not manage it better than all the rest. They make a bet with him. He arranges a journey. The *donne abandonate* want to die from sorrow and heartache. An avaricious chambermaid barter her services to the professor and sets about making fun of the inconsolable women. The disguised lovers appear and exchange roles. Naturally they are rebuffed by the constant beauties, and the most constant of them (Charlotte) sings a bravura aria about a rock braving the storm and tempest, and that's exactly the way it goes. Every possible means is used to seduce the weak creatures. Now the rascals take poison and are in death's throes; now the slash of a blade should end their unhappy lives; now the poor ladies are kept on tenterhooks, so that, out of pity, they finally can't resist giving the suitors their compassion and therefore also their love. Thus, in truth, no special skill is needed to seduce even the most constant person. That the most fickle of the two, Julie, is led with her new beau into a remote wood is an immoral act that will find its naive apologists.¹ I, however, who am obligated to consider art from a higher viewpoint, can never forgive this of any artist. – The chambermaid, Nanette, disguised as a doctor earlier, now comes out as a notary and wants to close the marriage contract. Then, the old lovers return, rant and rave with all of their strength, and the shamed, unfortunate ladies seek [294] death. Finally the game is disclosed, all male oaths and all female fidelity are taken as a joke, and a defence of infidelity and frivolity is offered. At the end comes forgiveness.

You see, my dear man, that it would be a waste of time to spend more words on a farce as banal as anything one could see in a puppet theatre. The music has individual beautiful sections, which, however, one would only expect from a born musician and cannot be attributed to genius. Had the good Mozart more learning and taste, he would have chosen such texts with reluctance and would probably not have made so much ado about nothing. To these numbers belong, above all, the first-act finale, where



Lärm um nichts gemacht haben. Dazu gehört vorzüglich das Finale des ersten Akts, wo man denken sollte, es importirte alle Thronen, Kronen und Herrlichkeiten dieser Welt, die Gift- und Mordscenen der verkleideten Liebhaber, die komischen Scenen, die nun einmal gegen die Würde der Musik sind, und oft den rührendsten Eindruck verwischen und jede gute Wirkung hemmen. Die Ouvertüre halte ich gleichfalls, wie die ganze Oper, für eine der schwächsten Arbeiten. Sie hat wenig Gedanken, und das ernste, oft tiefe Adagio harmonirt schlecht mit den trivialen kurzen Sätzchen des folgenden Allegro, die sich unaufhörlich langweilig wiederholen und kein Ende finden können. Ueberhaupt kömmt mir Mozart oft vor wie seine Nanette in *Così fan tutte*, die für Gold in jedes Dienste tritt; denn nimmer hätte sonst derselbe Mann jene rührende Tugend des Sarastro predigen, nimmer sonst diese verderbliche Moral des Leichtsinns singen lassen, die wegen ihrer süßen Lieblichkeit eben so wie ein süßes Gift gefährliche Wirkungen hervorbringen kann.

Ueber die ganz jämmerliche Conversation zwischen den Arien sag' ich kein Wort. Bei alle dem aber ist es doch angenehm, auch einmal die Schwächen eines großen Mannes kennen zu lernen, und die Direktion einer musikalischen Gesellschaft verdient Dank, uns zuweilen so etwas hören zu lassen, um so mehr, wenn sich so gute Talente zur Aufführung vereinigen als diesmal. Mad. *Eunike* sang ihre Bravourarien, vorzüglich die obengenannte, mit Kraft und Reinheit, Dem. *Willich* ihre Parthieen mit gleichem Fleiße, großer Lebhaftigkeit und geziemender Leichtigkeit. Herr *Ambrosch* und Herr *Eunike* thaten in ihren undankbaren Rollen so viel sich thun ließ, wenn gleich für diese gebildeten Künstler manche Lächerlichkeit des Stücks höchst schwerfällig auszufallen schien; Dem. *Maaß* spielte anspruchslos und gefiel allgemein, ihr Gesang erregte Beifall; Herr *Franz* soll nicht komisch genug gespielt haben, ein Fehler, der einem Sänger mehr zum Lobe als Tadel gereicht. Vorzüglich fiel sein seltsamer Dialekt des S. und Sch auf, wodurch das Komische vielleicht noch gehoben werden sollte. – Die Chöre waren zu schwach besetzt, vorzüglich der Soldatenchor, der kaum hörbar war. – Das Orchester spielte größtentheils mit Präcision, wie sich erwarten läßt.

one would think that it was laden with all the thrones, crowns and splendours of this world; the poison and murder scene of the disguised lovers; and the comic scenes, which run contrary to the worth of the music and often wipe out the most touching impression and block every good effect. Likewise I hold the overture, just like the entire opera, as one of the weakest of works. It has few ideas, and the serious, often deep Adagio harmonizes poorly with the following Allegro and its trivial, short phrases that, interminably tedious, repeat themselves and never come to an end. On the whole, Mozart comes across to me like his Nanette in *Così fan tutte*, who does any task for gold, because otherwise the same man who preached the touching virtue of Sarastro would never have sung this pernicious moral tale of frivolity, which on account of its saccharine amiability can, just like a sweet poison, have deadly effects.

About the entirely execrable dialogue between the arias I won't say a single word. For all this, however, it is still indeed pleasant to learn, if only just once, about the weaknesses of a great man, and the director of the musical society deserves thanks to let us hear such things from time to time – the more so when so much good talent is brought to the performance as it is here. Mrs Eunike sang her bravura arias, especially the one mentioned above, with power and purity. Miss Willich performed her parts with equal industry, great liveliness and apposite lightness. Mr Ambrosch and Mr Eunike brought much to their ungrateful roles, although even in the hands of these skilled artists some of the piece's comedy seemed overly ponderous. Miss Maaß performed unpretentiously and pleased everyone – her singing drew applause. Herr Franz should not have made his role so comic, a mistake that in a singer counts more as praise than as censure. His strange pronunciation of 'S' and 'Sch' was especially noticeable; perhaps he meant to make the comic more pronounced here. – The choruses were too weak, especially the soldiers' chorus, which was barely audible. The orchestra played for the most part with precision, as one has come to expect.



ZUSATZ.

Gar leicht könnte vorstehender Brief zu einem Mißverständnisse Anlaß geben; und ich gestehe gern, daß es nur selbst, bei der Correctur der Zeitung, die der Herr Herausgeber derselben während seiner Abwesenheit mir anvertraut hat, so ergangen ist. Der im nächsten Stücke folgende dazu gehörige Brief des Phantasus an Humanus wird zeigen, daß er im gegenwärtigen den Ton einer gewissen Classe von Krittlern bloß deshalb angenommen hat, um der Mozartschen Musik mit desto mehr Nachdruck Gerechtigkeit wiederfahren zu lassen.

–Schlimbach

BmZ 1/76 (1805), 299–301

Musikalischer Briefwechsel. / (*Così fan tutte* von Mozart.) / Phantasus an Humanus.

