CrossMark

by Joseph Haydn? Would it be too much to wish that Fernández-Cortés had told us something about what the process of bringing a 256-year-old score to contemporary performance had revealed of what those galant conventions, so scrupulously observed, continue to do for us today, aesthetically, affectively, dramatically?

Probably, in fact, it is too much to wish this: the generic divide between scholarly editions, which still tend to subscribe to the idea of cultural Monumenta, and the criticism of performance, which still tends to be conceived as evanescent and beneath the scholarly radar, is still pretty profound everywhere. I mention my wish, then, not as a complaint about this edition, but in order to question the divide itself. It is a relic that we might well consider discarding, even as we preserve places like Aranjuez.

ELISABETH LE GUIN
<leguin@humnet.ucla.edu>

Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2015
doi:10.1017/S1478570615000111

JOHANN SAMUEL SCHROETER (C1752–1788), ED. EVAN CORTENS
SIX KEYBOARD CONCERTOS, OP. 3
Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era 92
Middleton: A-R Editions, 2013
pp. xvi + 180, ISBN 978 0 89579 772 8

Although frequently mentioned in commentaries on music in Georgian England, Johann Samuel Schroeter remains for most music lovers little more than a passing reference. His name seldom appears on concert programmes and only a small portion of his music has been published or recorded; indeed, were it not for his close association with Johann Christian Bach, Schroeter would long ago have faded unnoticed into the recesses of history. Yet the obscurity that the passage of time has imposed on Schroeter and his music seems unwarranted. As keyboardist, teacher and composer, Schroeter played a significant role in London's musical life in the 1770s and 1780s.

Schroeter came to London as a young man of twenty, already a practised performer. His arrival in the English capital was especially timely. Subscription concerts, initiated in 1765 under the joint direction of Bach and Carl Friedrich Abel, had become a successful enterprise. Those who could afford the entrance fee were treated to an evening of new and fashionable music performed in elegant settings by the city's foremost musicians. Schroeter made his London debut in a Bach–Abel concert in May 1772 and quickly became a favourite with London audiences. The celebrity Schroeter experienced in the concert hall further ensured his appeal as a music teacher, a situation enhanced by his appointment as music master to Queen Charlotte.

Within only a few years, this son of a regimental oboist had managed to establish himself in the highest musical and social circles of the city. Unfortunately, Schroeter's meteoric rise in popularity and his brilliant concert career were to fall victim to the very self-confidence that had supported his fame. Described in the journals of Mrs Papendiek, assistant to the queen, as 'fascinating, fawning, and suave' (x) we are left with the suggestion that our 'teacher for the belles' was what a later time might term a 'ladykiller'. This was to be his downfall. In 1784, at the peak of his career, Schroeter eloped to Scotland with one of his former students. The young bride's parents, distraught at the notion that their daughter had married a musician, threatened legal proceedings. A compromise was reached which provided the undesirable son-in-law with an annual allowance of £500 on the condition that he forsake his professional career. Schroeter agreed, and made his last public appearance in 1783. He died only five years later, at the age of thirty-six. Although brief, Schroeter's life was fascinating and eventful, affording us a glimpse into the musical world of eighteenth-century London. In today's video-dominated culture, it is surprising that his colourful career has yet to capture the attention of the entertainment industry.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478570615000111 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Decisive for Schroeter's recognition as a composer was his association with the London publisher William Napier. Napier's printing in 1774 of Schroeter's *Six Concertos for the Harpsichord, or Piano Forte*, Op. 3, set in motion a successful partnership that resulted in the publication of a nearly complete library of the composer's works. Apparently an astute businessman, Schroeter also arranged for his music to be printed and sold in the continental market by Le Menu et Boyer in Paris and Hummel in Berlin and Amsterdam.

The Op. 3 concertos gained popularity as both performance and teaching pieces. No less a critic than Mozart deemed Schroeter's concertos 'very beautiful' and recommended them to both his father and sister. Mozart even composed cadenzas for the first and second movements of Opp. 3 and 6 (K6 626aII N, O, F and G) and the first movement of Op. 4 (K6 626aII D). This is indeed high tribute from a composer who only rarely offered praise for the music of his contemporaries.

The title page of Napier's edition specifies 'Harpsichord, or Piano Forte' as the solo instrument. The English harpsichord was a large and costly instrument with a powerful sound. In 1766, Johann Zumpe introduced London to another option. His square piano (also referred to as fortepiano, pianoforte and simply piano) was compact and relatively inexpensive to produce, making it ideal for the amateur market that Schroeter targeted with his music. Its mechanism also allowed for increased dynamic nuance, which is illustrated by passages of Op. 3 involving rapid alternation of *forte* and *piano* (Op. 3 No. 5, Rondo, bars 82–85) and crescendos (Op. 3 No. 3, Allegro, bars 97–98). As editor Evan Cortens points out, 'given Schroeter's fame and renown on the piano, that instrument is certainly the most natural choice' (xii).

