



THE HANDEL INSTITUTE

Registered Charity No. 299615

Conference on

Commemorating Handel

The Foundling Museum
40 Brunswick Square, London, WC1N 1AZ

Saturday 24 November 2007

WELCOME

The Handel Institute was established in 1987 to promote the study and appreciation of Handel's music and of the background to the composer and his contemporaries. It is particularly involved in matters concerning his music and its performance, representing British scholarly expertise in the preparation and publication of the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* (the new collected edition of Handel's works) in collaboration with German and American colleagues. The Institute is managed by a board of Trustees and a Council; the chairman is Donald Burrows.

This conference is the seventh major public event that the Institute has organized. Council is grateful to those who have accepted an invitation or offered to speak and to those who have demonstrated support by attending. We extend a warm welcome to you all and hope you enjoy the occasion.

Handel Institute Newsletter

The Institute publishes a newsletter twice a year, and copies of the most recent issue are available at the conference. If you would like to subscribe to future issues, please pick up the subscription forms that are on display at the conference, fill them in and send them to Malcolm London, whose address appears thereon.

Handel Institute Awards

The Institute offers awards for research into the music or life of Handel or his associates. The deadline for the next round of awards is 1 September 2008. If you are interested in applying, please pick up one of the relevant notices displayed at the conference.

Venues

Papers will be read in the Education Room on the lower ground floor of The Foundling Museum. **Coffee, lunch** and **tea** will be served in the adjacent temporary exhibition gallery. The **drinks** reception will be held in the Picture Gallery on the first floor of the Museum, and the conference **dinner** will be served at the restaurant Ciao Bella, 86-90 Lambs Conduit Street, WC1.

The Museum is open to visitors during the day, and delegates may view the exhibits as time allows. The Gerald Coke Handel Collection is on the second floor; it includes an exhibition gallery with 'musical chairs', as well as a collection store and reading room.

Thanks

The Handel Institute is grateful to The Foundling Museum for hosting the conference and the drinks reception, and to its staff. Special thanks are due to Katharine Hogg, Colin Coleman and Barbara Diana (Gerald Coke Handel Collection) and Helen Green (Open University) for their assistance in preparing and running the event.

Colin Timms

PROGRAMME

- 10.00 *Registration*
- 10.30 **Donald Burrows**
Commemorating a Commemoration: The Royal Music Library
- 11.00 **David Coke**
Roubiliac's 'Handel' for Vauxhall Gardens: A Sculpture in Context
- 11.30 *Coffee*
- 12.00 **John H. Roberts**
Questions about Borrowing
- 12.30 **Sarah Bardwell and Katharine Hogg**
London's Two Handel Museums
- 1.00 *Lunch*
- 2.15 **Graydon Beeks**
Sir George Smart's Performance of Handel's *Messiah*
- 2.45 **Annette Landgraf**
The Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace:
Cultural and Economic Achievement Combined
- 3.15 **Richard G. King**
Commemorating Handel Scholars
- 3.45 *Tea*
- 4.15 **Wolfgang Ruf**
The Performance of Handel's *Messiah* by Johann Adam Hiller in Berlin
- 4.45 **Konstanze Musketa**
The 1922 Halle Handel Festival
- 5.15 **Matthew Gardner**
The Commemoration of Handel through Film
- 6.00 *Reception on Opening of Exhibition 'Handel and the Crystal Palace'; Dinner*

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

DONALD BURROWS

Commemorating a Commemoration: The Royal Music Library

On 27 November 1957 Queen Elizabeth II presented the Royal Music Library to the Trustees of the British Museum, a gift commemorating the 200th anniversary of King George II's presentation of the Old Royal Library to the recently established Museum. Subsequently the Royal Music Library, with the rest of the Museum's library collections, was transferred to the British Library, and it remains today as an identifiable section of the British Library's music collection at St Pancras. The Handel material in the Royal Music Library, both manuscript and printed, is still one of the essential resources for our knowledge of his music. The fiftieth anniversary of the presentation provides an opportunity to reflect on its significance, the effects of its wider availability, and some of the puzzles about various stages in its history.