Du hast mir durch Ueberschickung des Briefes an Arithmos einen unbeschreiblichen Gefallen erzeigt, und zugleich einige herrliche scherzhaftige Augenblicke in dieses ernsthafte Leben gezaubert. Es ist in der That seltsam, daß der Ernst anderer Menschen uns so oft den reichhaltigsten Stoff zum Lachen gewährt, ohne daß die Lachenden eben darum den geringsten Vorwurf der Bosheit verdienen dürften. Wir sind gewiß viel zu strenge, wenn wir unsern Kindern das Lachen bei dem Falle eines alten Mannes, oder einer alten Frau, oder – auch eines jungen Mädchens verbieten, und ihnen sogleich die unglücklichen Folgen, die ein solcher Fall hätte haben können, demonstrieren und vorrechnen wollen. Es ist ja eben der rechte kindliche Sinn, die ernsten und dunklen Parthieen der menschlichen Schicksale scherzend und leicht zu betrachten, ja, oft den schrecklichsten Ernst des Lebens nicht ohne ein inneres Lächeln zu begehen, und für eine Maske zu nehmen, welcher wir uns freilich nach unserer jetzigen Beschaffenheit nun einmal nicht entäußern dürfen, wenn wir der Welt, die thöricht genug die Maske für die Schauspieler hält, und den wahren Ernst des Lebens, den wahrhaft weder Thränen noch Schweißtropfen, sondern ein redliches Lachen und ein unermüdlicher Müßiggang bilden, gar nicht kennt, kein Aergerniß geben wollen. Umgekehrt nehmen dann diese Leute an unsern redlichen Lachen ein nicht geringes Aergerniß, und unsern Scherz betrachten sie mit einem so schwerfälligen Ernst, den sie

ADDENDUM

The above letter could quite easily encourage a misunderstanding, and I gladly admit that such was also the case with me during the proofing of the periodical, which the publisher entrusted to me during his absence. The accompanying letter from Phantasus to Humanus, which will appear in the next issue, will show that he [the publisher] has simply assumed in the present letter the tone of a certain class of critic in order to let Mozart's music be re-experienced with all the more powerful an impression.

–Schlimbach

BmZ 1/76 (1805), 299–301.

Musical Correspondence. / (Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.) / Phantasus to Humanus.

You have done me an indescribable favour in sending along this letter from Arithmos and at the same time have conjured up several great, comic moments in this otherwise serious life. In fact, it is seldom that the earnestness of others so often allows us such rich material for laughter, and yet without the laughter's drawing even the least charge of malice. We are certainly much too strict if we forbid our children to laugh when an old man or an old woman or even a young woman falls; and yet we also want to make them aware of and demonstrate to them the unfortunate consequences that such a fall could have. It is indeed right to take a childlike view by observing the serious and dark parts of human fate in a light and jesting manner – indeed, often to meet the most terrifying seriousness of life with an inner smile and to take it for a mask that, in our present state, we are never allowed to remove if we don't want to give offence to the world. The world, for its part, foolishly enough takes the mask to be only for actors and in no way recognizes the true seriousness of life, which in truth consists of neither tears nor sweat but rather an honest laugh and an inexhaustible idleness. All confused, then, these people take strong offence at our appropriate laughter, and they observe our humour with such a heavy seriousness that they may be left feeling a fiery malice towards us. The scorn of such men affects me like music from a Gluckian fury scene,



uns oft mit einer gleichsam grimmigen Bosheit fühlen lassen mögten, und das Gelächter solcher Menschen würkt auf mich wie eine Musik etwa zu einer Furienscene von Gluck, voll kupferne und eiserne Schwere und stickendem Schwefelgeruch.

Zu dieser Societas gehört unser Freund nun wohl nicht. Eine Ordnung, die aus $a + a$ und $a \times a$ entsteht, ist das Ideal seines Lebens und seiner Kunst, nur schade, daß es dann zu keinem neuen Facit kömmt, dem einzigen Zweck aller Kunst und alles Lebens, da dieser Ansicht der zweite Prozeß des Lebens fehlt. Verstände ich die Philosophie des Lachens nicht, so könnte ich mich über seinen Brief schon ereifern, aber ich lache fort und sage mit Mozarts Nanettchen: Wer zuletzt lacht, lacht am besten. Denn ein ärgeres Mißverständniß kann es wohl selten gegeben haben. Du guter Mozart konntest wohl nie daran denken, daß sie mit Ellen und Maaßstab kommen und deine unendlichen Werke ausmessen würden, konntest nie ahnden, daß musikalische Rechenmeister deine unendlichen Aufgaben nach algebraischen Formeln würden auflösen wollen. Die dürre Zeit, welche die medicäische Venus durch Ellipsen und Dreiecke, dem *Don Juan* wie ein Rechenexempel, und das Universum durch eine Mechanik des Himmels begreifen will, ohne die Idee der Schönheit, den Geist der Wahrheit und den Sinn der Natur zu ahnden. Da kauen sie an den bloßen [300] Formen der Kunst, als bestände darin ihr Geist, da treiben sie den Ernst mit einer lächerlichen Ernsthaftigkeit, nicht daran denkend, daß der Ernst nur die Form des Scherzes ist, und der Scherz eigentlich die Materie des Ernstes, und daß beide in ihrer innigsten Vereinigung erst das Leben im eigenen Sinne des Wortes bilden. Irgendwo sagt ein Schriftsteller: so lange wir den Scherz nicht verstehen, so lange ist uns auch der wahre Ernst noch fern. Aus jener einseitigen Ansicht des Lebens ist denn auch Arithmos hartes Urtheil über Mozarts Kunst entstanden, und entstehn so viele schiefe Urtheile über Kunstprodukte. Das Leben und die Kunst der Menschen stehn in umgekehrtem Verhältniß. Wo nemlich das Leben selbst zur Kunst geworden, seine beiden Faktoren, Scherz und Ernst, auf das innigste mit einander vereinigt waren, da bildete die Kunst sich einseitig aus, und in den schönsten Werken solcher Kunst steht jeder Faktor für sich getrennt, als vollendet da. – Sophocles und Aristophanes. Wo wir hingehen in der Kunst nur den Spiegel von dem

full of the heaviness of copper and iron and the oppressive fumes of sulphur.

To be sure, our friend does not belong to this society. Instead, a system that arises out of a formula like $a + a$ and $a \times a$ is his ideal of life and art. It's just a pity that it doesn't lead to any new solution, to a distinctive purpose for all art and all life, because the second process, that of life, is lacking from this viewpoint. Even if I didn't understand the philosophy of laughter, I could still get excited about his letter, and laugh aloud and say with Mozart's Nanettchen: 'he who laughs last, laughs best'.² Indeed, there could hardly have been a deeper misunderstanding. You, good Mozart, indeed could never have thought that people would come with yardsticks and rulers to measure your immortal works; you never could have imagined that musical judges would want to solve your immortal studies with algebraic formulas. Such barren times want to interpret the Medici Venus using ellipses and triangles, Don Juan as an arithmetical problem and the universe as a celestial mechanism and yet without doing harm to the idea of beauty, the spirit of truth and the sense of nature. Thus they chew on the mere [300] forms of art, as if its spirit were contained therein, because they approach the serious with a ridiculous earnestness. They do not realize that the serious is only a form of the comic and the comic actually the material of the serious, and that both only in their most intimate union constitute life in the proper sense of the word. Somewhere a writer once said: so long as we don't understand humour, just so long will the genuinely serious be distant from us.³ From that myopic view of life have also arisen Arithmos's hard judgments on Mozart's art as well as so many distorted judgments about artworks in general. Life and art stand in an inverted relationship. Where, namely, life itself grew into art, the two factors – humour and seriousness – were united with each other most intimately; there, art established itself in a one-sided fashion. In the most beautiful artistic works of this type each factor stands distinct and complete – Sophocles and Aristophanes. Where, on the contrary, we perceive in art only a mirror of the life of the ancients, there we find both factors united in art; in life, in contrast, either the Goth's deadening seriousness or the



Leben der Alten erblicken, da finden wir in ihr die beiden Faktoren vereinigt; in das Leben ist dagegen entweder der ertödtende Ernst des Gothen, oder der flache Scherz des Gallier gedungen, die beide dem Verständniß der Kunst im hohen Grade Eintracht gethan haben und noch thun. Die beiden Heroen dieser Welt, der romantischen, sind Shakespeare und Mozart. Deshalb finden sich in beiden jene Gegensätze auf das innigste vereinigt.

