

# THE HANDEL INSTITUTE

## NEWSLETTER

Two research articles, two news articles, two announcements and a report make up this issue. Blaise Compton explores the implications of a neglected hornpipe attributed to Handel, for which he has found additional sources, and Robert Rawson discusses the relationship between Handel and Pepusch in light of his recent recording of the latter's *Venus and Adonis*. David Vickers reviews the recent American Handel Society conference at Princeton University, while Susan Bloor and

Ruth Smith report on the opening of the new Charles Jennens Music School at Foremarke Hall, a preparatory school near the site of Gopsall. The announcements concern the publication of the latest *Handbook for Studies in 18th-Century English Music*, which marks the revival of a valuable series, and the next round of Handel Institute Research Awards, and we also include news of a recent *Theodora* study day in Manchester.

Colin Timms

### 'HANDEL'S HORNPIPE'

It is well known among Handelians and cataloguers that there is an untidy swarm of vagrant pieces – mostly songs – claiming the paternity of Handel. Some are publishers' adaptations, probably unauthorised, of genuine pieces, while others claim legitimacy from the composer's name on a song-sheet or in a collection such as *The Musical Miscellany*, or from anecdotal association. Let the song 'Molly Mogg' (HWV 228<sup>15</sup>) stand for all these.

However, there is one little piece to which his name probably was not added merely to increase sales. It was printed under the title 'Handel's Hornpipe' in 1730 and noticed by W. C. Smith,<sup>1</sup> but it does not appear in the standard catalogues of the composer's works. Two main questions arise. Who wrote the tune, and is it really a hornpipe? Even if Handel was not the composer, the piece points to matters of musical interest that outweigh its value as a tune, and its history forms a footnote to his biography.

It will be helpful to take the questions in reverse order. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the hornpipe was in triple time and often strongly syncopated.<sup>2</sup> It was normally based on a simple ground, alternating two pitches a tone apart, and organised in four-bar paragraphs as a changing descant over the ground, with one implied chord or bass-note per bar. It either finished on the final minim or crotchet of the last bar or supplied an upbeat figure implying a return to the start or the improvisation of further divisions on the ground. The structure is indicated by Ex. 1: the ground is supplied editorially in strain 1; in strain 9 interlocking roulades of quavers arise, and in the final strain (13) 'nothing is concluded'.

The situation started changing in the mid-seventeenth century, when John Playford's publications included hornpipes in 2/4.<sup>3</sup> In the following century duple time displaced triple and became known as 'Scots measure', and 2/4 was eventually superseded by 4/4. In addition, as

Ex. 1: Thomas Marsden, 'Heartsease, or The Saturday-Night Hornpipe', from *A Collection of Original Lancashire Hornpipes, Old and New, containing Divisions upon each* (London: Henry Playford, 1705).

<sup>1</sup> W. C. Smith, *Handel: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Early Editions* (London, 1960), p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> See John Ward, 'The Lancashire Hornpipe', in *Essays in Musicology: A Tribute to Alvin Johnson*, ed. Lewis Lockwood and Edward Roesner (Philadelphia, 1990), pp. 140–73.

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Dean-Smith, 'Hornpipe (ii)', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn (London, 2001), xi, 736–7.



Ward observed, after the Restoration and the reopening of the theatres ‘French dancing masters and composers for the stage brought the hornpipe into the theatre, formally and stylistically altered, eventually beyond recognition’.<sup>4</sup> The decades around 1700 also saw the introduction of the hornpipe into vocal music and the emergence of what might be called the ‘orchestral hornpipe’.

There are at least two vocal movements by Handel that are labelled ‘alla Hornpipe’. Both are in 3/4. The soprano solo ‘Orpheus could lead the savage race’ in his *Ode for St Cecilia’s Day* displays some traditional features of the hornpipe style, but although it may set feet a-tapping, it has lost close contact with the structure of the dance, which demands four- or eight-bar strains. The same can be said of the chorus ‘Now Love, that everlasting boy’ in *Semele*, although here the rhythmic element is less prominent and the designation probably signals the presence of just some of the emphatic triple-time hornpipe manner.

