



# **The Handel Institute**

## **HANDEL AND HIS EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PERFORMERS**

**Conference in London  
21-23 November 2015**

**THE HANDEL INSTITUTE**

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<http://www.gfhandel.org/>

## WELCOME

The Trustees and Council of the Handel Institute extend a warm welcome to everybody attending this conference, especially to visitors from overseas.

The Institute comprises a group of British scholars with special interests in Handel or a related field of study, and collaborates closely with colleagues in Germany and America on the preparation of the new critical edition of the composer's collected works (the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe). It also supports many other research projects and publications, such as the monumental *George Frideric Handel: Collected Documents*, 5 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 2013–); awards grants for research, Handel opera performance and conference attendance; publishes a twice-yearly *Newsletter* and organises conferences.

Handel Institute conferences began in 1990 and have been held at two- and (mainly) three-yearly intervals. This is the tenth. Apart from the 2009 conference, organised in collaboration with the Purcell Society and marking both the death of Handel (1759) and the birth of Purcell (1659?), the conferences have focused on Handel and have been organised entirely by the Handel Institute.

The theme of this year's conference, 'Handel and His Eighteenth-Century Performers', prompted more offers of papers than ever before. Performance seems to represent a major concern of contemporary musicology. The gratifying response to the call for papers facilitated the preparation of a coherent programme which, we hope, will prove as entertaining as it should be illuminating.

The Handel Institute is grateful to the Director and staff of the Foundling Museum and to the staff of the Camden office of the Open University for permission to hold this conference in their buildings. Special thanks are due to: Katharine Hogg and Colin Coleman (Gerald Coke Handel Collection) for mounting an exhibition on Handel singers and assisting with the running of the event; the London regional services team of the Open University; the London Handel Festival, Laurence Cummings and Catherine Hodgson for their contribution to the preparation and presentation of the concert.

Colin Timms  
Hon. Secretary

# PROGRAMME

## SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER, THE FOUNDLING MUSEUM

9.30 am *Registration*

10.00 *Welcome: Donald Burrows*

### **Session 1 Singers and Players**

Chair: Donald Burrows

10.10 **Graydon Beeks**

Handel and his performing forces at Cannons

10.45 **David Hunter**

To preposition singers: with whom do they work for, against, near, among, with, opposite, without, around, alongside, despite, contrary to, until?

11.20 *Coffee*

### **Session 2 Singers and Opera in the 1720s (A)**

Chair: Reinhard Strohm

11.45 **Adriana De Feo**

The roles for Giuseppe Maria Boschi in Handel's and Antonio Lotti's operas

12.20 pm **Konstanze Musketa**

'Sung by Signor Riemschneider': Johann Gottfried Riemschneider (1691–1742), Zachow's scholar and Handel's singer on the London opera stage

12.55 *Lunch*

### **Session 3 Singers and Opera in the 1720s (B)**

Chair: David Vickers

2.15 **Randall Scotting**

The other Senesino: Handel's singer in context

2.50 **Liam Gorry**

'In which Senesino gained so much reputation as an actor, as well as singer': Senesino and *recitativo accompagnato* – the evidence

3.25 *Tea*

### **Session 4 Singers and Opera in the 1720s (C)**

Chair: Terence Best

3.50 **Hans-Dieter Clausen**

Cuzzoni's Cleopatra, or: The limits of a singer's influence on his part

- 4.25        **Wolfgang Hirschmann**  
Performing Handel on the German stage: The case of *Riccardo Primo*
- 7.30        *Concert at St George's Church, Bloomsbury Way, WC1A 2SA*

**SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER, THE FOUNDLING MUSEUM**

- 9.30 am     *Registration*
- Session 5 Singers and Opera in the 1730s (A)**  
Chair: Andrew Jones
- 10.00        **John H. Roberts**  
The London *pasticci* of 1730-31: Singers, composers, and impresarios
- 10.35        **Judit Zsovár**  
Transforming one another: Shaping Strada's vocal art – Inspiring Handel to new compositional thinking
- 11.10        *Coffee*
- Session 6 Singers and Opera in the 1730s (B)**  
Chair: Helen Coffey
- 11.40        **Graham Cummings**  
Handel, Giovanni Carestini and the 1734-35 London opera season
- 12.15 pm    **Matthew Gardner**  
The singer as composer: Gioacchino Conti and Handel
- 12.50        *Lunch*
- Session 7 Performing Oratorio**  
Chair: Silas Wollston
- 2.15        **Natassa Varka**  
Charles Jennens's version of *Joseph and his Brethren*
- 2.50        **David Hurley**  
The 'altered da capo' air in Handel's *Alexander Balus*
- 3.25        *Tea*
- Session 8 Vocal style**  
Chair: Berta Joncus
- 3.50        **Jonathan Rhodes Lee**  
Cibber and Frasi: Singers of sentiment
- 4.25        **Suzanne Aspden**  
Sweet birds: The Handelian sound in the later eighteenth century
- 7.00        *Conference dinner*

**MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER, OPEN UNIVERSITY, CAMDEN**

9.30 am *Registration*

**Session 9 Singers and Oratorio in the 1740s and 1750s (A)**

Chair: Ruth Smith

10.00 **Andrew Shryock**

Thomas Lowe: Another tenor voice

10.35 **David Vickers**

Handel and Giulia Frasi in context

11.10 *Coffee*

**Session 10 Singers and Oratorio in the 1740s and 1750s (B)**

Chair: Matthew Gardner

11.40 **Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson**

Who was Mr Brent?

12.15 pm **Patricia Howard**

Learning about Guadagni's voice from his Handelian roles

12.50 *Lunch*

**Session 11 Performing for Pleasure and Profit**

Chair: Colin Timms

2.15 **Alison DeSimone**

Handel's greatest hits: The composer's music in eighteenth-century benefit performances

2.50 **Berta Joncus**

'Bliss is only found ... when Beard and Frasi sing': Handel, celebrity singers and Ranelagh Garden concerts

3.25 *Tea*

**Session 12 Leading performance**

Chair: Donald Burrows

3.50 **Eduardo Sola Chagas Lima**

Handel and the notion of an orchestra leader

4.25 **Peter Holman**

'Handel several times reproved him till he wept':  
The composer as musical director

5.00 *Conference ends*

## ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

*Abstracts and biographies are presented in alphabetical order of authors' surnames.*

**SUZANNE ASPDEN**

### ***Sweet birds: The Handelian sound in the later eighteenth century***

In 1779 Susan Burney, daughter of the historian, reported a conversation held with her beloved Pacchierotti about other singers: 'M<sup>rs</sup> Sheridan seemed to him to have the advantage over all our female Singers – He said her Voice was more clear & more touching in its tone than Miss Harrops, & *without affectation*[;] he believed she had the most feeling, & sung Handel's Music best'. With these words, Pacchierotti (or Burney) seems to suggest a style of singing that is invoked again and again where interpreters of Handel are concerned, centred on a rhetoric of sweetness. Thus Fanny Burney similarly characterised Elizabeth Linley's (Mrs Sheridan's) voice as 'soft, sweet, clear & affecting'. And Daniel Lyons summarised Burney's remarks on Gaetano Guadagni by comparing him with another famous Handelian singer in much the same language: 'Handel was so much pleased with his sweet and full voice, that he engaged him to sing the fine airs in *Samson* and *The Messiah*, which he had composed for Mrs. Cibber's sweet and affecting voice'.

