



the printed libretto. The order of the numbers as found in the manuscript and libretto does not agree entirely, and some speculation is needed to match titles in *Country Dances* to the descriptions in Motteux's text. Burden handles these problems convincingly, and clear editorial comments and a useful table offer a transparent account of his method. Only in relation to the 'March' for the twelve grenadiers was I left uncertain about Burden's choice. This is the dance in Bray's collection least clearly identifiable as belonging to *Europe's Revels*. Presented in B flat major in *Country Dances*, Burden transposes it up a major third so as better to fit the tonal scheme of the work, but this results in an uncharacteristically high-lying melody line. As he does for all of the two-part dances, Burden supplies two inner parts, but here also suggests, following the cue for 'haut-bois' in the libretto, that an oboe doubles the melody line, and he adds an editorial kettledrum part. It seems possible to me that the grenadiers may in fact have performed their exercises to the accompaniment of a military oboe band, a number of which were attached to English regiments at this time.

As a preface to the musical text, Burden provides an edition of the lyrics and spoken texts, thoroughly and helpfully glossed. In this section, as in the excellent Introduction, those elements of the work that may be obscure to modern users are explained clearly. The edition also includes six well-produced plates. That of the song sheet featuring an engraving of a performer presenting his 'raree show' – it may, in fact, represent that of the original production – is especially welcome in terms of understanding the context and performance of the Savoyard's song.

In musical terms *Europe's Revels* is an uneven work. It is easy to imagine that in its original performances any limitations in the music were more than compensated for by the dancing and the colourful interpretations of the songs, but a full performance of the work today would be problematic for modern sensibilities. Nevertheless, the first song for the 'Lady, Messenger of Peace', 'Peace tunes the world', shows what Eccles could do at his best, and would be a valuable addition to the concert repertory from the period. Just as significant is the contribution the edition makes to our understanding of a noteworthy cultural response to the Peace of Ryswick. In this regard it is especially timely as an example of an attempt to represent England's ever-changing relationship to Europe, a project that remains as contentious now as it was in 1697.

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JOHANN JOSEPH RÖSLER (1771–1812), ED. ALENA HÖNIGOVÁ
 CONCERTO FOR PIANOFORTE AND ORCHESTRA NO. 2 IN E-FLAT MAJOR
 Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2018
 pp. x + 105, ISMN 979 0 260 10860 8

Manuscript No. 8040 in the archive of the Conservatoire Library in Prague is a clean and boldly scribed score of a *Concerto per il Piano Forte* in E flat major, dated June 1803. The confidence in its pen strokes chimes well with the characterful music its scribe committed to paper. There is an expansiveness of calligraphic gesture from time to time (for instance, as triplet-quaver arpeggios stride forth in the first violins just a few bars into the opening Allegro) that represents visually music of fine craftsmanship and weighty symphonic purpose, filled with distinctive ideas that ebb and flow in fine proportion: nothing outstaying its welcome, nor intruding mercurially, never to appear again. Those ideas are imaginatively developed too, broadly outlining tried and tested tonal strategies, and are sometimes surprisingly backlit with exotic chromatic colouring (diligently considered and expertly executed in orchestration). That confidence of craftsmanship extends also to the quality of the piano writing: this is a concerto whose virtuosic and declamatory language is fitted specifically



to the civic concert hall rather than the genteel private chamber – a three-movement concerto on a grand scale.

You can actually find this manuscript easily for yourself: it is available on open access on IMSLP, along with other works by the same composer. But it is only recently that the work (which lacks a title-page and has no ascription) has been securely allocated to Johann Joseph Rösler (1771–1812). The secure connection to Rösler was established by Alena Hönigová, whose edition of the concerto is under review here; there is also now a recording of the work with Hönigová as soloist, and with the Orchester Eisenberg, directed by Jiří Sycha (Koramant Records KR1003, 2018). Rösler left a handwritten thematic catalogue of his compositions dating from 1796–1809 ('Repertorio di tutte le mie Composizioni incominciando dall' Anno 1796 Parte 1^{mo}'), now owned by the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna (shelfmark 1248/34). It includes the incipit of the characterful E flat Concerto found in manuscript 8040, a work long thought to be lost (Rösler's Piano Concerto No. 1 in D major has been known since its discovery by Guido Adler in 1888).

Rösler's musical output was extensive, but not all of it is known to survive. According to the *Repertorio* it included nine operas (in Italian and German), melodramas, musical accompaniments to pantomimes, some thirty musical interludes for works by other composers and some eighty vocal compositions (among them masses, motets, cantatas and a host of arias for solo, duet, trio and quartet). In the latter category is a *Cantate auf Mozarts Tod* (1798), which is perhaps his best-known composition. Some of the operatic and theatrical works were performed extensively in Prague and in Vienna, where he spent the last decade of his life working at the Court Theatre and for the Countess Lobkowitz. His instrumental output was also apparently broad, comprising over four dozen works for solo keyboard (Rösler was a virtuoso pianist), as well as orchestral music and chamber music.

Rösler was largely self-taught as a composer, having received basic musical instruction from his father. In the time-honoured way, he evidently learned his craft by writing out works by esteemed masters such as Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach and his – at that time – less celebrated father, Johann Sebastian, and through his fingers, absorbing musical patterns at the keyboard. Stylistically, his music lies between Mozart and Beethoven (whose idiom the E flat Concerto resembles); indeed, the manuscript of the piano part from the D major work that Adler discovered in 1888 names Beethoven, which led Breitkopf to include the work in their complete Beethoven edition before Hans Engel unearthed the true composer in 1925. Rösler's *Cantate auf Mozarts Tod*, unsurprisingly, leans more in the direction of Mozart, and it is possible that he became acquainted with Mozart's style through some occasional lessons with František Xaver Dušek.