Notes

DAVID COKE

Roubiliac's 'Handel' for Vauxhall Gardens – A Sculpture in Context

Commemorative statues, even today, rarely celebrate living people; in Handel's lifetime such a thing was unthinkable under normal circumstances. However, the pleasure garden at Vauxhall in south-west London was far from normal. Its young entrepreneur, Jonathan Tyers, was a true patron of the arts, and it was he who, in the later 1730s, commissioned from Louis Francois Roubiliac a life-sized sculpture of Handel in the finest white Carrara marble. The sculpture was specifically created for the site that it occupied for some eighty years; there, as well as being the focus of a special effect, it fulfilled specific functions that informed its revolutionary design and were associated with the gardens' carefully honed public image.

Unusually for a statue, it is probable that its subject was involved in the commission and that its benefits that were enjoyed not only by Tyers but also by Handel and Roubiliac. Without his investment in this sculpture, Tyers would have found it harder to achieve the popular success that Vauxhall earned in the 1730s and '40s and Handel might have had greater difficulty in sustaining his public profile.

The sculpture fell out of favour after its removal from the gardens in the nineteenth century but has since been recognised as one of the great icons of British portraiture. It now enjoys pride of place in the British Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum, alongside other works of art associated with Vauxhall.

Notes

JOHN H. ROBERTS

Questions about Borrowing

In his classic study of Handel's dramatic oratorios in 1959 Winton Dean posed five questions about the composer's much-discussed habit of borrowing musical material from other composers and his own earlier works. In light of subsequent discoveries and changing attitudes, these questions can be reformulated and amplified to serve as the basis for future research and debate. I suggest that we need above all to ask:

1. How should 'borrowing' be defined in Handel studies?
2. What role did borrowing play in Handel's compositional process?
3. In what ways did the nature and extent of Handel's borrowing change over the course of his career, and why?
4. How do Handel's borrowing practices relate to those of his contemporaries?
5. How can the study of Handel's borrowing inform our understanding of his music?

Some preliminary answers will be offered.

Notes

GRAYDON BEEKS

Sir George Smart's Performance of Handel's Messiah

Sir George Smart (1776-1867) was one of the most influential English musicians of the first half of the nineteenth century, not least because he was considered an authority on the 'authentic' way to perform the music of Handel. In the words of the nineteenth-century historian W. H. Husk, 'he was much sought after by singers wishing to learn the traditional manner of singing Handel's airs, which he had been taught by his father, who had seen Handel conduct his oratorios'. Smart was also the conductor of the Handel Festival held in Westminster Abbey in 1834.

Little work has been done on the exact nature of Smart's performance style in Handel, primarily because little direct evidence has survived. In recent years, however, the British Library has acquired the full score from which he conducted *Messiah* and a vocal score of the work into which he wrote ornamentation for the soprano arias at the request of the celebrated soprano Jenny Lind (the 'Swedish nightingale'). This paper uses evidence from these sources, together with information from Smart's journals and descriptions of the 1834 Handel Festival, in an attempt to decipher what Smart and his contemporaries thought of as 'the traditional manner of singing Handel'.

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ANNETTE LANDGRAF

*The Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace:
Cultural and Economic Achievement Combined*

In 1851, when the Crystal Palace was erected for the London World Exposition, the capital of Britain was the largest city in Europe and the centre of the industrialised nations. The construction of the greatest glasshouse in the world was possible only because of the standard of British technical achievement. The building symbolised the idea of culture in the Victorian age, at a time of unprecedented economic prosperity and with the British Empire at the height of its power. Culture and art thrived in parallel with the technical, political and economic supremacy of the Empire. The development of the Handel 'cult' through vast performances in the festivals at the Crystal Palace demonstrated the close connection between cultural advancement and the development of economic power. When British influence diminished, attitudes changed and the success of the festival declined.

The Crystal Palace was moved from Hyde Park to Sydenham in 1854. The first Handel festival took place there on 19 June 1857, the last in 1926. This paper is based mainly on the reports, reviews and announcements in *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* (1844-1902), *The Musical Times* up to 1926, and other music magazines. The paper describes the festival's history, the programme planning, the quality of the performances and the influence of the conductors. It also explores the expectations and reactions of the audiences, the advantages and disadvantages and the possibilities and limitations of such performances.