Aus diesem Gesichtspunkt, und nach diesem Kriterium, sind fast alle größeren Arbeiten Mozarts zu beurtheilen, nur allerdings mit dem Unterschiede, daß ihm in diesem oder in jenem Werke die Vereinigung des Scherzes und Ernstes mehr oder weniger gelungen ist. In einigen Stücken, wo er seine Bahn verließ, arbeitete er mit ungünstigem Erfolge, und es entstand daraus eine Zwittergattung, von der ein andermal.

Jetzt laß uns zu unserer Oper *così fan tutte* übergehen. Mozart hat in derselben ein ihm ganz neues Genre versucht, das Genre des Leichten und Scherzhaften, da er sonst mehr das Große und Erhabene, das Wunderbare liebt. Das Leichte und Heitere würde aber zu gar keiner Gestaltung kommen, wenn es keinen Gegensatz des Ernstes und des Dunkels hätte, gegen welches die hellen Farben kontrastiren; er wäre offenbar in Monotonie gefallen, wie die entartete, weichliche italiänische Musik, oder die ernstere französische Musik eines Rameau, und später des Gluck, des Reformators des französischen und italiänischen Melos. Das Thema dieser Oper war eine Satire auf die so hoch gepriesene Treue des weiblichen Geschlechts und ein unschuldiger Scherz, der mit dem Ernst der Liebe getrieben werden sollte. Daß dies die wahre Idee des Ganzen sei, verräth der Titel des italiänischen Stücks: *Così fan tutte*, so machen's alle, und das große, aber ironische Gewicht, welches er einigemal in der Musik absichtlich auf diese Worte gelegt hat. Daß dieser Beweis von der Untreue aller Mädchen nur als ein Scherz betrachtet wird, ist eben das Zarte in der ganzen Operette, und daß diese Untreue wieder so gut davon kommt, beweist den leichten schönen Sinn des Künstlers. Alles ist nur Maske, Spiel, Scherz, Tändelei und Ironie, Dinge, die allerdings schwerer zu erfassen seyn dürften, als das gewöhnliche Einerlei des Lebens. Mit den ernsten Zügen, die dazwischen erscheinen, ist es Mozart gar kein Ernst gewesen, sie dienen ihm nur zur Gestaltung, und wie man sagen könnte, Bedunklung, Schattirung des Scherzes, wenn man gleich nicht leugnen kann, daß er

Gaul's superficial humour inserted itself. The both have brought and continue to bring harmony to the understanding of art in its highest conception. The two heroes of this world, the romantic world, are Shakespeare and Mozart. Thus every opposition in these two finds itself united in the most intimate way.

Almost all of the greater works of Mozart are to be judged from this viewpoint and according to this criterion, with the difference, to be sure, that the union of humour and seriousness succeeds to varying degrees according to the work. In several pieces where he lost his way, he worked with unsuccessful results, and out of this arose a hybrid type, about which I will say more another time.

Now let's turn to our opera, *Così fan tutte*. Mozart sought in this work an entirely new genre for him, the genre of the light and comic; as a rule, he preferred the great and sublime, the marvellous. The light and mirthful could never take shape, however, unless it had its opposite of the serious and dark against which the light colours contrast. He obviously would have fallen into monotony, like the degenerate, effeminate Italian music or the more serious French music of a Rameau and, later, of Gluck – the reformers of French and Italian song. The theme of this opera was a satire on the highly prized fidelity of the female sex and an innocent joke that should be enjoyed along with the seriousness of love. That this was the true idea of the whole is revealed both in the Italian title of the piece – *Così fan tutte*, thus do they all – and in the great but ironic musical weight that on several occasions he intentionally invested into the words. That this proof of female infidelity is viewed only as a joke is indeed the delicacy of the entire opera, and that this infidelity goes over well testifies to the artist's light, elegant conception. Everything is just disguise, play, jest, flirtation and irony: things that ought to be in every way more difficult to grasp than the usual ordinariness of life. Concerning the serious scenes that appear in between, Mozart by no means meant them seriously. They served him simply for shaping the form and, one might say, for darkening, shading the humour, if one cannot exactly deny that he allowed himself to go too far in these dark situations. It is as



sich in diesen dunklen Stellen zu sehr hat gehen lassen, indem sie ihm gleichsam bei der Arbeit über den Kopf gewachsen sind, da sie nur als Contraste dastehen sollte, die er wieder nicht ohne Ironie behandeln durfte, wie er auch einigemal in den *Aparts* gethan hat. Ich rüge bei dieser Gelegenheit zugleich einen Fehler in der hiesigen Darstellung, vorzüglich der männlichen Rollen. Die Oper scheint, wenn gleich aus der Gewöhnlichkeit des Lebens genommen, so verklärt und zart, daß die Darstellenden nur mit der größten Mühe diese Zartheit, diese Naivität, diesen fortdauernden Scherz, dieses Spiel in höhern Sphären zu erreichen vermögen. Die Schwerfälligkeit und das Ernsthafte, woran unsere Schauspieler und Sänger nur zu sehr gewöhnt werden, und wodurch jede graziöse Gelenkigkeit und angenehme Leichtigkeit zu Grunde gerichtet wird, war bei dieser Darstellung recht sichtbar, am meisten bei H. Franz, der die personifizierte Ironie durchaus nicht widererkennen ließ. Nicht grob komisch soll er spielen, sondern wie ein alter geschmeidiger Doktor der Weltweisheit, der [301] den Rausch der Jugend abgelegt hat, und den sogenannten Ernst der Liebe, das ist, die Treue, nur für eine kleine konventielle Albernheit nimmt, mit der sich die jungen Leute viel haben, hinter der aber durchaus nichts zu suchen ist, und auch nichts zu suchen seyn soll, wenn nicht alle Freiheit der willkürlichen Beschränkung zu Grunde gehen soll. Dabei gutmüthig und brav, kein Schelm noch Gauner. Das affektirte Komische in der Aussprache des S und Sch giebt nicht das Komische, so wie überhaupt keine Kunst durch kleinliche Kunstgriffe entsteht, sondern durch die natürliche Anlage zur Kunst selbst. – Das meiste Lob verdienen die weiblichen Rollen, vorzüglich Dem. Maaß als Nanette. Sie steht im Stück auf demselben Punkte wie der Doktor, nur daß die Theorie des Stücks über die Weiber bei ihr in die Praxis übergegangen zu seyn scheint, weshalb sie sagt:

Ach, nur zum Scherzen
Taugt Liebe allein.

Worte, die Mozart absichtlich in der Musik recht herausgehoben hat. Vom Doktor und dem Kammermädchen geht eigentlich das Leben und der Verstand des ganzen Stückes aus.