The E flat major Piano Concerto is scored for strings, a single flute, pairs of oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets and timpani. Its expansive first movement (an Allegro preceded by a two-bar Adagio maestoso tutti) covers fifty pages of full score in Hönigová's edition. In addition to full-textured orchestral and solo piano writing (this is not a work for an amateur pianist), there are moments of finely weighted delicacy, especially for the solo piano and upper woodwinds, either in dialogue or with lightly scored offbeat chordal punctuations setting the piano's right-hand sextuplets in relief (bars 235–243). Rösler's frequently gymnastic passage-work in the solo part resembles that which may be expected in a late Mozart concerto, or in Beethoven's first two; perhaps it is not quite as inventive or unpredictable as theirs on all occasions, but it more than holds the attention of the listener, and is rewarding for the player too (the first movement has a fully notated cadenza). Charmingly decorous embellishment of a folk-like melody characterizes the Andantino, a movement which is once again illuminated by occasional dashes of woodwind colour that highlight structural turning-points with great skill. If this oasis of repose may be thought to approach the Mozartean, then the Allegretto finale returns once more to the world of Beethoven, incorporating several teasing chromatic twists – whether 'incidental' within arpeggiated patterns on a local scale, or of more serious structural import on the tonal scale – along with some judicious use of *sforzandi* to highlight off-beat gestures. All in all, Rösler's musical language confidently navigates the challenge of balancing wit and panache against the coherence of formal design. The concluding section (Allegro vivace) prefigures in its piano writing the final pages of Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto, Op. 37, running full pelt into its culminating *fortissimo* cadence.

The presentation of the score is uniformly excellent (playing through the solo part, I cannot remember encountering a single error); the text is clean and uncluttered and clear to read, and while page-turns are



generally always hazardous for editors of virtuoso piano works, these have been sensibly considered, minimizing the impossible. An Introduction in Czech, German and English sets the scene nicely for this important addition to the literature, and a concise and informative Critical Commentary is provided at the end. Bärenreiter has set the standard for urtext editions of repertory from Rösler's era, and we must be thankful to them and to Alena Hönigová for making such an enjoyable and well-crafted work available once more. Tantalizingly, Rösler's *Repertorio* lists a third piano concerto; let us hope that, one day, it too may be found and published.

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AGOSTINO STEFFANI (1654–1728), ED. WALTRAUT ANNA LACH
DIE OPERNEINAKTER LA LOTTA D'HERCOLE CON ACHELOO UND BACCANALI VON AGOSTINO STEFFANI MIT EINER EINFÜHRUNG ZUR FORM DES OPERNEINAKTERS IM ZEITGENÖSSISCHEN KONTEXT UND EINER HISTORISCH-KRITISCHEN EDITION VON BACCANALI
Vienna: Hollitzer, 2020
pp. 336, ISBN 978 3 990 12599 1

This volume contains a study of Steffani's two one-act operas, *La lotta d'Hercole con Acheloo* and *Baccanali*, and an edition of the latter. The authenticity of these works has occasionally been questioned, because, unlike his full-length operas for Hanover, they do not survive in autograph. Such doubts are dispelled by a glance at the librettos and scores. Contrasted in subject, mood and casting, they would make a wonderful three-hour double bill.

The first half of the publication discusses the drama and music of both works and relates them to Steffani's full-length Hanover operas and to one-act opera in general. Synopses of both pieces are followed by an account of the sources of the librettos and their historical background. *La lotta* was first performed in the summer of 1689, probably during the visit to Hanover of the English diplomat William Dutton Colt. Dorothea Schröder saw Hercules' contest with Achelöus for the hand of Dejanira as an allegory of the rivalry between Ernst August of Hanover and Anton Ulrich of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel for the elevation of his duchy to an electorate. Lach espouses this interpretation and proposes that *La lotta* was the unidentified 'pastorale' of which, as Riva informed Steffani in 1721, a performance for George I was organized in London by Bononcini, with Senesino and Berselli in the cast. *Baccanali* was the second of the two Steffani operas first presented at Hanover during carnival in 1695. Superficially a light-hearted glance at the joys and sufferings of nymphs and shepherds, it begins with a prologue-like scene for the world-weary Atlas and ends with a finale in praise of Bacchus. Not being tied to a specific event, the work was easily adapted as *Doppia festa d'Himeneo* to celebrate a birthday and a wedding at Salztal in 1718 and further revised as *La festa di Minerva* for a name day at Wolfenbüttel in the following year. The relationships between these works and *Baccanali* are thoroughly explored.

The discussion of the music takes both operas together, each kind of movement – overtures, dances, arias, recitative, ensembles – being treated in turn. Each work inhabits a narrow range of keys and possesses a tonal identity (maybe perceptible in a one-act piece), but description of C major as 'more steely' and D minor as 'dark' strikes a false note (69). Although both operas finish with dancing, *Baccanali* also includes four other ballets that are integral to the piece; the relation of this music to actual dancing is not considered. The distribution of ballet music in the manuscripts of Steffani's Hanover operas is shown by a table which, strangely, omits *La lotta* and *Baccanali* and refers to the sources not by library and shelfmark but by copyists (not yet discussed in the text). The author rightly mentions the influence of Lully on Steffani's orchestration and instrumental movements but not that of Charpentier on his vocal writing. The arias, which are diverse in