



With regard to the reception of Bach in Italy, new discoveries were also discussed by, among others, Matteo Messori (Conservatorio Statale di Musica Niccolò Paganini, Genoa, and Conservatorio Gaetano Donizetti di Bergamo), who brought evidence of early interest in Bach in central Italy, by figures ranging from Padre Martini to Filippo Maria Gherardeschi and Johann Paul Schulthesius; by Markéta Stedronská (Universität Wien), who discussed the reception of Bach and Palestrina in nineteenth-century Vienna; and by Fulvio Berti (Scuola di Teologia di Tortona), whose paper illuminated the role played by Francesco Lurani Cernuschi, a late nineteenth-century nobleman, in promoting the first performances of some of Bach's sacred works in Italy by translating their sung texts into Italian.

Eftychia Papanikolaou (Bowling Green State University) offered an interpretation of Gaspare Spontini's performance in Berlin of excerpts from Bach's Mass in B minor within the framework of nationalism and related issues, and Vasiliki Papadopoulou (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) analysed the interpretative views and approaches of Italian editors of Bach's violin works. A particularly interesting panel focusing on Bach in Italian cinema was presented by a research group of the Fondazione Levi (Venice), led by Roberto Calabretto. The role of Bach's music in the filmography of Pier Paolo Pasolini and Ermanno Olmi, among others, was contextualized within the larger history of the reception of Bach by international directors. Other sessions that attracted the audience's attention were those on Bach's role in both musical and general education in Italy; on Bach in Italian music of the 1960s (progressive rock and computer music) and 'Bach on air' (concerning the presentation of Bach's work on radio during the Fascist regime and in contemporary documentary films); and another on Bach and the organ tradition in Italy, with a particular focus on Cecilianism.

The conference's musicological events were complemented by many musical performances, both within the sessions (a particularly striking aspect was the high participation of scholar-performers, who presented numerous lecture-recitals) and as evening concerts (with the participation of the Maghini Consort, Accademia del Santo Spirito and Trio Quodlibet, as well as a jazz ensemble led by Giovanni Petrella and the Early Music Youth Orchestra conducted by Alberto Sanna).

The overall picture emerging from the conference was that of a hitherto understudied but very promising field of research, in regard to both Bach's reception of Italy and Italy's reception of Bach. The general enthusiasm with which presenters and audience alike greeted this online event will encourage the activity of the still young association which organized it, namely JSBach.it. We are already working on the publication of a volume that reflects critically on the conference, and we hope that the positive signals observed during this event will translate into a renewed interest in research into 'Bach and Italy'.

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BEETHOVEN THE EUROPEAN
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This conference, presented online by the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini in Lucca and the journal *Ad Parnassum*, was an exciting and enriching event that set a high benchmark for Beethoven research in its marking of a very special moment: the composer's two hundred and fiftieth birthday. Whilst Covid



prevented so many of the year's promised commemorative activities, one positive outcome was the delay of the original 'live' Lucca event scheduled for March and its transformation into an online event in Beethoven's birth month.

The conference theme was unique in its focus on the fascinating turning-point between the particular and the universal: how Beethoven's creative inspiration, rooted in his historical and geopolitical contexts, achieved widely relevant, universal and timeless significance. It was also timely, coinciding with the reconfiguring of Europe and the power shifts in the USA, as well as the global political changes caused by both. Such a backdrop of world events presented an opportune moment to raise issues of a more transhistorical nature, such as the impact of notions of Europe on the creative spirit, notably of Beethoven and his contemporaries. What were the identities and social-political and technological forces at work that gave rise to the material and intellectual conditions for Beethoven's music and its performers and audiences? How was Beethoven's music adapted and adopted by the musical world beyond eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, which by the twenty-first century comprises a global community connected by the internet and more fluid cross-cultural and transnational relationships?