This paper will consider what it meant to sing with a 'sweet and affecting' voice, and why such terms – or, more intriguingly, such a sound – might particularly have attached to Handelian vocal style in the years after his death.

**Suzanne Aspden** is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Music, Oxford, and Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford. Her research interests centre on eighteenth-century opera and issues of performance and identity; she has published widely in these areas, in *JAMS*, *JRMA*, *Music & Letters*, the *Musical Quarterly*, *Cambridge Opera Journal* and elsewhere. Her recent book, *The Rival Sirens*, concerns the rivalry of the singers Faustina Bordoni and Francesca Cuzzoni in 1720s London. Her current book project examines opera and national identity in eighteenth-century Britain. She also has edited volumes in progress on the English version of Cavalli's *Erismena* (with Michael Burden) and on opera and cultural geography.

**OLIVE BALDWIN AND THELMA WILSON**

### ***Who was Mr Brent?***

In *Jephtha an Oratorio*, published by John Walsh in 1752, three solos for Hamor and his parts in a duet and a quartet are given as sung by 'M<sup>r</sup>. Brent', while a fourth solo is ascribed to 'M<sup>r</sup>. Brant'. William Barclay Squire began his *DNB* entry (1885) on the soprano Charlotte Brent by stating that she was the daughter of

‘a fencing-master and alto singer, who sang in Handel's *Jephtha* in 1752’, and this has generally been accepted. Charlotte’s father, Charles, was indeed a fencing master, and a leading one. The author of *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence* (1747) remembered that Brent took part in one of the finest fencing matches he had ever seen. Charles Brent was in his late fifties in 1752, rather old for Hamor the young lover, and is nowhere recorded as a singer. His only known ‘musical’ performance is as the player of the salt box in a burlesque St Cecilia ode for his daughter’s benefit at Ranelagh in 1763. This has led the *Cambridge Handel Encyclopedia* to state confidently that he was a singer there.

But if not Charles Brent, who was the original singer of Hamor? This paper will examine the puzzle further and attempt to find a solution.

**Olive Baldwin** and **Thelma Wilson** contributed many entries on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century stage singers to *New Grove*, were Research Associates for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and have edited facsimile editions of the complete songs of Richard Leveridge and of *The Monthly Mask of Vocal Music 1702-11*. Articles with Handel connections include ‘Who was Signora Margarita’s sister?’ (2007), ‘Handel, Eccles and the birthday celebrations for Queen Anne in 1711’ (2013) and ‘Anther Handelian Bass Singer and Organist [F. C. Reinhold]’ (2013).

## **GRAYDON BEEKS**

### ***Handel and his performing forces at Cannons***

In the thirty years since the publication of my article ‘Handel and Music for the Earl of Carnarvon’ nothing has emerged to challenge the overall description of the establishment, gradual growth and precipitous disbanding of the Cannons Concert. It is, however, possible to say more about individual members of the ensemble and to trace their careers as composers, instrumentalists and singers. The goal of this paper is to create a group portrait of the musicians for whom Handel composed his Cannons Anthems and *Te Deum*, *Acis and Galatea* and *Esther*.

Of the three composers known to have been active at Cannons, Nicola Francesco Haym was a salaried employee who seems to have been hired primarily as a cellist. Handel and Pepusch seem initially to have been treated as distinguished guests; only from late spring 1719 did the latter become ‘Director’ of the ensemble and receive a salary.

Most of the professional instrumentalists were second-tier members of the Italian Opera orchestra, of which Haym had been principal cellist. Some of them apparently became available when the Opera ceased to function in summer 1717, and many returned to the opera house when the Royal Academy of Music and its orchestra were established in 1719. Among the non-professional players, some were servants who were also skilled musicians. At least one of these, Charles Pardini, subsequently enjoyed a professional career. A few were young men

apprenticed to Pepusch, and several of these also went on to musical careers that intersected with Handel's.

The singers seem to have been either former cathedral choristers waiting for a position to open at a London cathedral or in the Chapel Royal, or young men with some experience of singing in the theatre, often under Pepusch's direction. James Blackly, for whom Handel wrote many demanding solos, came from the latter background, but his subsequent career remains a mystery. So too is the identity of the soprano who sang the roles of Galatea and Esther. Circumstantial evidence points to Margherita de l'Epine, who around this time became Pepusch's wife, having been his partner for many years.

**Graydon Beeks** is Director of Music Programming & Facilities and Professor of Music at Pomona College in California, where he also serves as Director of the Pomona College Band. He received his bachelor's degree from Pomona College and his master's and doctorate in music history and literature from the University of California at Berkeley. He has published extensively on the music of Handel and his contemporaries, and especially on the music of Handel's Cannons period. He currently serves as President of The American Handel Society and is a member of the Editorial Board of the *Hallische-Händel-Ausgabe* and the Vorstand of the *Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft*.

#### **HANS DIETER CLAUSEN**

##### ***Cuzzoni's Cleopatra, or: The limits of a singer's influence on his part***

Francesca Cuzzoni arrived in London towards the end of December 1722 to sing the part of Teofane in Handel's opera *Ottone*, which had been rehearsed in her absence. Only a few things could be altered for her. While composing her next part, Emilia in *Flavio*, Handel was able to consider her vocal abilities from the beginning. But this opera had to be composed and rehearsed in an extremely short space of time, while the opera season was running. It was not before the end of the season that, in his next opera, *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, Handel had the opportunity to create a part for her which took account of the whole of the singer's personality. It became one of Handel's most richly faceted operatic roles.

The complex creation process of the libretto and the score (hitherto not fully elucidated) will be examined to explore the composer's aims when he replaced, reshaped and reshuffled the arias (especially Cleopatra's arias), and to estimate how far the singer's abilities may have influenced this process. Contemporary assessments of Cuzzoni's abilities come primarily from those later seasons in which she and Faustina Bordoni competed, and they tend to emphasize their differences. The Cleopatra part may give a more faithful impression of this multi-talented singer.

