



geographical and historical contexts, such as Dorothea Link, John Rice and Martin Nedbal. And while he modestly refrains from citing his own significant body of work on this repertory and period – most recently *Performing Operas for Mozart: Impresarios, Singers and Troupes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) – *Cabals and Satires* offers another ‘overlay map’ of sorts. Woodfield began over ten years ago with meticulous source studies of the operas, their composers and librettists, moved on to their performers and troupes, and turns here to their ultimate audience member, Joseph. As Woodfield’s network of ‘operatic conversations’ unfolds, one might read between its own lines. It quietly reminds us that none of these perspectives or methodological inclinations need be mutually exclusive; on the contrary, like the best map overlays, in the hands of a master cartographer they are mutually illuminating.

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## EDITIONS

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JOHANN JOSEPH IGNAZ BRENTNER (1689–1742), ED. VÁCLAV KAPSA  
*INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC*

Prague: Academus Edition, 2017

pp. xxiv + 75, ISBN 978 8 088 08114 2

Johann Joseph Ignaz Brentner (1689–1742), or Jan Josef Ignác Brentner, as his name is traditionally written in Czech references, was born in the small town of Dobřany in western Bohemia, but appears to have spent most of his professional career living in the Malá Strana underneath Prague Castle along with many German-speaking craftsmen and merchants. For the most part, his music is found only in Central European sources, though copies of pieces from Brentner’s *Offertoria solenniora*, Op. 2 (Prague 1717), have been found in Bolivian archives. As noted by Václav Kapsa in the Preface, Brentner was among those composers whose target market was the religious institutions and schools in Bohemia. Also noted in the Preface is that Brentner’s instrumental output provides rare examples of Bohemian chamber music from the early eighteenth century.

The edition begins with the contents of his only published instrumental collection, the *Horæ pomeridianæ seu Concertus cammerales sex*, Op. 4 (Old Prague, 1720; Afternoon Hours or Six Chamber Concertos), the first known instrumental music published in Prague. Only a single copy remains of the four instrumental parts (‘Hautbois vel Flauto traverso vel Violino’, ‘Violino’, ‘Alto Viola’ and ‘Violonczello’ (note the Czech-influenced spelling)). Kapsa argues persuasively in the Critical Notes that these parts are a complete set that never had a title-page or a separately figured continuo part. The full title information is given only at the beginning of the ‘Violonczello’ part; the title on the remaining three parts begins with ‘Concertus cammerales sex’. The printer’s information, ‘Vetero-Pragæ / In Magno Collegio Carolino, Typis Georgij Labaun’ (Old Prague, In the Great Carolinum College, Jiří Ondřej Laboun) appears only at the end of the oboe/flute/violin part. Each part also indicates it was for sale at the composer’s home in Malá Strana: ‘Micro-Pragæ apud authorem’.

As Kapsa suggests, the contents of Brentner’s collection were probably meant as recreational music for members of religious orders or their students. This is also indicated by the entry in an inventory from the Cistercian monastery at Osek, where the collection was listed in the section ‘Genialia sue Cantus recreativi’ (Genial Items or Recreational Songs). An appreciation for the quality of this music (and accuracy of this edition) is aided by



the complete recording by Collegium Marianum, directed by Jana Semerádová (Supraphon SU 3970-2, 2009). The music of these chamber concertos is not very difficult, but Brentner imaginatively combines aspects of the sonata, concerto and *concerto ripieno*. The musical style is partly indebted to Arcangelo Corelli, and the influence of Vivaldi is strong in many passages, though the ritornello form is missing. It is evident that Brentner conceived of these works as containing a prominent leading part (for oboe, flute or violin) and a string trio, though Kapsa provides some evidence from the part-writing that seems to indicate the need for an additional sixteen-foot bass instrument (which is added to all but one of the concertos on the recording). Some movements actually begin with just the oboe/flute/violin part, without accompaniment, which initiates a call-and-response pattern between the leading voice and the trio, a feature I have rarely encountered in other concertos. For example, the second movement (Allegro) from Concertus VI begins with a four-bar solo for the leading part with cello, which is then followed by a seven-bar response from the trio.

Brentner's music also evokes the style of traditional Bohemian music from this period. Though not labelled as such, Concertus IV refers to the Central European pastorella style. For example, the second movement, entitled 'Vigil nocturnus, Der Nachtwachter', begins with a paraphrase of a traditional melody associated with the night watchman, and the violin of the trio imitates the arpeggiated patterns of the alphorn found in many other pastorellas. In another example, the 'Capriccio' from Concertus V begins with five-bar phrases, perhaps another Bohemian characteristic.

In addition to the *Horæ pomeridianæ* this edition includes four works preserved in unique manuscripts. Found in the Vatican Library are two further *concerti da camera*, one for oboe and string trio and the other for oboe or recorder (two separate parts are provided in the source), violin and violoncello. Brentner's *Pastorella* for quartet, found in a manuscript now in Vienna, is characterized by Kapsa as the earliest instrumental pastorella. The edition concludes with the *Partita a 5* for viola d'amore, two oboes, horn ('Lituus') and 'basso', whose Dresden parts were copied by Johann Georg Pisendel some time between 1720 and 1725.

From the informative and well-documented Preface (printed in both Czech and English) to the clear presentation of the scores and the excellent critical commentary, this edition should be of use to both scholars and performers. The latter are served by the availability of the instrumental parts for all but the Partita online, and Pablo Kornfeld, who was one of two keyboard continuo players on this recording, edited and figured the cello part available with the on-line parts. Perusing this edition while listening to the recording was truly a recreation for my afternoon hours.

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REINHARD KEISER (1674–1739), ED. KOTA SATO, MAI KOSHIKAKEZAWA AND HANSJÖRG DRAUSCHKE  
*ALMIRA*

Beeskow: Ortus, 2018

pp. xxiii + 63, ISMN 979 0 502 34098 8

Lately we have been favoured by Hanjörg Drauschke of the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg with a number of critical editions of music by Reinhard Keiser, including the operas *Desiderius* (1709) and *Nebucadnezar* (1704), and three volumes of smaller secular works edited in collaboration with Thomas Ihlenfeldt. Now comes an edition of Keiser's opera *Almira*, produced by two students at Halle, Kota Sato and Mai Koshikakezawa, working under Drauschke's supervision. Although Keiser composed three distinct versions of *Almira*, none of them survives in anything like a performable state. Yet they amply deserve a modern