Ueberhaupt herrschte bei der Aufführung nicht Leichtigkeit genug; die Dekorationen hatten kein blühendes Leben, die Masken waren träge, die Illumination matt, die Bewegung der Männer war zu

if they had, in the process of his working on them, grown in spite of himself, when they should have arisen only as contrasts, which, again, he should not have treated without irony, as he had done several times in the *asides*. At the same time, I blame this outcome on an error in the present production, especially with the male roles. The opera, even though taken straight out of the commonality of life, appears so transfigured and tender that the actors could achieve only with the greatest effort this tenderness, this naiveté, this continuous humour, this play in the higher spheres. The ponderousness and the earnestness to which our actors and singers are growing only too accustomed and through which all graceful suppleness and agreeable lightness are destroyed were clearly visible in this production, especially with Herr Franz. Throughout, he did not allow the role's personified irony to come out. He should not perform in a crudely comic fashion but like an old, subtle professor of worldly wisdom who [301] has set aside the transports of youth and who takes the so-called seriousness of life, which is to say fidelity, only for a little typical foolishness that young people make much fuss over. Behind this seriousness, however, there is really nothing to seek and also nothing that should be sought, if all freedom of arbitrary limitation is not to disintegrate. For all that, he is benevolent and kind, neither rogue nor scoundrel. The affected comedy in the pronunciation of 'S' and 'Sch' does not produce true comedy, just as art does not generally arise through little gimmicks but through a natural inclination towards art itself. – The female roles earned the most praise, especially Miss Maaß as Nanette. She occupies the same place in the piece as the professor, except that, for her, the theory of the piece concerning women seems to have gone over into practice, which is why she says, 'Ah, love is good only as a jest' – words that Mozart intentionally brought out in the music. The vitality and rationale of the whole work truly proceed from the professor and the chambermaid.

In general, the production lacked lightness; the scenery had no sense of life to it, the costumes were uninspired, the lighting faint, the men's acting too stiff. Indeed, the military dress also contributed to



streif, wozu wohl die militärische Kleidung, die fantastischer seyn könnte, und nicht zu große Aehnlichkeit mit der, welche wir alle Tage vor uns sehen, haben darf, auch das ihrige beitrug. Man sollte doch immer die Welt der Kunst genau von der Welt des Lebens zu sondern suchen. Alle Gestalten und Verhältnisse des reellen Lebens, vorzüglich die herbsten Erscheinungen desselben, die gewöhnlichen militärischen Uniformen, sollten aus der Ideenwelt, und aus der idealsten Kunst, der Musik, und vorzüglich aus der Musik des Mozart verbannt werden. Wir retten dadurch den Ernst und die Charakteristik, die aus der Welt immer mehr und mehr zu entschwinden scheinen, sichern den Ernst des wirklichen Lebens, so wie das göttliche Spiel der Kunst, und bewahren uns auf diese Weise vor jeder Vermischung, die in aller Hinsicht als die größte Gefahr des Menschengeschlechts anzusehen ist. Etwas anders ist dies bei den Kopien des Lebens, den Familiengemälden und den satirischen Spielen. Daher kam es also, daß die Fehler, dessen Mozart sich theilweise in der Musik zu Schulden kommen ließ, noch greller hervorsprangen, und man eigentlich gar nicht wußte, was man von den Verkleideten zu halten hatte, und daß der Ernst also zu sehr die Oberhand behielt, der nur als eine dunklere Tinte zur Schattirung dienen sollte.

(Die Fortsetzung im nächsten Stück.)

BmZ 1/77 (1805), 303–306

Musikalischer Briefwechsel. / (*Così fan tutte* von Mozart.) / Phantasia an Humanus. / (Fortsetzung.)

Nach jener Ansicht zerfällt der erste Akt in zwei große Hälften. In der *ersten* wird gleichsam die Farbe aufgetragen, gegen welche die folgenden hellern Gestalten abstrahlen sollen. Zuerst feste Ueberzeugung der Liebhaber von der Treue ihrer Mädchen, in den drei ersten Terzets, deren Charakter männliche Kraft, Edelmuth und Treue ausdrückt. Die Protestation des Doktors dazwischen bildet den Keim zu all den darauf folgenden Scherzen. Er beredet sie zu einer verstellten Reise. – Jedes dieser Terzets hat seinen eigenen bestimmten Charakter, den zu entwickeln, eben so angenehm als lehrreich seyn würde, dürft' ich zu sehr ins Einzelne gehn. – Das Zimmer verwandelt sich in einen Garten, die lieblichsten, sanftesten Töne erschallen und ein zartes Duett, welches die innige heiße Liebe der Schönen, das

this effect: it could have been more outlandish and not have borne such a strong resemblance to what we see before us every day. One should indeed always seek to distinguish the world of art precisely from the world of life. All figures and relationships from real life, even the most mundane images like standard military dress, should be banished from the world of ideas and of the most idealized art, which is music, and especially the music of Mozart. In this way we rescue the serious and the characteristic, which seem to disappear more and more from the world, assure the seriousness of actual life as well as the divine play of art, and thereby protect ourselves against every confusion [of art and life] that in full hindsight is to be seen as the greatest threat to the human race. The matter is somewhat different with the copies of life, the domestic portrayals and satirical plays. From this it turns out, first, that the mistakes that Mozart occasionally allowed, to his discredit, to enter into the music appear even more glaring, so that it was not at all clear what one was to make of the masked characters, and, second, that the seriousness thus held too much the upper hand, when it should have served only as a darker tint for shading.

(To be continued in the next issue.)

BmZ 1/ 77 (1805), 303–306.

Musical Correspondence. / Phantasia to Humanus. / (Continuation.)

The first act, seen from that viewpoint, falls into two great halves. The first presents the colour against which the following brighter forms are to radiate out. At first, in the three opening trios, we see the lovers' firm conviction about their ladies' fidelity; the character of the trios conveys virility, nobility and honesty. Professor Alfonso's dissent, meanwhile, forms the core of all of the following comedy. He prepares them for a feigned journey. – Each of these trios has its own distinct character; explaining this would be as pleasant as instructive, but I would have to go into too much detail. – The room changes to a garden; the loveliest, sweetest tones resound, and the eager ladies sing a tender duet that celebrates their beaux' inner ardent love, the glow of their cheeks, their pleasing eyes, their charming mouths.



Glühen der Wangen, das beglückende Auge, den entzückenden Mund ihrer Geliebten, überhaupt aber die Lust, das Glück und Entzücken der Liebe feiert, wird von den erwartenden Mädchen gesungen. Die sehnlichst Erwarteten endlich erscheinen, um den Geliebten ihr Lebewohl zu stammeln, da Ehre und Pflicht sie ins Feld und den Krieg ruft. Der bittere Schmerz der Trennung ergießt sich in den rührendsten Tönen, das ernste Chor der Krieger und Matrosen feiert den Ruhm des zu hoffenden Sieges. Fernando und Wilhelm verlassen, Treue schwörend, die Untröstlichen, besteigen das Schiff, und der vorige Chor fällt noch einmal ein. Getrennt von den Theuren, die Hände nach dem Meere gestreckt, und in Thränen, stehn die Unglücklichen am Ufer, einen Klagegesang singend, so zart, sanft und schmeichelnd, wie die Wasserfluth und die linde darauf spielenden Winde, von den Göttern die glückliche Farth erstehend. Er bildet einen rührenden Gegensatz zu dem vorhergegangenen militärischen Chor der Soldaten. Bis so weit geht der erste Theil des Ernstes. Des Komischen ist bis jetzt nur wenig, bis auf des Doktors Rolle, vorzüglich in dem:

Nur piano! finem lauda!

das er zuweilen zwischenein singt. Doch ist der Fleiß Mozarts in der Ausarbeitung dieser Rolle unverkennbar.