For the chance to consider those questions, the three-day event – which, for full disclosure, I helped to conceive and organize as a member of the programme committee – attracted a heady gathering of both young and experienced musical scholars from around the globe (Europe, Scandinavia, the USA, Latin America, Australia and Japan), presenting a wonderfully wide range of topics, including Beethoven reception within Europe and beyond, questions of political meanings and messages, broader influences of Beethoven in myth and heritage, and radical analytical approaches to his music. While this report does not mention every paper, I aim to highlight some of the main themes discussed (which I hope will be published in the future). Amongst the highlights were the presentations by two distinguished keynote speakers: Barry Cooper (University of Manchester) and William Kinderman (University of California Los Angeles).

Barry Cooper's address, 'Performing Beethoven's Vocal Music in the 21st Century', covered reception and interpretation, addressing the question of why only a fraction of Beethoven's considerable vocal output is regularly performed, and identifying reasons for this. For instance, in the case of *Die Ruinen von Athen* and *König Stephan* – which Cooper considers to be instances of singspiel rather than 'incidental music' on account of their sung-spoken ratio of 3:1 – the topics are either too 'occasional' or politically sensitive. Another neglected work is *Christus am Ölberge*, which has languished owing to criticism such as Lewis Lockwood's reference to its 'inconsistent quality' and 'routine recitatives' (*Beethoven: The Music and the Life* (New York: Norton, 2003), 269), and the impression given by Anton Schindler that it was abandoned after only one performance. Cooper made a strong case for its quality, stressing the vivid character portrayals it contains. He underlined that it had been performed several times initially, gained popularity during the nineteenth century and was praised by Beethoven's biographer Alexander Wheelock Thayer.

Cooper systematically discussed many aspects of interpretation of the vocal music, including ornamentation, pedalling, tempo and use of vibrato, and linguistic issues relating to text setting and translation (Beethoven set texts in Danish and Spanish, alongside the languages in which he more commonly worked). Emphasizing how the large output of folksong arrangements was a labour of love, rather than (as is often thought) merely a means of generating income, he concluded by citing a world-premiere performance given in 2014 of Beethoven's 'Lament for Rowan Roe O'Neill', WoO 158b. This was originally published without a text, but Irish baritone and scholar Tomás Ó Súilleabháin (1919–2012) added words (in English) by the Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779–1852). (Edited by his daughter Margaret O'Sullivan, this was part of his project 'Beethoven's Irish Songs Revisited', which sought to reconstruct those folksongs for which George Thomson never got around to supplying texts.)

In his stimulating address, 'Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as a Disputed Symbol of Community: From Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* to the Brexiteers of 2019', William Kinderman cast a wide intellectual net, developing themes from the final chapter of his most recent book, *Beethoven: A Political Artist in Revolutionary Times* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020). Explicating this iconic work with fresh relevance, Kinderman fused politics, history and literature with musicological sketch study and analysis to



reveal a deep connection of past and present. His pre-recorded presentation featured his own performed examples of themes from sketchbooks in a section on genesis, and video footage of recent and contemporary performances of the 'Ode to Joy' in his survey of reception. Kinderman's thrust was to explore how the Ninth Symphony became a positive cultural symbol, Schiller's 'effigy of the ideal', starting with an interpretation of the String Quartet in A minor, Op. 132, as a 'shadow companion work'. Giving illustrations from the De Roda sketchbook, Kinderman explained how material intended as an instrumental finale to the symphony became instead the finale to the quartet. The quartet's progress, from joyful march through 'despairing recitative' to a personal, tragic finale, inverts the path of the 'Ode to Joy' from personal meditation (in the third movement and the finale's recitative) to a communal affirmation of joy. That inversional connection between the works is reflected in the augmented inversion of the 'Ode to Joy' melody in the chorale-like theme of the 'Heiliger Dankesang'.

