



new research that might otherwise be confined to non-English or subscription-only publications. There have so far been nine annual volumes of *Understanding Bach*, with the tenth due for publication in March 2015. Full articles go through a double peer-reviewed procedure, whereas articles in the Reports section and in the Young Scholars' Forum do not. All are heard as spoken papers at our Dialogue meeting or at the ICBM, and after consideration by the council and discussion with the authors, an invitation to submit an expanded or revised version of the paper is issued. Full articles are then forwarded to an anonymous reader. Although we do not have the resources to read and process uninvited papers, our review system has proved successful in attracting and producing many excellent articles of the highest scholarship. Yo Tomita and Ruth Tatlow are the current editors.

The Bach Network UK website is vitally important as the primary platform for *Understanding Bach*, as a means of keeping the network alive and growing via the secure online email sign-up and as a reference point for information about our activities. As we have no membership, we are dependent upon donations for all our basic expenditure. We would love to build a fund to enable research students to attend our meetings, and have recently introduced a 'Donate' button on our website to encourage gifts of any size. Those on our email list receive information about our activities two or three times each year. Our open Facebook page <www.facebook.com/BachNetworkUK> includes a variety of posts ranging from Bach discoveries to announcements of our activities. Many of the 276 individuals who have so far 'liked' the page use it as their main contact with BNUK.

New initiatives come and go, sometimes successful, sometimes not. Our latest exercise to facilitate collegiality among Bach scholars will happen immediately after the 2015 Dialogue meeting. Realizing that many delegates will be travelling to Madingley from far away, and will probably wish to use the time in England to study at the British Library or other London archives, we have reserved a block of reasonably priced self-catering rooms within short walking distance of the British Library. We hope that this will be attractive to many like-minded colleagues pursuing independent research and wishing to extend the time of cross-fertilization of ideas and plans. If you are interested, please contact Matt Laube at <laube.bnuk@gmail.com>.

Inevitably, ten years of activities create a trail that could, if we are not careful, foster expectations that gradually creep into our structures and limit our creative freedom. Personally, I hope that BNUK will remain non-hierarchical, and that in time new council members will continue to expand the vision for networking and to facilitate further communication and dissemination of ideas about Bach and his music. And one can always dream that our work as a whole will influence the direction of Bach studies, and perhaps even the direction of musicology, in the twenty-first century.



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FRANCESCO COTTICELLI (Seconda Università di Napoli) and PAOLOGIOVANNI MAIONE (Conservatorio di Musica di Avellino) write:

Over the last two decades digital resources have proved to be extremely useful even in the humanities. Apart from library catalogues and sophisticated databases, which enable any reader from anywhere in the world to search for items and often offer free access to rare books and prints – not to mention a huge project like Google books or the diffusion of e-books as an alternative to printed materials – websites and computer programs have become an essential part of the daily work of scholars, and they keep providing wonderful opportunities to collect, analyse and compare primary (and secondary) sources.

Gathering texts and organizing them according to their affinities constitutes perhaps the most interesting and fascinating use of the web in this field. Far beyond the boundaries of comprehensive virtual libraries, where old and new masterpieces are made available to a wide public, some websites reflect in both their



conception and their structure major scholarly issues and aim at raising questions and proposing solutions. They represent in many respects a new frontier in critical editions, as they document the transmission of an original 'theme' through its transformation and adaptations over years or centuries, trying to emphasize differences while urging comparisons and historical explanations.

Recently, Metastasio's *drammi per musica* have been presented by grouping under the 26 titles of his librettos the 141 editions that he promoted or authorized. We are referring to <www.progettometastasio.it>, available also on CD. This digital project was conceived along with the paper edition, which reflects more philologically conventional criteria and is obviously addressed to a different audience: Pietro Metastasio, *Drammi per musica*, ed. Anna Laura Bellina (with CD) (Venice: Marsilio), volume 1: *Il periodo italiano 1724–1730* (2002), volume 2: *Il regno di Carlo VI 1730–1740* (2003), volume 3: *L'età Teresiana 1740–1771* (2004). Another digital project, at <www.carlogoldoni.it>, contains Goldoni's *drammi per musica*, complementing the rich and thorough paper edition with an overview of their circulation in Europe. This website emphasizes the wealth of texts written by Goldoni that were set to music: since the mid-1990s the national critical edition of Goldoni's *opera omnia* has appeared in a series also published by Marsilio in Venice. Entire collections have been reproduced and made accessible through various forms of ad hoc software in order to encourage further investigations. It is not by chance that most of these resources are based upon theatrical materials: they seem to give practical application to many relevant theoretical problems concerning the relationship between philology and the performing arts, in which basic assumptions such as authorial intent or the *editio ne varietur* (the relevance of a unique, definite version as a reference text) are constantly defied by the unwritten rules of staging. As the editors of Metastasio's oeuvre declare, only by fully exploiting the electronic medium has it become possible to describe the uncontrollable dissemination of his texts: no book could ever have demonstrated how vital and fatally subject to change this repertoire was. Each variant has its own history, and for a theatre historian or music historian, this is all that matters.