Cortens's edition of the Op. 3 concertos marks the first appearance of Schroeter's music in a critical edition. These are pleasant and unassuming works – less profound than agreeable. Their musical language is thoroughly up to date, with graceful melodies, translucent textures and symmetrical proportions that speak to the fashionable galant style popularized in London by Christian Bach. Indeed, it is likely that Schroeter modelled his pieces on Bach's Op. 7 concertos (wC55–60), published in 1770. The two sets share features of format, style and structure. Reminiscent of Bach's work is the younger composer's choice of both two- and three-movement cycles, his preference for fantasia-like display areas, the predominance of Alberti-bass figuration and the adoption of features of the sonata principle in his ritornello structures. However, upon close comparison, Schroeter's concertos emerge as less substantial than those of his mentor. This is especially apparent in his handling of line and texture. While his musical ideas are attractive and engaging, his skill in folding those thoughts into a continuous musical fabric is often limited, suffering from an overdependence on phrase repetition and sequence (Allegro movements from Op. 3 No. 5, bars 2–21 and Op. 3 No. 2, bars 51–59). While acknowledging its charm, the German music critic Carl Junker pronounced Schroeter's music 'transparent' and 'empty' (*Musikalischer und Künstler-Almanach auf das Jahr 1783* (Kosmopolis [Leipzig]: Schwickert, 1783), 56–57).

While Allegros and closing rondos capture the display character of these concertos, it is in the slow movements that we begin to appreciate what Schroeter's audiences found captivating in his music. Their graceful melodies, shaded with a delicate melancholy and encased in lacy embellishment, achieve a tender and effortless lyricism that at times approaches the sound of Mozart.

Cortens precedes his edited score with an informative Introduction, in which he reviews what is known about Schroeter's life, establishes the historical and musical context of the Op. 3 concertos and briefly describes their style and structure. His comments linking the concert life of eighteenth-century London with an emerging middle class are especially interesting. It is thus unfortunate that he did not continue to develop this theme, as it seems to have stylistic as well as sociological implications pertinent to the concerns of both performer and historian.

Lacking an autograph, Cortens bases his musical edition on Napier's print, 'with the Le Menu et Boyer print of 1775 also being consulted' (164). In a detailed Critical Report he describes his sources, explains his editorial methods and provides critical notes for each movement. Cortens's stated editorial philosophy 'to intervene as little as possible' (163) seems to have been applied with care and consistency. The result is an unencumbered rendering of the musical text that satisfies the requirements of both performance and scholarship.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478570615000111 Published online by Cambridge University Press

There is little to criticize in his editorial method or its application. As is evident in the facsimiles of pages from the Concerto Op. 1 No. 1 (plates 2–3), Napier's print is relatively free of dynamic and expressive markings, leaving the editor with the primary task of resolving issues of conflict and omission, especially with regard to articulations. A cursory comparison of the edited score alongside Napier's printed parts yielded only a few occasional lapses – mostly dynamic or articulation marks that have been omitted or misplaced.

Eighteenth-century concertos infrequently survive with cadenzas. We are therefore particularly fortunate to have a number of cadenzas for concertos in this set. In addition to the five by Mozart, eighteen others whose authorship remains anonymous have survived. Cortens attaches transcriptions of the entire group as an appendix and provides a helpful table identifying their appropriate placement. Mozart's cadenza for the first movement of Op. 3 No. 6 is singular within this group. No fermata signals its placement in the music, and it is written out in measured units. Rather than mere embellishment, this 'cadenza in tempo' offers an instructive lesson from Mozart in how Schroeter's figuration might be extended and further developed.

Schroeter was foremost a concert performer, but one who also composed music. In his world, the worthiness of his music was determined as much by its pedagogical value and commercial appeal as its artistic merit. But we can benefit from history's practical accomplishments as well as its great masterworks, and there is much in these concertos to recommend them to both performer and scholar. In addition to drawing our attention to music by a marginalized composer, Cortens's edition provides valuable insight into the concert life of late eighteenth-century London and the thin line that separated the musical world of the professional from that of the amateur.

STERLING E. MURRAY
<smurray@wcupa.edu>

RECORDINGS

Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2015
doi:10.1017/S1478570615000135

ANONYMOUS, PAULO CARLO DURANT (*FL. c*1745–1769), JOHANN ADOLF HASSE (1699–1783), JOSEPH HAYDN (ATTRIBUTED) (1732–1809), JAKOB FRIEDRICH KLEINKNECHT (1722–1794)
GRACEFUL DEGRADATION: THE LAST LUTE SONATAS
Christopher Wilke, thirteen-course lute
Self-issue, no catalogue number, 2013; one disc, 62 minutes

In his debut solo recording, lutenist Christopher Wilke presents a selection of four solo sonatas and a divertimento for the lute from the second half of the eighteenth century. Most of the compositions selected are manuscript lute intabulations of works for keyboard or other instruments from the period *c*1750–*c*1770, a welcome choice as similar recordings often focus on original solo music by renowned lutenists instead of lesser-known arrangements. The selection of works revolves around the idea of the fading art of practising the lute, as encapsulated in the subtitle of the recording: 'The Last Lute Sonatas'. While the narrative of demise is certainly alluring, it is also misleading, in part because most of these works were conceived for a different medium and thus reflect technical concerns distant from the lute. More importantly, other lute-type instruments such as the gallichon/mandora are known to have remained popular in German-speaking regions well into the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, significantly longer than the D minor lute. Stylistically, the compositions in *Graceful Degradation* lie somewhere within a spectrum defined by the intimate and expressive *empfindsam* style at one end, and the graceful *galanterie* that gained prominence after the middle of the century at the other.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478570615000111 Published online by Cambridge University Press