After this ingenious analysis we were then taken on a whirlwind video tour of performances of the 'Ode to Joy' in political events spanning almost a century, showing how – despite the movement's misappropriation by the Nazi regime and racist Rhodesia, and the way it is associated with aggression in Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* – Schiller's text was reinterpreted to suit each different historical context, whilst remaining 'an untainted symbol' of affirmation and resistance. The examples of performances included those given by Germans held in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp in June 1918, the annual December ritual of massed choirs and orchestras in Japan, the Occupy Wall Street protests in New York in 2011, the struggle of Chilean opponents of Pinochet, the playing of cassette recordings with makeshift amplification by students protesting against martial law in China at Tiananmen Square in 1989, right up to Tan Dun's 2021 work *Sound Pagoda* – composed to be performed alongside the 'Ode to Joy' – for a concert dedicated to Wuhan's Covid victims.

Reception history and political meanings formed the focus of papers in the first two days. Italian reception was explored by Benedetta Saggiotti (independent scholar, Turin) in her depiction of the Turin Exposition of 1884, whilst Luigi Bellofatto (independent scholar, Milan), a major collector of Beethoveniana, surveyed his early Italian editions of Beethoven's music. These included examples of arrangements for ballets based on Beethoven by Salvatore Viganò, such as the 1813 piano arrangement from *Il Prometeo* (Viganò's 1813 ballet drawing on extracts from *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*, Op. 43, which he had choreographed for Beethoven in Vienna in 1801). Bellofatto also discussed arrangements of Viganò ballets, including *La Vendetta di Venere* (1817) and *La Vestale* (1818), which incorporated music from *Egmont*, Op. 84. We were shown the first full work of Beethoven's published in Italy, the Piano Sonata Op. 90, printed in January 1817 by Giuseppe Lorenzi in Florence. The first full Beethoven work published by Ricordi was the Sonata in A major Op. 101, albeit in a violin-and-piano arrangement, which appeared in 1821. Bellofatto explained that the edition was a political gesture, intended as a kind of homage to the pianist Dorothea von Ertmann, the sonata's dedicatee, who was in Milan because her husband (Imperial Captain Stephan von Ertmann) was posted there with the Austrian infantry in 1824. Bellofatto speculated that the arrangement was made by Ertmann in collaboration with a Milanese violinist, Alessandro Rolla.

One significant point to emerge from examination of music publishers' catalogues was that Beethoven was apparently not a popular composer in Italy until the 1860s. Lorenzi's catalogue of 1821 listed some six hundred items, of which only twenty-two were by Beethoven; Ricordi's catalogue of 1828 listed eleven out of nearly four thousand. One exception, however, was *Christus am Ölberge*: Ricordi published the first foreign edition in 1824, as *Christo sull' Oliveto*, and Bellofatto showed the audience the title-page of a copy in his collection. He also showed us an 1826 Italian libretto of this work – in fact, the only libretto of the work to be published during Beethoven's lifetime – which was produced for a concert in Bergamo conducted by Giovanni Simone Mayr. The oratorio was subsequently widely performed all over Italy for many decades. Bellofatto also showed two programmes for performances of the oratorio given on 7 April 1827, a few days after Beethoven's death.

The reception of Beethoven's music in Spain, which is less known within musicology, was considered in two contrasting papers. María Encina Cortizo and Ramón Sobrino (Universidad de Oviedo) noted that there



was hardly any tradition of performing the symphonies in Spain before the second half of the nineteenth century, and there was only sporadic exposure of Beethoven's piano variations and concertos. A comparison of three orchestras' repertoires for the period showed that Symphonies 6–8 began to be introduced in the 1860s (the seventh was described as 'the king of symphonies'), but the Ninth Symphony was yet to achieve any success, shown by a press report of the public feeling cold and leaving before the finale. The 'Eroica' was popularized only in the 1880s (by the conductor-composer Thomas Breton), and Beethoven's symphonies on the whole gained wider acceptance with their direction in Spain by international conductors such as Hermann Levi in the 1890s. José-Ignacio Suárez (Universidad de Oviedo) explored the case of Beethoven reception in a single Spanish town, León, and the role of its Philharmonic Society (formed in 1907) in this process.