Born in 1937 at Hanover, **Hans Dieter Clausen** studied music education in Berlin, and musicology and philology (German and Nordic) in Göttingen and Hamburg. He gained his Dr. phil. in 1969 with a dissertation on *Händels Direktionspartituren* („*Handexemplare*“) that was published at Hamburg in 1972. From 1966 to 2001 he taught music, literature and philosophy and was director at a comprehensive school in Hamburg. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, for which he has edited *Floridante*, *Samson* and *Solomon*. His ‘Elemente des Tragischen in Händels Oratorien’ appeared in the *Händel-Jahrbuch*, 56 (2010), and he is currently editing *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*.

## **GRAHAM CUMMINGS**

### ***Handel, Giovanni Carestini and the 1734-35 London opera season***

In the four seasons from 1733 to 1737 London was entertained by not one, but two competing Italian opera companies; that of Handel was pitted against the rival ‘Opera of the Nobility’, which had Porpora as its music director (1733–36). It was during these same four seasons that London applauded the singing of two of Italy’s most renowned castratos – Giovanni Carestini, the *primo uomo* of Handel’s company for two seasons (1733–35), and Carlo Broschi (‘Farinelli’), who held the same leading position in the rival company for three seasons (1734–37). These two *virtuosi* had been vocal rivals since the Rome carnival season of 1722, when they both sang in the same operas by Porpora and Predieri. This rivalry continued for the next eleven years and was to resurface in London during the 1734–35 season, when Farinelli had a runaway success in a varied reprise of his Venetian role of Arbace in Hasse’s *Artaserse* (but as a *pasticcio* in London: Hasse/Porpora/Riccardo Broschi) and as Aci in Porpora’s *Polifemo*. At the same time Carestini had a more muted success in two of Handel’s finest operas of the 1730s, in the title-role of *Ariodante* and as Ruggiero in *Alcina*.

This paper seeks to investigate what part Handel’s music for Carestini played in the ongoing competition between the two opera companies. In particular it examines some of the music that Handel composed for Carestini’s characters in *Ariodante* and *Alcina* in terms of musical style, vocal content and scale, when compared with the music composed for Farinelli by Hasse, Porpora and R. Broschi.

**Graham Cummings** is Visiting Professor of Historical Musicology at the University of Huddersfield. The music of Handel and his English and Italian contemporaries has been at the centre of his research work; this has led to publications on Handel and opera at an international level. He is an editor for the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe; his revised edition of the opera *Poro, rè dell’ Indie* was published in June 2014. He is currently the recipient of a Leverhulme Trust Emeritus Fellowship awarded to facilitate his research on ‘Operatic Rivalry in London: Seasons of Conflict and Competition (1733–37)’.

**ADRIANA DE FEO**

***The roles for Giuseppe Maria Boschi in Handel's and Antonio Lotti's operas***

The bass Giuseppe Maria Boschi (1675?–1744) was one of the most famous singers of his time; this is particularly remarkable in an era that favoured the high vocal registers. In 1707 he sang in Venice in Gasparini's and Lotti's operas at the Teatro S. Cassiano. Also in Venice he sang the role of Pallante in the first, triumphant performance of Handel's *Agrippina* (1709) at the Teatro S. Giovanni Crisostomo. The name of Boschi is linked with Handel's most important operas: in 1711 he sang the part of Argante in *Rinaldo* at the Haymarket Theatre; between 1720 and 1728 he played significant roles in the productions of *Radamisto*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano*, *Rodelinda*, *Scipione*, *Alessandro*, *Siroe* and others, mounted by the Royal Academy. Boschi had also been active in Dresden, where he sang in Lotti's *Giove in Argo* (1717), *Ascanio, ovvero Gli odi delusi dal sangue* (1718) and *Teofane* (1719); this last opera honoured the marriage of crown prince Augustus III of Poland to Maria Josepha of Austria, daughter of Emperor Joseph I, and was staged with the most famous virtuosos of the time – Margherita Durastanti, Vittoria Tesi and Francesco Bernardi ('Senesino').

My paper aims to analyse the particular dramatic roles written for Boschi by comparing Handel's scores with some of the parts written for him by Lotti in operas performed in Venice and Dresden.

**Adriana De Feo** was born in 1980 in Salerno (Italy), graduating in 2005 at the University of Bologna. In 2012 she gained her PhD in musicology at the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg with a dissertation on Mozart's *serenate* in the context of the serenata in the eighteenth century (*Mozarts Serenate im Spiegel der Gattungsentwicklung*). From 2009 to 2015 she was a researcher for the critical edition and the database of Mozart's librettos at the Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation. Her research interests and publications focus mainly on the libretto and Italian opera in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

**ALISON DESIMONE**

***Handel's greatest hits: The composer's music in eighteenth-century benefit performances***

On 26 March 1729 the soprano Ann Turner Robinson sponsored an elaborate evening of vocal and instrumental entertainments for her benefit. Robinson filled the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane with arias from at least eleven of Handel's operas. Her decision to feature his music was professionally strategic: not only was he currently abroad recruiting singers for a new opera company, but with the closure of the Royal Academy his operas had not been heard in nearly a year. Robinson's specially organized concert offered English audiences a chance to marvel at her vocal talents while admiring some of the 'greatest hits' of a beloved, and greatly missed, composer.

This concert was just one of many benefit evenings that featured Handel's music during his nearly fifty years in London. Singers, instrumentalists and actors performed a wide selection of his works in their benefits, events that were organized and executed according to the desires of the featured beneficiary. Performers chose from various popular plays, arias, dances and instrumental works to maximize their profits and appeal to fickle audiences. Yet a survey of advertisements from between 1700 and 1759 reveals certain patterns in the Handelian selections. These performances offer tantalizing clues about the value that musicians and their audiences placed on Handel's music outside its original performance contexts.

Using advertisements, public accounts and the music itself, I reconstruct benefits that featured Handel's music, with a focus on benefit concerts given by two musicians: Robinson, who sang for him during the first Royal Academy season, and Jean Christian Kytch, the King's Theatre's leading oboist and a close friend of the composer. These examples show that performers featured Handel's music in different ways but with the same crucial purpose: to identify themselves with the composer's greatest hits during periods of professional and musical uncertainty in London.