Mit dem Auftreten Nanettens hebt der zweite heitere Theil des Scherzes an. Ihre Moral, die sie gleich Anfangs ihren Fräuleins über das Kapitel der Treue liest, die sie als die langweiligste Prosa der Liebe anzusehen scheint, harmonirt vortreflich zu der schon oben erwähnten Arie: Unter Männern, bei Soldaten, deren Refrain die Worte sind:

Ach, nur zum Scherzen
Taugt Lieb' allein!

deren Begleitung dazu ein wahres Meisterstück von leichter, ächt komischer Musik ist. Der Scherz tritt nun immer mehr und mehr hervor. Die Ver-[304] kleideten werden von dem Doktor der Nanette vorgestellt, und das Quartett zwischen den beiden zärtlich glühenden Liebhabern und dem listigen, vielleicht auch lüsternen Kammermädchen, deren Rolle Mozart in der Musik jetzt eben so fleißig gearbeitet hat, wie vorher in dem ersten Theil des Doktors Rolle, ist vielleicht das allerkomischste, was die Musik irgend aufzuweisen hat. Es wird noch frappanter durch den

Above all, however, the duet celebrates the happiness and charm of love. The longingly awaited men finally arrive in order to stammer out their farewells to their beloved women, for honour and duty call them to the field and to war. The bitter pain of parting flows over them in the most touching tones; the serious chorus of soldiers and sailors celebrates the glory of the expected victory. Fernando and Wilhelm depart, swearing fidelity to the inconsolable women, and embark on the boat; the previous chorus enters one more time. Separated from their dears, the hands stretched out towards the sea and in tears, the unfortunate ladies stand at the shore singing a lamentation as tender, sweet and alluring as the waves and the gentle winds playing upon them, as if the bon voyage came from the gods. It forms a touching contrast to the previous soldiers' chorus. Thus concludes the first and serious part of the act. There is little of the comic to this point, outside of the professor's role, especially in his 'Nur piano! finem lauda!' which he sometimes interjects. Nevertheless, Mozart's industry in working out this role is unmistakable.

With Nanette's entrance, the second, comic part of the game begins. She reads her moral philosophy to the ladies right from the start and right out of the chapter on fidelity, which she thinks contains the most tedious prose about love. This perspective harmonizes beautifully with the aria already mentioned above, 'Unter Männern, bei Soldaten', whose refrain runs 'Ah, love is good only as a jest', and whose accompaniment is a true masterpiece of light, genuinely comic music. Now, the comedy continues to advance. [304] The professor introduces the disguised men to Nanette, and the quartet between the two charmingly ardent lovers and the sly, perhaps also lascivious chambermaid. Her role, which Mozart had musically worked out with as much care as he had with the philosopher's in the first section, is perhaps as purely comic as any musical role could be. It becomes still more striking with the entrance of the ladies: the modulations become more serious, and the sextet that now appears is a wonderful mixture of tender, ardent, merry, malicious, true and



Eintritt des Fräuleins: die Modulationen werden ernster, und das Sextett, das nun entsteht, ist ein wunderbares Gemisch von zärtlichen, glühenden, lustigen, schadenfrohen, treuen und standhaften Gefühlen, das aber wieder zum tiefsten Ernst zurückzukehren scheint, wie es vorher vom heitersten Scherz ausging. Der Ernst der Liebe, nemlich die Treue, erscheint noch einmal, aber zuletzt in seiner feierlichsten Pracht, in der Bravourarie:

Fest wie Felsen, in Sturm und Wetter,

der Mozart, wie er es oft thut, einen Anstrich von der alten metallischen Musik eines Bach und Händel gegeben hat, und die Künstlerin, die sie sang, Mad. Eunike, schien ganz den tiefen Sinn ihres Gesanges zu fühlen; denn sie sang einfach, kräftig, majestätisch. Ihr, so wie allen diesen braven Talenten, welche sich zur Darstellung dieses Mozartschen Meisterwerks vereinigten, gebührt der wärmste Dank der Kunstfreunde, denen es zu einem wahren Trost gereicht, daß ihm, dem Großen, ihre Dienste nur die Edelsten weihen.

Ernst und feierlich beginnt das Finale des ersten Akts. Klagen um die entflohenen, glücklichen Stunden, und Ausdrücke des Schmerzes der Trennung der Jungfrauen, so wie das Verzweiflungsgeschrei der sich verstellenden Liebhaber, die schon die Folgen des Giftes fühlen, sind die frühern Bestandtheile desselben. Der Tod erscheint in schauerlicher und düstrer Gestalt, die Worte ersterben auf den bleichen Lippen. Des Herzens Klopfen, der Glieder Zucken, der Wangen klägliches Erblassen rühren auch die unerbittlichsten. Die süße Regung des Mitleidens entsteht in den felsenharten Herzen. Sie schicken nach Hülfe. Sie eilen selbst den Sterbenden näher. Kalt die Stirn, die Wangen bleich, der Puls stockend, der Odem entgangen, kein Schlagen des Herzens! Ach die Unglücklichen, die an dem Eingange des Todes stehen in der Blüthe der Jugend! – Freund, dieses Gemählde des Todes, wo alles dahin sinkt, und wie Blätter vom herbsthlichen Baume abfällt, wie wirkt es nicht gegen jene belebende Frühlingslust, gegen jenes üppige Lebensgemälde der Liebenden, wo das Glühen der Wangen, das beglückende Auge, der entzückende Mund, die Lust und das Glück der Liebe gefeiert wurde! Alles dahin! Qualen der Verzweiflung, Schmerzen der Trennung, Ruf des Todes, wo einst Hoffnung, Vereinigung und Leben! da kämpft in dem zarten Herzen

constant feelings, which, however, again appear to turn back towards the deepest seriousness, just as earlier it proceeded from the most serene comedy. The seriousness of love – that is, fidelity – appears once again, but at last in its festive splendour, in the bravura aria ‘Fest wie Felsen, in Sturm und Wetter’, to which Mozart, as he often does, has given a tinge of the old, austere music of a Bach and Handel. The artist who sang it, Mrs Eunike, appears to have entirely felt the deep meaning of her aria, for she sang it simply, powerfully and majestically. She, like all of the fine talents who joined in presenting this Mozartean masterwork, is due the warmest thanks from friends of art, for whom it is an article of faith that only the noblest dedicate their services to art and to what is great.

The first-act finale begins seriously and festively. The first sections of the finale contain the ladies’ lamentation over lost happy hours and expressions of the pain of separation, as well as the cry of despair from the disguised lovers, who already feel the consequences of the poison. Death appears in dreadful and gloomy guise; words die away on the pale lips. Throbbing hearts, twitching limbs, the pitiable blanching of cheeks would touch even heartless souls. The sweet emotion of compassion starts to arise in the rock-hard hearts. The women call for help. They even hasten near to the dying men: the cold brow, the pale cheeks, the failing pulse, the fading breath – no heart beat! Alas for the unhappy men who, in the bloom of youth, stand at death’s door! – Friend, this portrait of death, where everything sinks down and falls off like leaves from an autumn tree – in what way does it not contrast with that life-filled air of spring time, that luxurious portrait of lovers, where the blush of cheeks, the pleasing eye, the sweet mouth, the desire and the happiness of love are celebrated! All lost! Torments of despair, pain of separation, the call of death where once there had been hope, union and life! Now, compassion strives with love, which paints itself upon the pale cheeks of the trembling beauties. Longed-for hope finally approaches and, with it, comedy, which is like



das Mitleid mit der Liebe, die sich auf den bleichen Wangen der zitternden Schönen mahlt. Die ersehnte Hülfe naht endlich und mit ihr der Scherz, der wie eine helle Wolke urplötzlich in dunkler Nacht erscheint. Der graue Nebel muß weichen, und mit der gelehrten Anrede des Arztes:

Salvate amabiles
bones puellas,

gewinnt das Ganze ein munteres Kolorit, das immer mehr und mehr zunimmt, und bis in das allerkomischste gesteigert wird.