Reception in France received the most extensive discussion, with four papers, two of which focused on the absorption of Beethoven's works into piano methods. An account by Chiara Sintoni (Università di Pavia/Cremona – Università di Bologna) of the evolution of these methods from the turn of the nineteenth century found increasing instances of Beethoven's music being used for both its artistic and its pedagogical value, citing works by Carl Czerny and Friedrich Kalkbrenner as well as by Louis Adam, whose 1828 edition of his *Méthode de piano* included the sonata Op. 2 No. 3 as an example of virtuosity. Frédéric de La Grandville (Université de Reims) expanded on Adam's *Méthode*, showing how Beethoven's technical challenges to pianists spurred efforts to create an official fingering to be used at the Paris Conservatoire. La Grandville, a historian of the Conservatoire, reminded us of the broader context of Beethoven's French connections. These included, for instance, Beethoven's encounter in 1798 with Jean Bernadotte and Rodolphe Kreutzer at the French embassy in Vienna, along with his meeting of many musicians who were connected with France and based in Vienna in the 1800s: Luigi Cherubini, Kalkbrenner and the pianist Marie Bigot (a pupil of Louis Adam at the Conservatoire).

La Grandville dispelled the myth that Beethoven was popular in France only after his death by detailing performances at the Conservatoire during the years 1807–1814, which included several symphonies and the ballet *Prometheus*; he discussed the mixed reviews the works received, which showed an evolution from initial shock to appreciation, and the important role of conductors such as François Habeneck, preceding the proliferation of Beethoven popularizers like Jules Padeloup, Édouard Colonne and Charles Lamoureux in the second half of the century. Habeneck also featured in the discussion of French press reception by Temina Cadi Sulumuna (Uniwersytet Muzyczny Fryderyka Chopina, Warsaw), who showed how there was no uniform evaluation. On the one hand critics used descriptors like 'bizarre', 'barbaric', 'difficult' and 'incomprehensible' (the Ninth Symphony in 1834), and on the other Beethoven was well received by audiences, who displayed a special predilection for arrangements, such as orchestral versions of the Septet, Op. 20, and string quartets. The contribution of arrangements to dissemination was the focus of an entertaining paper by David Hurwitz (independent scholar, New York), whose title, 'Beethoven's French Liturgical Organ Music – No, Really', hinted at the humour as well as the informative aspects of his paper. This was an introduction to what, I suspect, are little-known collections (Opp. 30–35) by Édouard Batiste (1820–1876), organist of the church of St Eustache and a professor at the Conservatoire (and, incidentally, also great-uncle to Léo Delibes), consisting of transcriptions of slow movements of Beethoven's symphonies as well as extracts from *Die Ruinen von Athen* and the 'Kreutzer' Sonata, Op. 47. Hurwitz argued that these works, which were dedicated to François-Joseph Fétis and responded to Fétis's critique of organ repertory as being too sensual and operatic, served to bring Beethoven to new audiences. Since St Eustache was situated near Les Halles, it attracted people from the busy marketplace who would not normally have attended elegant concert halls to hear music by Beethoven. As well as marking the assimilation of Beethoven's secular works into a sacred, even universal, context, the transcriptions represent valuable documents of later nineteenth-century interpretation, shown in Batiste's detailed registration, such as the use of organ tremolo to imitate the sound of massed strings and the use of different organ stops in dialogue to imitate orchestral effects.