**Alison DeSimone** is an Assistant Professor of Musicology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She received her PhD from the University of Michigan (2013) and taught previously at Michigan and the University of Cincinnati. Her research has been recognized by the American Association of University Women, Michigan's Institute for the Humanities, The Handel Institute, and the American Handel Society. She is currently working on two book projects: a co-edited collection (with Matthew Gardner) on benefits and a monograph on musico-theatrical miscellany in early eighteenth-century London. She is also a research assistant for the Lobkowitz family's private music collection in the Czech Republic.

**MATTHEW GARDNER**

***The singer as composer: Gioacchino Conti and Handel***

When, at the end of the 1734–35 season, Handel's star castrato, Giovanni Carestini, left his company and returned to Italy, he was eventually replaced in April 1736 by the young Gioacchino Conti, who had been singing in Naples, Vienna, Venice and Genoa. Upon arriving in London, Conti did not, as would have been expected, make his *début* in a new opera or with an adapted part in a revival; instead, Handel allowed him to sing arias from works by other composers, which he brought with him, in a revival of *Ariodante*. Around the same time, he nevertheless also sang a leading role in the première of *Atalanta*. During the two seasons he spent in London, Conti sang in revivals of three further Handel operas (*Alcina*, *Partenope* and *Poro*), with Handel adapting music originally conceived

for other singers; in three new Handel operas (*Arminio*, *Giustino* and *Berenice*) in which the composer created roles for him; in the Italian oratorio *Il trionfo del Tempo e della Verità*, and in the 1737 bilingual performance of *Esther*, where he performed music that had originally been written for Carestini. In the same season he was also scheduled to participate in a revival of *Deborah* that did not take place. From October 1736, however, owing to the arrival in London of the more experienced Domenico Annibali, Conti most commonly sang secondary roles. The range of parts that he performed for Handel in a short space of time provides a useful insight into the composer's working practice with a new singer at a time when he was still facing serious competition from the rival 'Opera of the Nobility'. Based on a re-examination of Handel's autographs, performing scores and wordbooks, this paper explores the parts Handel composed and adapted for Conti during his fifteen-month stay in London, highlighting how the abilities of a singer and the need for a castrato played a key role in Handel's compositional process and casting decisions.

**Matthew Gardner** is a research fellow at the Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, Germany, having previously held a similar post at the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg (2008–14), where he also gained his doctorate with a dissertation on *Handel and Maurice Greene's Circle at the Apollo Academy*. Between 2012 and 2014 he was the principal investigator of a research project on singers working in Restoration and early Georgian London (1660–1760) funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). He has published widely on Handel and his English contemporaries, and edits for the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, receiving the 2014 International Handel Research Prize for his edition of Handel's Wedding Anthems.

#### **LIAM GORRY**

##### ***'In which Senesino gained so much reputation as an actor, as well as singer': Senesino and recitativo accompagnato – the evidence***

From the time of John Hawkins in the 1770s to the present day scholars have consistently linked Handel's most famous castrato, Francesco Bernardi ('Senesino': 1686-1758), with *recitativo accompagnato*. Charles Burney in his *An Account of the Musical Performances in Westminster Abbey and the Pantheon* (1785), and in his *General History of Music* (1789), even included the reminiscences of Handel's original audience, which further strengthen this connection. But frustratingly there are no contemporary published accounts, and no known private letters, that confirm the singer's reputation in this area, and modern studies fail to give statistics. Yet if we turn to the music that Handel wrote for Senesino, we can instantly ascertain that the castrato must have been extremely gifted in the singing of *recitativo accompagnato*. A study of the music that the composer wrote for him at least leads us to the conclusion that Senesino was the

most important performer of *accompagnato* in London during the 1720s and 30s.

This paper explores the facts associated with Senesino and the *accompagnati* that he sang on the London stage between 1720 and 1736. It takes account of: the *accompagnati* composed for the singer by Handel, Porpora, Bononcini and Ariosti; the statistics relating to Handel's overall usage of *recitativo accompagnato* in his *opere serie* and other works; a comparison between Senesino and contemporary singers in London; and the reasons for the relative decline of *recitativo accompagnato* in Handel's *opere serie* after 1733.

**Liam Gorry** completed his DELNI-funded PhD dissertation, *Handel and His Accompanied Recitatives*, at the Queen's University, Belfast, in 2012 and has delivered papers on Handel and baroque music to the Handel Institute, IMR, QUB CECS, SMI, ICBM and the Music in Eighteenth-Century Britain study day. For many years he was a teaching assistant in the School of Music at Queen's and a library assistant in the university's Special Collections, where he helped catalogue the Harty and the Nelson manuscripts. Among other things he is currently working on projects relating to Handel and music in eighteenth-century Ulster. He is also chairperson and assistant editor of the West Inishowen History & Heritage Society.

#### **WOLFGANG HIRSCHMANN**

##### ***Performing Handel on the German stage: The case of Riccardo Primo***

On 3 February 1729 Handel's *Riccardo Primo* had its first Hamburg performance at the Gänsemarkt theatre in an adaptation by Christoph Gottlieb Wend and Georg Philipp Telemann; the new title was *Der misslungene Braut-Wechsel oder Richardus I., König von England* (TVWV 22:8). In accordance with the theme of this conference I will try to explain the special character of the Hamburg version arising from the necessity to adapt Handel's original to a completely different cast of singers. I will also try to show that, just as Handel composed his operas in a performer-sensitive way, so Wend and Telemann intended to make the very best of the performance situation in which they had to work. As will be seen, in the hands of Wend and Telemann and their Hamburg performers Handel's opera became a completely different stage event.

**Wolfgang Hirschmann** is Professor of Music History at the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, President of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft, and President of the Society for Mitteldeutsche Barockmusik in Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt und Thüringen. He serves as chief editor of the foremost complete works editions of music by Handel, Telemann and Pachelbel. He is currently engaged in a research project (together with Bernhard Jahn) entitled 'Johann Mattheson as Mediator and Instigator: Knowledge Transfer and the Establishment of New Discourses in the First Half of the 18th Century'. His primary fields of research are the history of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music and of medieval music theory, and editorial method and practice.