Nur durch das Komische konnte solch ein Ernst wieder zur Heiterkeit erhoben werden, wie so oft bei Mozart geschieht. Seine ungeheuren Kontraste kann er nie anders vermitteln. In solchen Fällen ist die erste Wirkung des Komischen immer die Erhöhung des tragischen Eindrucks, der sich aber später verliehrt und zu seiner wahren Wirkung der Beruhigung zurückkehrt. So auch hier. Durch Magnetismus und Sympathie hat Doktor Manipulus die Vergifteten kurirt; sie sind vom Tod erstanden, sie regen und erholen sich. Mit glänzenderer Pracht steigen nun Gesang und Begleitung empor. Die erwachenden Liebenden glauben sich in den Olymp versetzt, – Pallas und Cythere nahen sich ihnen, sie schwören den theuren Geliebten die unverbrüchlichste Treue. Wie sollte solche Liebe nicht die hießbeste Gegenliebe verdienen, da nur ein Kuß sie versiegeln soll? Aber standhaft stellen die Schönen sich den Wünschen der Liebhaber entgegen, und dieser Schluß, wo Zorn und Rache der Fräuleins und Scherz und Tändelei der beiden Liebhaber und des alten Doktors, wo gleichsam der furchtbarste Ernst und der leichteste Scherz sich miteinander verbinden, ist der glänzendste Punkt der Operette. Den großen Lärm um nichts, den Arithmos in demselben zu finden glaubt, nicht rechtfertigen zu können, zeigt eben von keiner tiefen Einsicht in das Stück. Das [305] vorgebliche Nichts mußte Mozart hier allerdings als ein Etwas darstellen; denn daß es den Damen wirklich nicht so ums Herz ist, als sie vorgeben, glaub' ich selbst recht gern, aber um desto treuer müssen sie sich äußerlich stellen, und mit vollem Rechte mußte daher Mozart sie in dieses äußerliche Geschrei ihrer Wuth und ihres Schmerzes, ihres Zorns und ihrer Rache ausbrechen lassen. Daher allerdings der Lärm – und vielleicht der Bombast, den Arithmos dem allersolidesten Künstler vorwirft.

a bright cloud that suddenly appears in the dark night. The grey mist must yield, and with the doctor's learned discourse – 'Salvate [*sic*] amabiles / bones puellas' – the entire wins a more vibrant colour, which it increasingly takes on until it rises to the highest levels of the comic.

Only through the comic can such seriousness again be elevated to serenity. Mozart cannot convey his enormous contrasts in any other way. In such cases, comedy's first effect is always the elevation of the tragic impression, which yet later loses itself and reverts to its true effect of instilling calm. Such is the case here. Through magnetism and sympathy Doctor Manipulus cures the poisoned men; they are raised up from death; they bestir themselves and recover. Song and accompaniment wax with splendid magnificence. The waking lovers believe they have been transported to Olympus – Pallas and Cythere approach them; they swear the most unbreakable faith to the precious beloved ones. How should such love not deserve the most ardent reciprocation, which needs only a kiss to seal it? But the beauties stand firm against the wishes of the lovers. This conclusion, where the women's anger and rage are simultaneously held together with the play and jesting of the two lovers and the old philosopher, where the most frightful earnestness and the lightest comedy are bound up together, is the most brilliant point of the opera. An inability to defend the much ado about nothing that Arithmos believes to find in this same spot shows no profound insight into the piece. [305] In this place above all Mozart had to portray the alleged nothingness as something substantive, for this reason: even though I myself fully believe that the women's hearts aren't actually the way they believe them to be, all the more faithfully must they present themselves publicly. Mozart is thereby completely justified in having them break out with this extraordinary cry of rage and pain, of anger and vengefulness. Thus the noise – and perhaps the bombast – with which Arithmos reproaches this most skilled of artists.



Hiebei will ich zugleich dem Vorwurf des Arithmos, den er der Overture zu dieser Oper gemacht hat, begegnen. Ohne sie gehört zu haben, könntest du sie gewiß nach meiner Darstellung schon vertheidigen. Denn es kann der Scherz, das Spiel und die Tändelei nicht leicht anders ausgedrückt werden. Die kleinen Sätzchen, die sich durch alle Stimmen und durch alle Modulationen gleichsam Zeck jagen, und wie kleine goldschuppige Fischchen in dem sonnerleuchteten klaren Element hervortreten, verschwinden und widererscheinen, stimmen das Gemüth gar herrlich zu dieser Gallerie scherzhafter Kleinodien, die mit einer bunten Muschel- und Korallengrotte vergleichbar seyn dürfte, wo der Naturtrieb sich gleichfalls in den allerschmerzhaftesten, muthwilligsten und tändelndsten Formen ausgebildet hat. Das Adagio, womit dieser Scherz eröffnet wird, wäre dann am Ende der Ernst, oder das stillfließende, ruhige, ernste Prinzip des Thales. – So weit davon! – Zeige den Brief ums Himmelswillen keinem Arithmos! – Die Leute lachen ja! –

Bis hieher will ich meine Darstellung nur führen. Es soll mich freuen, wenn Du und Deine Freunde das Stück liebgewonnen haben. Der Brief würde seine geziemende Länge überschreiten, wollte ich Dir auch den zweiten Akt, als die Lysis des Ganzen, so darstellen, obgleich er es eben so verdient als der erste. Wird unser Berliner Publikum Geschmack zeigen, so will ich nicht undankbar seyn, das heißt, wird die allerliebste Operette noch öfter gegeben, so erhältst du von mir auch die Darstellung des zweiten Akts. Und daran ist wohl kein Zweifel? denkst Du in Deinem Sinn. Denn Jung und Alt, schöne Damen und schöne Herren, Frauen und Männer, Matronen und bejahrte Liebens- und Lebensmüden, mußten wohl dahin eilen, um entweder ihre zukünftigen Schicksale zu lesen, oder ihre gegenwärtigen Intriguen vorgestellt, oder ihre Vergangenheit noch einmal vorgezaubert zu sehen. Denn gewiß findet sich unter den Zuschauern mancher alte Doktor, manches schlaue Nanettchen, manches flatterhafte Julchen und mancher betrogene Fernando! Ihr alle, Leichtsinnige und Standhafte, Treue und Treulose, Erfahrene und Unerfahrene, ihr alle kommt hinzu und ergößt euch bei diesem unschuldigen Spiel, das euch scherzend lehren will: keiner zu trauen, und die Untreue nicht zu ernsthaft zu nehmen, wenn ihr nicht betrogen seyn; keinem untreu zu werden, und die Treue nicht zu scherzhaft zu nehmen, wenn ihr