Moving north, we arrived at reception in England, with a lucid contribution on the influence of Muzio Clementi on Beethoven's creativity by David Rowland (Open University). 'Further Light on Clementi's 1807 Contract with Beethoven' offered rich context about Clementi's visits to Vienna between 1806 and 1810. These trips included at least four meetings at which Clementi could have influenced Beethoven by explaining English taste, and such a connection is possibly reflected in the two-movement piano sonatas Opp. 78 and 79, which were clearly geared to the English market. Rowland zoomed in on fascinating details surrounding the oft-discussed contract, and why it resulted in many more works being published than originally listed. Rowland provided complex details about Clementi's occasional practice of forgoing registration at Stationers' Hall to save money, and explored why the string quartets Op. 59 as well as Op. 61 and Op. 61a (the Violin Concerto and its piano version) – all contracted together in 1807 – were published at different times, Op. 61 and Op. 61a together with a clutch of works requested later in 1810. Rowland also challenged the notion that Clementi's publication of Op. 59 was based on the Viennese first edition, preferring to explain it as being based on Beethoven's own copy, which he gave personally to Clementi.

The Violin Concerto featured in two later papers. Marica Filomena Coppola (Università di Roma La Sapienza) delved into its French Revolutionary musical influences, including those of François-Joseph Gossec, interpreting gestures and syntax in the work as articulating a larger narrative. A thought-provoking paper by Ned Kellenberger (Illinois College) argued that editors and scholars need to draw from a number of autograph and early sources to create a comprehensive reading of the violin part, taking into account divergences between the first edition (which was based on a source written by Beethoven's copyist) and earlier versions in the composer's hand. He illustrated how Beethoven excised a heroic solo passage, which makes climactic use of a wide range, just before the recapitulation, which was not restored in later versions. Kellenberger suggested the erasure was to avoid technical difficulties in the 1806 premiere, but that the passage deserved to be reinstated on account of its exciting effect. Drawing on primary sources, new critical approaches and recordings from 1950 to 2016 that make use of the 1806 and 1807 versions (the latter contracted by Clementi), Kellenberger gave a performer's perspective on the need to retain such passages.

As a counter to the Europe-focused explorations of reception, a panel entitled 'Beyond European Boundaries: America and Asia' provided some insight into aspects of Beethoven's purported universalism. Mai Koshikakezawa (Tokyo University of the Arts) surveyed Beethoven reception in Japan from the era of the Meiji Restoration to the second half of the twentieth century, covering topics such as the premiere of the 'Moonlight' Sonata in 1896 and the popularity of the 'blind girl' legend in Japan; performances and publications including the Japanese translation of a biography of Beethoven by Romain Rolland; the incorporation of Czerny and Beethoven into exam syllabuses from the 1890s onwards; the period of the first piano makers (Nippon Gakki, later Yamaha); and the influx of German music teachers. Concepts of universality and Beethoven's role as a cultural icon infused two papers on the Americas. First, Alison Minkus (independent scholar, Edmonton) gave an account of the New York Philharmonic's performances of Beethoven from an inaugural programme in 1842 to the end of the century. During this time Beethoven fuelled the orchestra's increasingly entrepreneurial spirit, while the orchestra brought the composer's music to audiences in New York and beyond. Marita Fornaro Bordolli (Universidad de la República, Uruguay) highlighted the popularity of Erich Kleiber's acclaimed cycle of Beethoven symphonies given in 1939 in Montevideo, and its repetition by the same radio orchestra in 2019, yet noted the political problems raised by the valorization of European over local culture.

Papers on the second day of the conference were devoted to politics and historical meaning. David B. Dennis (Loyola University Chicago) took the centenary of Beethoven's death in 1927 as a cue to explore how meaning has been appropriated by many different factions 'from Communism to Fascism', and concluded with the observation that we are fortunate to be celebrating the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary at a time of relative European cooperation, when – in contrast to earlier, more faction-driven periods which contested Beethoven's image – the idea of exploring a singular identity of Beethoven as 'European' is widely