**PETER HOLMAN**

***'Handel several times reproved him till he wept': The composer as musical director***

In the course of research for my book *Before the Baton: Conducting and Musical Direction in Georgian Britain* I have reconsidered the many anecdotes about Handel's dealings with his performers, testing them against what is known about his methods of direction. One of them, providing the title for this paper, comes from a contemporary annotation to the entry devoted to the violinist Giovanni Stefano Carbonelli in an early nineteenth-century dictionary of musical biography; Carbonelli is known to have led Handel's oratorio orchestra in the 1740s. Handel seems to have begun by using the normal methods of his time, directing from the first harpsichord in Italian opera and beating time in large-scale choral music. However, there is evidence that he increasingly tried to exert an unusual amount of control over his performers, singers as well as instrumentalists. I will argue that to achieve this he reduced the authority of his orchestral leader, and eventually devised a method of directing oratorios (a genre combining features of opera and choral music) that enabled him to play rather than beat time. To do this he used a harpsichord connected to a large organ by a 'long movement', allowing him to communicate with his singers aurally rather than visually; they were all placed out of his sight at the front of the performing area. This system, used by his followers until the early nineteenth century, had the added advantage of enabling him to dispense with additional keyboard players, whose abilities he doubtless felt inferior to what a newspaper report of one of his Dublin performances referred to as 'his own inimitable hand'.

**Peter Holman** is Emeritus Professor of Historical Musicology at the University of Leeds. He has wide interests in English music from about 1550 to 1850 and the history of instruments and instrumental music. His books include the prize-winning *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court 1540-1690* (1993) and *Life after Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch* (2010). At present he is working on *Before the Baton*, a study of conducting and musical direction in Georgian Britain. As a performer he is director of The Parley of Instruments, the Suffolk Villages Festival, and Leeds Baroque.

**PATRICIA HOWARD**

***Learning about Guadagni's voice from his Handelian roles***

There are many problems involved in trying to discover what an eighteenth-century singer sounded like. Most of them are insuperable. Descriptions of a singer in performance are usually couched in vivid but ambiguous adjectives: does 'sweet' imply lack of volume? do 'fiery and impetuous' suggest 'spirited but inaccurate'? does 'polished' indicate that he or she sang the right notes, that they

sang in tune, or that they possessed some other quality prized by an eighteenth-century critic hidden within a metaphor? The most reliable evidence comes from examining the music performed. This can at the very least establish vocal compass and may indicate the preferred tessitura, though whether this represents the preference of the composer or of the singer is another moot point. Notwithstanding the usual association of Guadagni with Gluck, the singer had his longest working relationship with Handel and sang more roles by him than by any other composer. An investigation of some ten roles written or (as is mostly the case) adapted for him enables us to make objective deductions about the nature of Guadagni's voice. It is also possible to infer what Handel liked about his singing, what opportunities he provided, and how he 'heard' the castrato. And because Guadagni's association with Handel occurred at such an early and formative stage of his career, we can trace how the qualities identified and nurtured by Handel persisted in the voice of the mature singer.

**Patricia Howard** is Visiting Research Fellow in Music at the Open University. Her main research interests are eighteenth-century opera and the history of singing. She has published widely on Gluck and his operas, and her most recent books are *The Modern Castrato: Gaetano Guadagni and the Coming of a New Operatic Age* (OUP, 2014) and *Gluck (The Late Eighteenth-Century Composers)* (Ashgate, 2015).

#### **DAVID HUNTER**

***To preposition singers: with whom do they work for, against, near, among, with, opposite, without, around, alongside, despite, contrary to, until?***

Though the title of this year's conference may suggest that Handel had a proprietary, not to say exclusive, interest in the performers he worked with, the lives of singers prove otherwise. In positing the ways in which singers were connected with persons and groups beyond the composer/impresario/music director norm, I explore issues of belonging and relating. Spouses, siblings, parents, children, patrons, audiences, countries, styles, religions, languages, stage characters and agents all had their own demands. By taking a broader sweep than has been attempted to date, I show that the relationships between singers and their environment, so often summarized in terms of prepositions, is inadequate to the complexities of their situations. Compliance or complaisance in one area may be completely lacking in another (such as a willingness to perform with particular musicians in one venue but not another). Or, to take an obvious example, a singer who brought complete works or arias to London, expecting to perform them in a forthcoming season or another work, exhibited a far different kind of relationship than the repertory and experience of a singer from the Chapel Royal.

By teasing out the implications of these differences we can delight in the

diversity of musical experience, assessing it not only at the level of works and individual interactions but also in terms of relationships with audiences and more abstract concepts such as styles (musical), countries and religions.

**David Hunter** is the author of *The Lives of George Frideric Handel*, published this month by Boydell and Brewer. The book provides a new biographical interpretation of Handel while also examining the achievements, errors, opinions, and antagonisms of previous biographers.

**DAVID HURLEY**

***The ‘altered da capo’ air in Handel’s Alexander Balus***

Among the myriad formal structures manifested in the airs of Handel’s oratorios is a ternary form in which the last section is newly written, as opposed to the verbatim repeat of the first section found at the end of the da capo aria. This form, for which I propose the term ‘altered da capo’ aria, while sometimes mentioned by scholars, has never been the subject of a comprehensive study. This paper focuses on Handel’s use of the altered da capo, exploring particularly the flexible array of recapitulation designs that it encompasses, and suggesting musical and dramatic reasons why Handel sometimes chose this form instead of the typical da capo structure. Because it is impossible to examine all of Handel’s altered da capos in this paper, I will concentrate on the composer’s use of this form in two airs in his oratorio *Alexander Balus*. I explore how the compositional freedom intrinsic to the ‘altered da capo’ is among the features that allow for the portrayal, sometimes subtle, of specific aspects of the protagonists’ emotional and psychological states – particularly those related to erotic attraction, which plays such an important role in *Alexander Balus*, perhaps the most opera-like of Handel’s biblical oratorios.

A graduate of the University of Chicago and former president of the American Handel Society, **David Hurley** currently teaches at Pittsburg State University in Kansas. He has explored Handel’s compositional process in his book *Handel’s Muse: Patterns of Creation in his Oratorios and Musical Dramas, 1743-1751* (Oxford University Press, 2001) and has written a number of articles devoted to other aspects of Handel. His current work focuses on Handel and the aria.

**BERTA JONCUS**

***‘Bliss is only found ... when Beard and Frasi sing’: Handel, celebrity singers and Ranelagh Garden concerts***

The singers John Beard and Giulia Frasi, by performing Handel’s music in early Ranelagh Gardens concerts, both strengthened the Gardens’ programme and articulated their own celebrity profiles.

Modelled after the Vauxhall Gardens, Ranelagh Gardens created a native pseudo-Arcadia where music was deployed to transport visitors to a realm of pleasure and foster fealty to British taste. Beard embodied these conceits, dramatising in airs and cantatas the Lover and the Patriot. Handel's music was carefully selected to strengthen this representation, with the support of Frasi. Deployment of this music advanced in stages: at the 'reopening' of the Ranelagh Rotunda in 1743 with a production of *Samson*; at 1746 concerts honouring the Duke of Cumberland; possibly at Beard-Frasi breakfast concerts between 1748 and 1752, and at high-profile benefits in 1757 and 1759.