At this point I will also respond to Arithmos's condemnation of the opera's overture. Without having heard it, you could certainly still defend it on the basis of my description. Indeed, comedy, play and flirtation cannot easily be expressed in any other way. The short phrases – which chase after the same goal through all the voices and modulations and which emerge, disappear and then reappear like little goldfish in a sunlit, clear medium – perfectly determine the character of this gallery full of delightful jewels. It might be compared to a colourful reef of seashells and coral, where the love of nature has developed simultaneously into the most thoroughly comic, sportive and flirtatious forms. The adagio that opens the comedy would then, at the conclusion, represent the serious, or the serene, restful, serious principle of the valley. – Enough of this! – Don't show this letter to Arithmos, for heaven's sake! – People will laugh for sure! –

I will carry on my description of the opera only up to this point. It would please me if you and your friends enjoy the work. Yet this letter would overstep its appropriate length were I also to explain the second act as the denouement of the entire work, even though it is as deserving as the first act. If our Berlin public shows taste, I will not be ungrateful; which is to say, if this thoroughly endearing opera is performed more frequently, you will also receive from me a rendering of the second act. 'And is there indeed no doubt of that?' you think to yourself. Because, young and old amiable men and women, wives and husbands, matrons and elderly people weary from love and life must indeed hasten to this opera, in order either to read their future fate, or to see their present predicaments portrayed or their past invoked once again. For one will certainly find among the audience many old professors, many sly Nanettes, many fickle Julies and many deceived Fernandos! All of them – frivolous and serious, true and faithless, experienced and naive – appear here and charm you in this innocent play, which will lightheartedly teach you the following: to trust no one and not to take infidelity too seriously, if you are not to be deceived; to be untrue to none, and not to take fidelity too seriously, if you are not to hear reproaches or weep tears; but to forgive all mortals, to become reconciled and generally to take life and



nicht Vorwürfe hören und Thränen vergießen; allen Menschen aber zu vergeben, euch zu versöhnen, und das Leben und die Liebe überhaupt scherzhaft und ernsthaft zu nehmen, wenn ihr euer Daseyn anders froh und heiter genießen wollt! diese lebenswürdige Moral der Liebe ist es, die euch Mozart hat geben wollen! –

Demungeachtet, mein Bester, war schon bei der ersten Vorstellung das Haus eben nicht sehr gefüllt, und bei der zweiten noch weniger. Was man davon denken soll? Erschrick nicht! Dem Don Juan, dem Figaro, dem Titus, gehts nicht besser. Die Mozartsche Musik, weißt du ja von Arithmos, hat ihre Schönheiten, aber auch ihre großen Mängel. Die werden die Leute nicht hören wollen! Richtig! dafür haben sie ja ihren Donaunymphen und ihre Labyrinth, ihre Flachheiten und Verworrenheiten; ihre Fanchons* und Operschnneider, ihre Süßlichkeiten und Bizarren! Außerdem weißt Du ja, ist die Musik zu *Così fan tutte* eine bloße Concertmusik, wie Du bei Arithmos gelesen haben wirst, und solche reine Aethermusik verfliegt den Leuten ja. Alles muß hübsch kompakt und solide seyn, es muß sich handgreiflich begreifen lassen, sonst ist nur alles Phantasterei. [306]

Dennoch aber freut es mich, daß unser Theater sich um diesen Krämersinn nicht eben sehr zu kümmern scheint; seit unendlicher Zeit ist keins von all den genannten Sächelchen aufgeführt worden, es scheint, als hätten diese Unholde sich vor der großen Zauberin Armide aus Scheu und Scham in ihren Hölen verkriechen müssen, worin sie denn so lange als möglich versteckt bleiben mögen, bis einmal ihr ungestümer roher Anhang sie wieder zu sehen verlangt. Möge unserer Direktion die guten Götter diesen Sinn erhalten, vorzüglich da unser Orchester jetzt wenigstens den ersten sichtbaren Anlauf zu einer neuen Bahn nimmt, zu der die Freunde des wahren Geschmacks sich Glück wünschen können. Möge der Dirigent desselben, unser würdige Weber,

* Daß durch Zusammenstellung dieser Werke und vorzüglich durch Nennung dieses Meisterwerks der Himmlischen Muse durchaus kein Tadel auf diese Künstler fällt, wird der verständige Leser wohl von selbst einsehen; ein Urtheil solches im eigentlichen Sinne des Worts phantastischen Autors kann keinen vernünftigen Mann und Componisten beleidigen, eben so wenig wie Werthers vagabonde Urtheile über die beliebtesten und verehrungswürdigsten Dichter seiner Zeit.

Anmerk. d. Einsend.

love jokingly *and* earnestly, if you want a joyous and serene life! This endearing moral about love is what Mozart wanted to give you! –

In spite of all this, my dear man, the house was not very full even at the first performance, still less so at the second one. What should one think of this? Fear not! It didn't go any better with *Don Juan, Figaro, Titus*. As you know from Arithmos, Mozartean music has its beauties but also its great shortcomings. People don't want to hear about these things! Indeed! Instead, they have their *Donaunymphen* and *Labyrinthe*, their *Flachheiten* und *Verworrenheiten*, their *Fanchons** and their *Operschnneider*, their pleasantries and their curiosities.⁴ Aside from that, you know indeed that the music of *Così fan tutte* is simple concert music, as you will have read from Arithmos, and such pure ethereal music in every way escapes the common people. Everything must be nicely compact and solid for them; it must be tangible, otherwise it is all just empty fancy. [306]

Even so, it pleases me that our theatre doesn't seem too concerned with this pedestrian way of thinking; not one of the above-mentioned trivialities has been performed in the longest time. It seems as if these fiends have, out of timidity and shame before the great magician Armide, had to hide themselves in their caves, where they may remain hidden for as long as possible, until once again their crude, impetuous kin demand to be seen again. May the good gods preserve this understanding in our directorship, especially as our orchestra is now taking at least the first visible steps on a new path, along which the friends of true taste can wish them luck. May this same director, our worthy Weber, continue, true to his plan, also to grant us the fortune of enjoying Mozart's remaining works as a counterpart, as well

*The understanding reader will see for himself that, in assembling these works and especially in mentioning this masterpiece of the divine muse [i.e. *Così fan tutte*], no blame should fall on these artists. Such a judgment in the literal sense of the words of a fictional author can offend no reasonable man or composer any more than can Werther's wayward judgments against the most beloved and honourable poets of our times. – Editor's note.



getreu seinem Plane, fortfahren, den Gluck uns auch in seinen übrigen Werken, so wie auch die übrigen Heroen der Kunst, vorzüglich einen Piccini, als Gegenstück genießen zu lassen. Herrn Seidel wünschen wir recht bald wieder dirigiren zu sehen bei Titus, Bellmonte, Figaro, und vor allen Dingen recht bald bei *Così fan tutte* und Don Juan.

BmZ 1/76 (1805) 301–302.

‘Vermischte Nachrichten’. / Berlin den 17ten Sept.