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RICHARD G. KING

Commemorating Handel Scholars

The year 2007 marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of Victor Schoelcher's landmark *Life of Handel*, one of the founding documents in Handel research. The 1850s also saw the publication of the first volumes of Friedrich Chrysander's Handel biography and edition. The work of both Schoelcher and Chrysander has received much attention in recent years, but they were by no means the only scholars active in Handel research in the second half of the nineteenth century.

This paper marks the anniversary of Schoelcher's monograph with a review and evaluation of his goals, methods and accomplishments; but the focus is rather on the work of other musicians and scholars active in the second half of the nineteenth century, who commemorated Handel in editions, arrangements, collections, or research and whose work is still largely unknown or underappreciated. Figures to be considered include William Ayrton, Michael Rophino Lacy, George Macfarren, Julian Marshall, and Edward Rimbault.

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WOLFGANG RUF

The Performance of Handel's Messiah by Johann Adam Hiller in Berlin

Hiller's performance of *Messiah* in 1786 was not the first in Germany but was by far the most important for the reception of Handel's works on the continent. Its success was due mainly to the bookseller Friedrich Nicolai, a music-lover, anglophile and leader of bourgeois intellectual life in Berlin. Nicolai had planned a *Messiah* performance as early as 1771 but abandoned it for unknown reasons. In 1785 he was visited by Burney, who reported on the London commemoration and encouraged him to revive his idea. Nicolai had good contacts at the Prussian court and took advantage of the illness of King Frederick to organize the performance with the assistance of the court chapel and the approval of the crown prince Frederick William, a greater friend of Handel's music than his uncle.

The performance was special for many reasons: the outstanding venue, large orchestra, high-quality soloists, fine choir, guest conductor, mixed audience (royalty and public), language (Italian), arrangement of the music and the charitable nature of the event. The performance accorded well with new orientations in Prussian religious politics and with foreign policies of the 1780s, when Berlin looked for a strong Hanoverian (*i.e.*, British) ally in the so-called *Fürstenbund*, a German counterpart to Austria. The resonance of the concert in the press was remarkable, prompting further performances elsewhere in Germany and a more intensive preoccupation with *Messiah* and its composer. The Berlin performance marked a significant step in the process of Handel's canonization as a national figure in German culture.

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KONSTANZE MUSKETA

The 1922 Halle Handel Festival

After the great Handel commemorations of 1859 and 1885, it was only in 1922 that a Handel festival again took place in Handel's home town. Organized by several of the town's musical institutions, it marked, as Hermann Abert had hoped, the beginning of a new era of Handel performances in Halle. Indeed, it was the first in the continuing series of Handel festivals, which now number seventy. The rich and ambitious programme included the oratorios *Semele* and *Susanna*, the opera *Orlando furioso*, and several concerts with smaller works by Handel and other Halle composers of the sixteenth, seventeenth or eighteenth century. The programme booklet of more than one hundred pages provides information on the concerts and other events, the locations, the performers, the organizers and their intentions – on all of which it is the purpose of this paper to comment.

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MATTHEW GARDNER

The Commemoration of Handel through Film

There have been numerous films and documentaries on various aspects of Handel's life. One of the earliest cinema films, *The Great Mr Handel* (1942), coincided with the 200th anniversary year of *Messiah*'s first performance and is centred on Handel's production of this work. Later films include the East German documentary *Georg Friedrich Händel* (1960), offering a general overview of his life, and the television film *Honour, Profit and Pleasure* (1985), which was clearly made with his 300th birthday in mind. Handel (as a character) has not only taken the lead role in films, but has also made appearances in such works as *Farinelli: il Castrato* (1994), where he is portrayed both searching for new castratos in Italy and in competition with the Opera of the Nobility. He has also enjoyed some popularity on the small screen in such documentaries as *Journey Through Time: Handel* (1999) and, more recently, *Auf der Suche nach dem jungen Händel in Rom* (2007), where his time in Rome and, to a certain extent, Italy in general is outlined by scholars.

The above-mentioned productions (and more) form a part of Handel reception, biography and/or commemoration. This paper offers an overview of the ways in which Handel and his music are portrayed in selected productions, and a more general historical review of Handel commemoration through films and documentaries.

Notes

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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