Overlooked by scholars, the Ranelagh production of *Samson* in April 1743, just after the work's première at Covent Garden, celebrated the Rotunda's new orchestra, relocated to improve its acoustics. Playing *Samson* at the Rotunda, known as a 'Temple' for love's pleasures, enhanced Beard's characterisation of the Israelite hero who surrenders to, and then triumphs over, female seduction. In his concert music of 1746, Beard rallied audiences behind the Duke of Cumberland, the Gardens' highest-ranking habitué, by stealing for his concerts Handel's song 'Stand round, my brave boys' from its original singer, the rival tenor Thomas Lowe. Together with Frasi, Beard evidenced his entrepreneurship in three Ranelagh breakfast concert series in 1748, 1749 and 1752. Although we do not know what music they performed, Handel's oratorios are likely to have been a source for these fashion-driven, exclusively English-language entertainments. This is implied by a 1755 commentary linking Beard's and Frasi's performances to Handelian pleasure-garden music.

This vocal partnership culminated in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, mounted in 1757 as a Marine Society benefit that reportedly drew an audience of over two thousand. This splashy event is probably what encouraged Beard to use Handel's *L'Allegro* with beefed-up forces for his next benefit. The castrato Tenducci, and Leopold Mozart on his son's behalf, followed Beard in paying homage to polite British taste by programming Handel's English-language compositions in benefits.

**Berta Joncus** is a Senior Lecturer in Music at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research focuses on performers, eighteenth-century music and celebrity culture. Besides scholarly articles, her major outputs include an edited book on John Rich, the founder of Covent Garden, and the electronic resource *Ballad Operas Online* (Oxford Digital Library). She is senior editor of the opera *Love in a Village* (1762), a hybrid hard-copy and online music volume to be issued by Bärenreiter and the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature. Berta is also a music critic, principally for the BBC.

**JONATHAN RHODES LEE**

***Cibber and Frasi: Singers of sentiment***

Handel's oratorios hit their stride at the same time that the so-called culture of sentiment produced its most influential works. With Richardson's famed *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1748) bounding the oratorios' main decade, it is worth considering how this culture affected them, and particularly their performers. Women – and men's ideas about women – were at the centre of sentimental culture, and the expectations of sentimentalism shaped the careers of at least two of Handel's female singers of the 1740s: Susanna Cibber (1714–66) and Giulia Frasi (*fl.* 1742–72).

In this paper, I draw on histories of the British theatre that record how actors authored their professional and personal identities during Handel's period. Thespians expected consistency on stage, 'owning' roles for years and maintaining fictional identities through sequels. Off stage, too, self-authorship was vital to them; the line between performer and role frequently blurred, and (as Lisa Freeman has shown) the growing polysemy of the word 'character' reflected growing recognition of this conflation.

I demonstrate that Cibber and Frasi also needed to manage their on- and off-stage selves, and that both singing ability and persona affected Handel's composition and revision processes. These women specialized in the theatrical line of the sentimental heroine, moral centres of troubled worlds. A publicized sex scandal challenged Cibber's status as such; revisions Handel made to her parts show that this challenge shaped her work as oratorio alto no less than as stage actress. Frasi carved out her role as singer of sentiment in the years preceding her work with Handel; both her repeated casting as endangered heroine and a continuity of musical language show Handel's awareness of her public image beyond the oratorio. These women's off-stage and on-stage lives intersected, and their music, drama, and public personas reflected their status as women of feeling.

**Jonathan Rhodes Lee** is assistant professor of music at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he studies both eighteenth-century topics and film music. He is preparing a book, provisionally titled *Music, Morality, and Sentiment in Handel's England*, which demonstrates the influence of the culture of sentiment on English musical culture. His concurrent project, *Film Music and the American South*, elucidates the relationship between Hollywood's ongoing fascination with this region and film sound. Jonathan completed his PhD at the University of California, Berkeley, in 2013 and was part of the Society of Fellows at the University of Chicago before moving to UNLV.

**EDUARDO SOLA CHAGAS LIMA**

***Handel and the notion of an orchestra leader***

This paper contemplates Handel's engagement with the idea of an orchestra leader in the context of the musical scene in eighteenth-century Great Britain and Ireland. In particular, it considers how this engagement relates to his close and personal relationship with the English violinist Matthew Dubourg, for whose skills as a leader he demonstrated significant appreciation. Although Dubourg's life and few compositions rarely arouse the interest of musicologists, his well-known prominence as an accomplished violinist has much to say when it comes to orchestra leading, and his connection with Handel also sheds invaluable light on the latter's choice of performers.

This study is based mainly on a twofold investigation. Firstly, it discusses the various leading practices employed in eighteenth-century Britain, paying special attention to existing research on the Corellian tradition that was brought to the British Isles by Francesco Geminiani and other violinists during the diaspora of Italian musicians. As one of Geminiani's most notorious pupils, Dubourg embodied the idiosyncrasies of this foreign tradition, and he also adopted orchestra leading as one of the main aspects of his career as a violinist. Secondly, the paper explores Handel's choices of leader for the performance of his choral works, acknowledging examples of his own conducting from the harpsichord and other potential instances of shared leadership. Finally, the study discusses an occasion on which these two aspects intersect: the Dublin, 1742, performance of *Messiah*, led by Dubourg. In analysing this well-documented example, I draw parallels with other eighteenth-century performances of Handel's choral work.

The paper concludes with an evaluation of Handel's use of an orchestra leader, in which I argue that some of his performance preferences may have been influenced by both the practices in fashion throughout Britain at the time and his personal relationship with the musicians of his choice.

**Eduardo Sola Chagas Lima** graduated recently with an MA in Musicology from the University of Toronto, Canada. He also holds a BMus in baroque violin and historical performance from the Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag (The Hague), The Netherlands. Besides pursuing further postgraduate studies in historical musicology, he has also spoken and published on music perception and music cognition, among other topics within systematic musicology. He published his first book *O Menino e o Som* (The Boy and the Sound) in 2014 and performs internationally as a violinist in concerts, recitals and recordings.