It would always be advisable to consider how these digital resources accomplish their philological goals, whether they give up any attempt to identify a text as the most representative for a specific play and settle for a detailed *recensio*, or whether – as is the case for theatre – a detailed *recensio* is the only reliable accomplishment an editor can reasonably achieve in the first place. But the most intriguing feature of these new instruments is that they can give us an idea of theatrical and musical practice in the modern age (that is, before the copyright era) more clearly than any ponderous publication on this topic.

We took inspiration from these adventures and the related debates when in our capacity as advisors to the Centro di Musica Antica Pietà de' Turchini we decided to start the website <www.operabuffaturchini.it>. Since 1997 the Centro (now Fondazione) di Musica Antica has striven to rediscover and affirm the musicocultural heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with special reference to Naples and southern Italy. Along with the production of operas, concerts and master classes, it has regularly promoted and organized conferences as well as publishing books, scores and proceedings. (The German edition of the first volume of a series about the history of music and theatre in Naples was presented in Salzburg at the Whitsun festival in 2010; see Francesco Coticelli and Paologiovanni Maione, eds, *Storia della musica e dello spettacolo a Napoli*, volume 2: *Il Settecento* (Naples: Turchini, 2009) and *Musik und Theater in Neapel im 18. Jahrhundert* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2010).) Our site provides accurate and philologically reliable transcriptions of all the extant librettos from the seasons 1707–1750 – in other words, from the first establishment of the comic genre to its definitive national and international acknowledgment – with the aim of exploring a compact repertoire that still raises questions about its origins and its sudden, striking success. The emergence of the *commedeja pe' museca* in the public venues of Naples in the early eighteenth century actually represented the culmination of a long gestational period that had unfolded in palaces and private houses, mainly beyond public view, where the secret strivings of a multitude of practitioners for dramatic innovation were kept under wraps. From its inception, in fact, the *commedeja* was an invention conceived by the stage and for the stage, an ideal opportunity to carry out experiments without the obsession with rules or theory casting a shadow over practice. It occupied an entirely new space, one which avoided the dialectical opposition



between performances that expressed an ideological approach to the stage and those that were determined by consumption and show business. (For further information about the *commedeja* see Paologiovanni Maione, 'La scena napoletana e l'opera buffa (1707–1750)', in *Storia della musica e dello spettacolo a Napoli*, 139–205. On its high level of functionality for the stage see Franco Carmelo Greco, *Teatro napoletano del '700: intellettuali e città tra scrittura e pratica della scena* (Naples: Pironti, 1981); Greco, 'Ideologia e pratica della scena nel primo Settecento napoletano', in *Studi Pergolesiani / Pergolesi Studies* 1, ed. Francesco Degrada (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1986), 33–72; and Francesco Cotticelli and Paologiovanni Maione, *Onesto divertimento, ed allegria de' popoli: materiali per una storia dello spettacolo a Napoli nel primo Settecento* (Milan: Ricordi, 1996), 31–55 and 159–177. See too Maione's 'The "Catechism" of the *commedeja pe' mmuseca* in Early Eighteenth-Century Naples', in *Genre in Eighteenth-Century Music*, ed. Anthony R. DelDonna (Ann Arbor: Steglein, 2008), 3–35.)

In fact there were rules, and in all likelihood they derived from the techniques of improvised theatre, which continued to share with the *commedeja* the stages of both the Teatro de' Fiorentini and the Teatro Nuovo. The structure of the website immediately reveals a substantial part of this performing genre, the serial dimension of which reflects once more the typological schemes of professional theatre. It becomes possible to identify parts and roles, connect them with the careers of some interpreters and verify how they were adapted and transformed as the theatrical seasons went by. Needless to say, skilful musicians exerted their influence on the final products as well as on the way plots were ultimately handled. Although each libretto corresponds to a single event, only intertextual analyses disclose the hidden performing strategies followed by impresarios, singers and composers. Outstanding pieces such as Scarlatti's *Trionfo dell'onore* or Pergolesi's *Flaminio* can finally be seen through the lens of formulas, patterns or stock situations, all forming part of a long-lasting tradition.

These librettos are also relevant for the history of language. The controversy between Neapolitan and Tuscan had never faded throughout the seventeenth century, and the rise of the *commedeja pe' museca* as an alternative to opera seria seems to have been favoured by this background. In order to make the texts even more accessible to the public, we are planning to provide Italian translations of the Neapolitan originals, although a lexicon is being prepared to help readers orient themselves to the old-fashioned dialect. At the same time, these transcriptions are of the utmost importance for language historians and dialectologists, as they document a phase in the development of Neapolitan for which there is scarce evidence in contemporary sources.



CONFERENCES

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GENERATIONEN: GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN UND CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH: IMPULSE –
TRANSFORMATIONEN – KONTRASTE
MAGDEBURG, 17–18 MARCH 2014

This conference continued a series of meetings (biennial since 1994) dedicated to Telemann scholarship and held in Magdeburg, city of the composer's birth and home of the Zentrum für Telemann-Pflege und -Forschung. The theme of the conference linked it to a host of international events dedicated to Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach on the occasion of his three hundredth birthday. The close relationship of Telemann to the second oldest Bach son (Telemann was his godfather) provided ample reason to bring together leading authorities on these two composers and their musical cultures. Twenty-five presentations across two days reflected what has already been written about Emanuel Bach and Telemann, what is currently being learned and what topics might fruitfully be explored in future.