accepted. Especially polemical, and equally persuasive, was the paper by Peter Tregear and Michael Christoforidis (University of Melbourne), who argued for a more historically informed reading of the Ninth Symphony that reflects the specific contemporary Viennese political context of protest against Klemens von Metternich's censorship and the suppression of liberal movements in Spain and Greece in the 1820s. Their account also threw light on the political contexts of the 1814 version of *Fidelio*, and Beethoven's settings of *König Stephan* and *Die Ruinen von Athen*, based on plays by August von Kotzebue, whose 1819 assassination by radical liberal students resulted in the increasing censorship enforced by Metternich's Carlsbad decrees. They argued that Beethoven was politically aware, as evidenced through conversation books, showing enthusiasm for Rafael del Riego's Uprising of Cádiz, leading to the *Trienio liberal*, which the Congress of Verona in 1822 would curtail by restoring the Spanish monarch, Ferdinand VII. According to the speakers, the 1822 revival of *Fidelio* in Vienna conveyed a subversive message, even more so in the 1823 Dresden production under Carl Maria von Weber, which included nine extra bars interpolated by Beethoven for Don Fernando's recitative 'Hinweg mit diesem Boesewicht!' ('Away with the villain'). Awareness of Greek–Ottoman conflicts, reflected in veiled allusions to classical Greek themes in the 1812 *Die Ruinen von Athen*, was evident in its 1822 Viennese recasting as *Die Weihe des Hauses* for the inauguration of the neo-classical Josefstadt theatre.

The radical revised reading of the finale of the Ninth Symphony entailed hearing the Turkish march as a symbol of Ottoman oppression, the fugato echoing a type of 'battle' music as essayed earlier in 'Wellington's Victory', depicting the fight in the early 1820s of Ottoman and Austrian Metternichian despotism against European liberals, restoring the Elysium to Greece. If such readings risk reifying associative meanings, the paper highlighted the rich possibilities of taking a closer historical view of the work, yet the possibility of deriving different conclusions. An almost opposite perspective coloured a paper on 'Patriotism and Islam' in *König Stephan* and *Die Ruinen von Athen* by Sanna Iitti (independent scholar, Helsinki), who explored how Beethoven characterized the Turks as 'crude conquerors' whilst emphasizing the Hungarians' loyalty to Austria. Iitti gave illustrations of some musical extracts from the two works, concluding by highlighting 'Islam's perilousness'. She pointed out elements of musical exoticism, a representational approach which is also evident in other compositions by Beethoven. One such work is the Clarinet Trio, Op. 11, which was the focus of a paper by Arabella Pare (Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe). The third movement's theme, which is followed by nine variations, is borrowed from an Italian aria from the opera *L'amor marinaro, ossia il corsaro* by Joseph Weigl, whose roots were Hungarian. Pare traced the melody's transnational adaptation, showing an awareness of the Hungarian *verbunkos* style, apparent in ornamentation, accentuation and cadential gestures. Her suggestion that the solo-piano variation was an evocation of the cimbalom was especially persuasive, and she offered evidence of the combination of different national elements within a symbiotic cosmopolitan style.

Whether allusions to classical Greece were politically inspired, it is clear that Beethoven's relation to Latin texts was an important facet of his creative inspiration, and a new angle was opened by Susan Cooper (independent scholar, Manchester) in her richly illustrated paper on the influence of Horace. Upholding Schindler's sometimes questioned claim that Beethoven could recite by heart sections of Horace's *Ars poetica*, the paper evidenced the great extent to which Horace, both in original Latin and in Karl Wilhelm Ramler's German translations, penetrated into Beethoven's reading, letter writing (including to the Brentanos, his nephew Karl and Marie Bigot) and conversation books. How Horace's influence may be detected in Beethoven's oeuvre remains tantalizingly open to further investigation.

It was salutary to have some panels devoted to close readings of Beethoven's works, with novel analytical approaches. My own paper (Malcolm Miller, Open University) explored Beethoven's use of registral extremes as a significant structural parameter in the context of the European instruments of his time, and as an expression of Beethoven's 'Blick nach oben' (upward gaze), a narrative of the spiritual and earthly expressed in a famous 1823 letter to Karl Friedrich Zelter regarding the *Missa solemnis*. Especially engaging as an analytical approach was the paper by Eftychia Papanikolaou (Bowling Green State University) about choreographing Beethoven, focused on the work of Uwe Scholz, who set the Seventh Symphony for the Stuttgart Ballet in



1991. Scholz's visual interpretations of structure, through movement and shape – as in the fugato in the first-movement development, with male and female dancers separating into interlocking groups – led one to ask whether such choreography resembles arrangement or analysis.