– Ich möchte sagen, mit Armidens Erscheinung sei eine neue Epoche (in Betreff der Singspiele) auf dem Nationaltheater begonnen. Funfzehnmahl wurde sie, bei vollem Hause, mit dankbarem Entzücken aufgenommen. Zwischen diesen Vorstellungen wurden einige kleinere Singspiele gegeben, allein der Einfluß, den die Glucksche Musik bereits auf den Geschmack des Publikums sich erworben, machte daß sie weniger als sonst besucht und kälter aufgenommen wurden. Glucks *Iphigenie in Tauris*, Winters *Opferfest*, Mozarts *Zauberflöte*, *Don Juan*, *Bellmont und Constanze*, lauter auserwählte Musiken folgten aufeinander. Jetzt kehrte eine der schönsten Mozartschen Musiken zurück. Seit dreizehn Jahren hatte *Così fan tutte* unser Theater verlassen, weil sie keinen Beifall erhielt. Herrn Treischkens Umarbeitung (nicht des Sujets, sondern nur der Poesie) vermogte Herrn Seidel sie wieder aufs hiesige Theater zu bringen. Den 9ten d. wurde sie zum erstenmale bei vollem Hause gegeben, und mit dem regsten Beifall aufgenommen; am 16ten wurde sie wiederholt mit demselben Beifall, doch bei weniger gefülltem Hause, welches wahrscheinlich daher kam, daß das Publikum Mittags bereits ein anderes schönes Schauspiel gesehen. Herr Prof. Jungius unternahm nämlich an diesem Tage seine ihm rühmlichst gelungene Luftfahrt. *Mädchentreue* – so hat Herr Treischke die Oper benannt – ist kein Spektakelstück, das Sujet nichts weniger als interessant, so steht denn die schöne Mozartsche Musik allein im vollen Glanze da, weder Auge noch Verstand werden von Nebensachen, die so oft Hauptsachen sind, abgezogen, nur die Musik beschäftigt, unterhält uns, und zwar so angenehm, daß wir einmal gerne jener, – Haupt- oder Neben- [302] sachen, gleichviel! – entbehren. Die Oper ist keine Oper, aber ein vortreffliches Concert. Ein sehr vortheilhaft gewählter Künstlerverein gewährte einen Genuß, den man nicht alle Tage im Concertsalle findet. Madame Eunike, Dem. Willich und Maaß, beide erste als Liebhaberinnen, diese als ihr

as those of the other heroes of art, especially a Piccini. Indeed, we soon hope to see Herr Seidel direct *Titus*, *Bellmonte*, *Figaro* and, above all, *Così fan tutte* and *Don Juan*.

BmZ 1/76 (1805), 301–302.

From Miscellanies. / Berlin, 17 Sept.

I would like to say that, with the appearance of *Armidè*, a new epoch (in relation to the Singspiel) has begun at the National Theatre. It was performed fifteen times to a full house and with appreciative delight. Between these performances several lesser Singspiels were given, and yet the influence that Gluck’s music has now exerted over public taste has led to a drop in attendance for and a cooler reception towards these works. Gluck’s *Iphigenie in Tauris*, Winter’s *Opferfest*,⁵ Mozart’s *Zauberflöte*, *Don Juan*, *Bellmont und Constanze* – one thoroughly exceptional piece followed upon the other. Now, one of Mozart’s most beautiful pieces has returned. *Così fan tutte* left our theatre thirteen years ago for lack of interest. Maestro Seidel wanted to bring it back to the local theatre through Treitschke’s adaptation (which reworked only the poetry, not the plot). On the ninth the opera was given to a full house and received the liveliest applause; it was repeated on the sixteenth to the same applause, although to a less full house, probably because the public had already enjoyed another fine show that afternoon; namely, Professor Jungius undertook his famously successful balloon ride on the same day. *Mädchentreue* – Treitschke’s title for the opera – is no mere show piece. The tale is never less than interesting, because Mozart’s beautiful music stands alone in its full glory. Neither eye nor reason is drawn away by trivialities, which so many other operas make into main points. The music alone occupies us, entertains us, and indeed so agreeably that we gladly dispense with those main points or [302] trivialities – or whatever you want to call them! The opera is not an opera, but rather an outstanding concert piece. Indeed, a judiciously chosen orchestra afforded a pleasure not to be found on just any day in the concert hall. Mrs Eunike, Misses Willich and Maaß – the first two as the sisters, the last as the maidservant – Messrs Eunike and Ambrosch as the lovers, Mr Franz as Doktor Alfonso are both famous and esteemed for their talent. Under



Kammermädchen, Herr Eunike, Ambrosch als Liebhaber, Herr Franz, als Doktor Alphonso, sind durch ihre Talente so bekannt als geschätzt. Das Orchester zeigte, unter Herrn Seidels braver Direktion, daß es mit Mozartscher Musik vertraut ist; und so konnte es nicht fehlen, daß die so rühmlich ausgeführte Musik, wie sie es verdient, aufgenommen wurde.

.....

Auch auf das Publikum hat die zeitherige Wahl der Singspiele sehr erwünschten Einfluß, indem es nach und nach der armseligen Produkte vergißt, an größere Musiken gewöhnt, und dadurch der Geschmack verfeinert, veredelt wird. Bleibt es bei der jetzigen Stimmung, wandelt ihm nicht aufs neue ein Gelüst nach Nymphen und dergleichen losen Speisen an, läßt sich die Direktion nicht durch Launen und Einfälle dieses und jenes verleiten, das höhere Ziel die Kunst überhaupt, und insbesondere die vaterländische, eine Stufe um die andere höher zur Vollendung zu heben, aus den Augen zu lassen, so sehen wir einer herrlichen Folge ausgewählter wirklicher Kunstwerke entgegen. Verdient nicht auch in dieser Hinsicht Berlin derselben Auszeichnung vor andern großen Städten Deutschlands, die ihm in mehr als einer andern nicht abzusprechen ist?

Maestro Seidel's fine direction the orchestra showed that it is intimately familiar with Mozartean music, and so it could not fail that the music received the performance that it deserved.

[There follow two paragraphs discussing Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, which was performed on 13 September.]

The timely choice of Singspiels has also had the highly desired influence upon the public, which little by little forgets the impoverished works, grows accustomed to better music and thus attains a more refined, nobler taste. May it keep this present mood, may a desire for nymphs and similar empty games not overcome the public again; may the director not be seduced by caprices and vagaries of this or that type. May he always keep in sight the higher and especially the patriotic goal of art in general, which is to strive to move a step closer to another level of perfection, so that we can expect a remarkable succession of first-rate, genuine works of art. From this perspective, does not Berlin also deserve the same distinction as Germany's other great cities, which is not to be denied it more than any other city?

¹ The setting of a remote wood likely has its source in the Berlin production; neither Da Ponte's nor Treitschke's texts mention a wood, remote or otherwise. Also, Treitschke has the scene beginning with 'Secondate, aurette amiche' take place at night, whereas Da Ponte's takes place in the day. Cf. Guglielmo, 2.3: 'Che bella giornata'.

² This phrase actually comes from Doktor Alfonso, in Act 1 Scene 11 of Treitschke's adaptation.

³ See the Commentary, page 84, for the possible source of this quotation in Plato.

⁴ Phantasus, as Schlimbach's disclaimer confirms, is citing popular operas from the time. These include *Fanchon das Leyermädchen*, a Singspiel by Friedrich Heinrich Himmel with a text by August von Kotzebue; *Die Nymphe der Donau*, a 'romantisch-komisches Volksmärchen' with music by Ferdinand Kauer and a text by Hensler; and *Das Labyrinth, oder Der Kampf mit den Elementen*, a 'heroisch-komische Oper' by Peter Winter, with a text by Schikaneder. In a footnote in an earlier entry in the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, Reichardt identifies *Der Operschneider* as a 'niedrig-komisches Ballet' by Gürlich. 'Beantwortung einer Anfrage in der Berlinischen Zeitung die Operette *Fanchon* betreffend', *BmZ* 1/3 (1805), 12. For the dispute over the reception and quality of Himmel's *Fanchon*, see the Commentary, pages 78–79.

⁵ *Das unterbrochene Opferfest*, to a libretto by Franz Xaver Huber (Vienna, Kärntnertheater, 14 June 1796).