**KONSTANZE MUSKETA**

***'Sung by Signor Riemschneider': Johann Gottfried Riemschneider (1691-1742), Zachow's pupil and Handel's singer on the London opera stage***

Handel and the two brothers Gebhard Julius (1687–1734) and Johann Gottfried Riemschneider (1691–1742) were pupils of Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow (1663–1712), the organist at the Marktkirche (St Mary's/Our Lady) in Halle. Gebhard Riemschneider (1657–1701), their father, was appointed Kantor at the same church; he was not only Zachow's colleague, but also his friend. The Riemschneider brothers were good singers, and they too became Kantors later on – the elder one in Halle at the Moritzkirche (St Maurice's), the younger, Johann Gottfried, at Hamburg cathedral, as the successor to the late Reinhard Keiser (1674–1739). By this time Johann Gottfried was already well known in Hamburg as an excellent singer. In the article on 'Händel' in his *Grundlage einer Ehren-Pforte* (1740) Mattheson called him 'unser bester Baritonist' (our best baritone). Riemschneider spent the 1729-30 season in London, where he sang the bass parts in Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, *Lotario* and *Partenope* at the King's Theatre. It is more than likely that the two former Zachow pupils knew each other from their time in Halle.

The paper examines Johann Gottfried Riemschneider's origins and career, the relationship between the Riemschneider, Zachow and Handel families, Riemschneider's work in Hamburg and his role as a performer of Handel's arias in London.

**Konstanze Musketa** is head of the Library, Archive and Research department of the Händel-Haus Foundation in Halle an der Saale. She was born in Halle and studied musicology there with Walther Siegmund-Schultze and Bernd Baselt. She was awarded her Diplomarbeit for work on the music manuscripts of Johann Friedrich Fasch and began working at the Händel-Haus Museum in 1980. Seven years later she gained her doctorate with a dissertation on Handel's chamber duets, works that she has since edited for the HHA (2011). She was president of the Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft 1995–2008 and Wissenschaftlicher Sekretär of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft 1999–2011. Her research interests include Handel, Fasch and local music history.

**JOHN H. ROBERTS**

***The London pasticci of 1730-31: Singers, composers, and impresarios***

In 1729, following the collapse of the Royal Academy of Music, a new opera company was launched under the joint management of Handel and Heidegger, who controlled the King's Theatre. During its first two seasons this company performed eight Handel operas and two *pasticci* of music by other composers, *Ormisda* (1730) and *Venceslao* (1731). The original performing scores of these *pasticci*, now in London and Hamburg, were part of Handel's personal collection,

and it has usually been assumed that he was primarily responsible for their compilation. This paper argues, however, that Handel had little direct involvement in either *Ormisda* or *Venceslao* except as a performer. Both operas appear to have been based in some way on scores supplied to the Royal Academy in 1726 by the former London impresario Owen Swiney, then living in Venice, though the musical contents were largely replaced. Handel's singers probably provided most of the arias out of their own repertoires. The musical style of the recitatives shows that they cannot be by Handel but were the work of a single unidentified composer, perhaps Pietro Castrucci, leader of the Haymarket orchestra. The whole process may have been masterminded by Heidegger.

**John H. Roberts** is Professor of Music Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, where he also headed the Hargrove Music Library from 1987 to 2007. He has written extensively on Handel, especially his borrowing from other composers, and edited the nine-volume facsimile series *Handel Sources* (Garland, 1986). His reconstruction of Handel's pasticcio opera *Giove in Argo* has been recorded on Virgin Classics and will be published in the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe.

#### **RANDALL SCOTTING**

##### ***The other Senesino: Handel's singer in context***

Operas written for the voice of Francesco Bernardi ('Senesino') by George Frideric Handel – including many of the best-known today, such as *Giulio Cesare*, *Orlando*, and *Rodelinda* – account for only one seventh of the 114 operas in which he is known to have performed during his 33-year career. These works by Handel are largely how Senesino's voice and abilities have been defined to date. What of the other operas? What new information can they offer on one of the most famous singers of the eighteenth century and his musical and dramatic abilities?

This paper will address elements of style, historical context, vocal range, and the technical and musico-dramatic demands of a selection of operas from Senesino's career by composers other than Handel, including Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747), Nicolò Porpora (1686-1768), Giovanni Maria Ruggieri (?1665-1724), Attilio Ariosti (1666-1729) and Giovanni Antonio Gaj (1690-1764). 'Handel's Senesino' will be placed in context, and the singer's apparent strengths at various points in his career will be addressed, including his début and his final years on the stage. Conclusions will be drawn by contrasting these operas with the better-known works of Handel, offering a view of Senesino beyond the few works for which he is most recognised today. A more complete understanding of Senesino's career and abilities will provide insight into how he may have been viewed by audiences during his own lifetime.

**Randall Scotting** is currently a PhD candidate at the Royal College of Music, where his thesis, ‘The Changing Voice of Francesco Bernardi (Senesino): Case Studies in Italian Opera, 1707-1737’, focuses on elements of the singer’s vocal and musico-dramatic facility as evidenced by extant musical manuscripts. He has presented his research to the British Society for Eighteenth Century Studies and at the Handel House Museum and the Foundling Museum in London, and at the Hobart Baroque Festival in Australia; in a forthcoming BBC4 documentary he discusses the castrato Giovanni Manzuoli and his relationship to Mozart. Randall also performs regularly as an operatic countertenor specialising in heroic Baroque repertoire.

#### **ANDREW SHRYOCK**

##### ***Thomas Lowe: Another tenor voice***

Handel’s Dublin tour (1741–42) is generally regarded as a watershed in the composer’s professional career, cementing the transition to large-scale theatre works in English. It seems Handel also may have regarded the journey as a scouting trip: the subscription series featured local voices, Handel remarked on specific soloists in correspondence, and he heard and employed singers who later appeared in London oratorio seasons. The tenor Thomas Lowe may have been among these individuals. Although a treble-voiced Lowe has been recorded as singing for Handel in the 1730s, the mature-voiced Lowe became known in 1740 as a singer of Thomas Arne’s music and an actor at Drury Lane. Indeed, he was with Arne in Dublin while Handel was there in 1742, and the two probably met during this period. In this paper, I argue documentary evidence and manuscript sources suggest that Handel was sufficiently impressed with Lowe (and sufficiently needy) to include him in the 1743 London oratorio season. On returning from Dublin, Handel revised works (*i.e.*, *Messiah* and *Samson*) to include substantive parts for his new tenor. While it is unknown whether or not Handel suspected early on what Charles Burney later observed about Lowe – ‘he could never be safely trusted with any thing better than a ballad’ – nevertheless, it was this voice lodged in Handel’s mind as he composed many of the oratorios, anthems and songs that mark the second half of the 1740s. Thus, this paper explores early stages of a collaboration that influenced Handel’s works until nearly the end of his compositional career.