Brian Gaona (independent scholar, Naperville, Illinois) considered the esoteric background to Op. 131, an analysis which brought in a variety of symbolic systems including Masonic numerology and Middle Eastern thought, and suggested that the quartet offers a musical allegory of the 'music of the spheres', bringing the human face to face with the divine. He gave an illuminating account of the significance of various numerical factors (numbers of works, movements, accidentals, pitches) as well as of high-level tonal and motivic integration, while also considering the extent to which such phenomena were deliberate, unconscious or coincidental. The paper by Stefano Mengozzi (University of Michigan) on the 'Super Sensuous in the "Pathétique" Sonata' searched beneath the surface in similar ways, exploring how a Schillerian aesthetics expressed in 'On the Pathetic' sheds light on the sonata as a 'gradual affirmation of moral freedom' by which reason triumphs over the sensuous. Mengozzi explored this issue in the work by tracing hidden links between archetypal tetrachordal patterns.

One of the silver linings of the dark Covid cloud has been the proliferation of online conferences and seminar series, which offers advantages as well as disadvantages. Scheduling any conference programme entails careful, considerate handling, and an online conference even more so. Some online events run for only a few hours each day, but here the schedule was virtually identical to an in-person meeting: it ran from 9 a. m. to 7 p. m. (Italian time) with a generous, Mediterranean-style two-hour break for lunch as well as numerous coffee breaks. Although one could not congregate in sunny Tuscan lounges or restaurants to network and discuss research, we could nevertheless pour our own coffee and speak and meet online; moreover, access and international participation was made easier without the problems of travel and accommodation. Speakers based in North America presented in their morning (European afternoon), and those from Australia and Japan late at night (European midday). Even though some delegates had to be awake in the early hours to hear all presentations, the advantage was to heighten continuity and intensity so as to engender as immersive an experience as one would have at a live event.

In that last sense one could pick up interesting connections across sessions, as for instance the recurrent mention of two of Beethoven's neglected works, *Die Ruinen von Athen* and *König Stephan*, hinting at their significance in the context of Beethoven's Europe. There was much free and open discussion, nurtured perhaps by the fact that the proceedings were not being recorded (thus avoiding the possibility of their being posted online for an indefinite period). Discussion took place by way of the now-familiar format of the 'chat-box' directed to the chair, or to 'everyone', raising hands or 'unmuting'; these discussions were especially lively and fruitful. Thankfully we suffered no 'zoom bombings', as the links were shared privately, and in only a couple of cases were there any minor interferences owing to weak internet connections; and whilst it was sensible for a couple of papers to be offered in a precautionary pre-recorded format, with the speakers present for the live online discussion, the vast majority were presented live. Powerpoint presentations were especially effective and often contained embedded sound and video examples, as for instance the eye-opening paper about dance choreography of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, where we could appreciate the staging up close. And live performance is also effective, as demonstrated in the final paper of the programme: Peng Du (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) gave a piano lecture-recital on the topic of humour in the Variations on 'La Stessa, la Stessissima', WoO 73, based on Antonio Salieri's *Falstaff*, highlighting the way the cadenzas could be seen to portray aspects of the characters from Shakespeare's comedy. This rounded off the conference with a virtuoso flourish.

For the smooth organization of this noteworthy event much credit is due to the team of the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini in Lucca, especially Fulvia Morabito, Roberto Illiano and Massimiliano Sala, who have hosted a remarkable number of conference events on a wide range of themes over the last few years, both in person and online. The beautifully produced volumes that emanate from such events, published by



Brepols, have stimulated much new research. One hopes the rich fruits of research presented in 'Beethoven the European' may similarly become available for a wide audience in their series in the near future.

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