**Andrew Shryock** is a musicologist at the Boston Conservatory (Massachusetts). His research examines intersections of music, literature, and aesthetics in the eighteenth century, specifically in the music of Handel. This interest extends also to hip hop. His work on these topics appears in books and journals, including most recently *This Is the Sound of Irony* (Ashgate, 2015). He has delivered papers at conferences including the American Musicological Society and the Handel Institute. Awards and fellowships include the Frank Hideo Kono Fellowship at the Huntington Library (California). Andrew also served as general manager of the early music ensemble Boston Camerata.

**NATASSA VARKA**

***Charles Jennens's version of Joseph and his Brethren***

Although *Joseph and his Brethren* is not the only Handel oratorio of which Jennens owned more than one manuscript score, it is unique in that the location of both scores is known. In the first of these scores Jennens made a staggering number of amendments to the words, music and structure of the oratorio, ranging from the alteration of tiny details to the deletion of around a fifth of the lines set by Handel. This heavily annotated score was then used as the source for the second score and its accompanying set of partbooks. As these manuscripts incorporate all of Jennens's amendments, they contain a version of the oratorio markedly different from any that Handel or Miller ever intended: they contain what is best described as Jennens's version of *Joseph and his Brethren*.

Jennens's numerous small-scale amendments shed more light on many aspects of his character, including his editorial mind-set, his approach to word-setting, and his attitude to Handel in the mid-1740s. The fact that he owned a second set of partbooks which contained the airs and duets that he had deleted shows that he thought them worthy of preservation and performance but did not consider them to have a place in the oratorio; an exploration of why he thought this leads to a better understanding not only of his approach to the adaptation of Scripture for oratorio, but also of his beliefs and commitments.

After graduating with a double First from King's College, Cambridge, **Natassa Varka** wrote an MPhil dissertation on *Saul*, which was awarded a Special Faculty Prize for an Outstanding Thesis. She is now halfway through a PhD on Jennens's copies of Handel's late works, supported by a generous award from the Handel Institute. Her research involves source studies and filiation, as well as contemporary politics and religion; she is also creating profiles of the scribes S1 and S2. In addition, she supervises undergraduates at various Cambridge colleges in harmony, counterpoint, figured bass, and aural skills, which she greatly enjoys.

**DAVID VICKERS**

***Handel and Giulia Frasi in context***

The Milanese soprano Giulia Frasi arrived in London in autumn 1742 to join Lord Middlesex's opera company at the King's Theatre. Initially a second-rank singer, over the next few years she performed in many productions that represent the post-Handelian taste of managers, music directors and supporters of Italian opera ventures in London during the decade immediately after Handel's decision to produce and perform only English oratorio-style works. However, from 1748 Frasi's Italian opera activities were concurrent with her appearances as principal soprano in all of Handel's concert seasons, and during the 1750s she also sang several times for Arne. After Handel's death she continued to be the leading

English oratorio soprano for his successors John Christopher Smith (junior) and John Stanley, performing both in revivals of Handel's old works and in their own new oratorios. The gist of this has been related most comprehensively by Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson in the *ODNB*, but I have undertaken a fuller reconstruction of Frasi's performance calendar of both operas and concerts in London from 1742 to 1774 and examined the extant manuscript and printed sources of music written for her (or at least sung by her in revivals and concerts).

Burney famously wrote that Frasi had a 'sweet and clear voice' and 'a smooth and chaste style of singing, which, though, cold and unimpassioned, pleased natural ears, and escaped the censure of critics'. It is my intention to redefine Frasi's attributes by presenting examples from Italian arias composed by Galuppi, Porpora, Gluck, Hasse, Pergolesi, Ciampi and Cocchi, and English music by Arne, Smith, Stanley and Hayes. I will argue that the repertory she performed across thirty years not only indicates changing styles and tastes in English musical culture at both the opera house and oratorio concerts, but also sheds valuable new light on musical and dramatic attributes familiar to us from the roles that Handel created for her (the Queen of Sheba, Susanna, Theodora, Iphis) – thereby enabling us to appreciate both Frasi's career and Handel's late musical achievements in a broader context.

**David Vickers** is a council member of the Handel Institute, co-editor (with Annette Landgraf) of *The Cambridge Handel Encyclopedia* and compiler of an assortment of scholarly literature for *Handel: The Baroque Composers* (Ashgate, 2011). Currently editing a collection of essays for Boydell & Brewer and working on an edition of *Partenope* for the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, he teaches at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, and is a musicological consultant for a variety of performance and recording projects.

**JUDIT ZSOVÁR**

***Transforming one another: Shaping Strada's vocal art – Inspiring Handel to new compositional thinking***

Handel's longest continuous collaboration with a leading singer took place between 1729 and 1737 with Anna Maria Strada del Pò, whom Burney defined as a soprano 'formed by [Handel] himself and modelled on his own melodies ... and he at last polished her into reputation and favour'. In the first years, Handel set Strada's maximum limits with respect to range, agility, stamina, *messa di voce* and *legato*, which he then synchronized with the embodied character and dramatic context, thus achieving final unity. This meant an important shift in Strada's artistic profile, leading to full maturity as Handel revealed her true pathetic sense and mingled it with her dramatic vein: through the 'care he took in composing for her, and his instructions ... he rendered her equal at least to the first performer in Europe'.

This process resulted in mutual transformation. Handel discovered the multi-coloured, unlimited entity of the female soprano voice, on one hand, and a new freedom, on the other, to apply vocal skills according to his artistic aims without pressure of vocal exhibitionism. He could experiment with asymmetric phrases, or let the melody pass through the twelve semitones in the middle section of an aria, thanks to Strada's superb intonation. Uncommon coloratura patterns requiring a wide range were linked to her voice; elsewhere her expressiveness and variety of timbre shone through the simplicity of a ten-bar lullaby. Furthermore, her powerful voice projection, together with her particularly high *tessitura* combined with sonorous lower notes, allowed Handel to compose richly orchestrated *castrato*-type arias for her. Strada's capacity for a thicker *legato* permeated compositional structures on a deeper level – a quality not generally found in the Handelian repertory of Faustina or Cuzzoni, nor in the composer's later works.

**Judit Zsovár** is a PhD candidate in musicology at the Liszt Academy Budapest. Her research topics are Anna Maria Strada, Handel's prima donna, and the relations between Baroque and Romantic *bel canto* vocal techniques. As a soprano, she made her début at the Vienna Konzerthaus with the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg under Ivor Bolton. Judit has performed Mozart and Cimarosa roles and interpreted Spanish music, and presents a wide-ranging Baroque repertoire with harpsichordist Fanni Edöcs. She studied with Marek Rzepka and has participated in workshops by Júlia Hamari, Krisztina Laki, Malcolm Bilson, Luca Pianca and Lorenzo Ghirlanda. Her coach is Stephen Hopkins of the Vienna State Opera.