This holds true also for the famous D-major ‘alla Hornpipe’ in the *Water Music*, which is of such an elaborate nature – with its colourful orchestral antiphony, overlapping and irregular phrases, tonal excursions, and ABA structure with trio in the relative minor – as utterly to outclass any hornpipe that had gone before. What’s more, with its 4½-bar opening phrase it cannot have accompanied any dancing other than by trained professionals using specially devised choreography. The little F-major Hornpipe in the *Water Music*, with its simpler scoring and two balanced eight-bar halves, is much closer in style and spirit to the Purcellian model and could have been danced to as easily in a tavern as at court.

‘Handel’s Hornpipe’ is a bouncy little two-strain dance tune in duple metre and in G major (see Ex. 2). So far as I am aware, this Hornpipe is preserved in five printed sources dating from between 1726 and c. 1756, some of which were reprinted, and in one late eighteenth-century manuscript:<sup>5</sup>

- 1 *A Choice Collection of Country Dances*[.] *With their Proper Tunes, wherof many never before Publish’d, and in an easier Method to be understood than ever yet Printed*[.] Gathered, Composed and Corrected by Many of the Best Masters of this Kingdom[.] Dublin [...] John and William Neal [... 1726], p. 13 (‘Hendall’s Hornpipe’); the index has ‘Hendels Hornpipe’.
- 2 *The Female Parson: or, Beau in the Sudds. An Opera.* As it is acted at the New Theatre in the Hay-Market [...]

By Mr. Charles Coffey [...] London [...] Lawton Gilliver [...] and Fran. Cogan [...] MDCCXXX[.] p. 45: Act III, Air VI (‘Hendal’s Hornpipe’).

- 3 *The Compleat Country Dancing-Master Volume the Fourth*[.] *Being a Collection of all the Celebrated Country Dances now in Vogue.* Perform’d at Court, the Theatres, Masquerades and Publick Balls. With Proper Directions to each Dance. The Tunes fitted for the Violin, Hoboy or German Flute. London [...] J. Walsh
- 4 *Caledonian Country Dances. Being a Collection of all the Celebrated Scotch and English Country Dances now in Vogue, with Proper Directions to each Dance.* Perform’d at Court, and Publick Entertainments. For the Harpsichord, Violin, Hoboy, or German Flute Vol. II. Part I [...] London [...] J. Walsh [1748], Tune 323 (‘Handel’s Hornpipe’).
- 5 *Rutherford’s Compleat Collection of 200 of the most celebrated Country Dances both Old and New which are now in Vogue,* Performd at Court and all Public Assemblies with the newest and best Figures and Directions to each Tune, by Mr. Rose, for the Violin German Flute or Hoboy Voll. 1<sup>st</sup>. [...] David Rutherford [...] London [c. 1756], Tune [70] (‘Handel’s Hornpipe’).
- 6 London, British Library, Add. MS 29371 (an untitled collection of dance tunes compiled in the late eighteenth century, with additions by Dr Timothy Essex), f. 76v, tune 351 (‘Mr Handels Hornpipe’).

The earliest known source of the Hornpipe is 1, but Smith found the music in 2 – Charles Coffey’s ballad opera *The Female Parson* (first performed on 27 April 1730). This book includes genuine pieces by Handel. ‘Handel’s Hornpipe’ is prescribed for the song ‘Since wedlock is a state in life’; the words are not underlaid but can be made to fit the tune. The Hornpipe was required also for the song ‘Ye sprightly Beaux, I pray, make room’ in *The Conspirators. A Tragi-comic Opera, as it was acted in England and Ireland, without Applause* (Carrickfergus, 1749); this book does not give the music, and the words (on p. 53) do not easily fit the melody.

Every source presents a different version of the tune. Sources 1 and 6 give no time signature, while 2, 3, 4 and 5 use three different signatures (C, cut C and 2/4). All the versions share roughly the same implied harmony, but there are differences in the note-values and barring of the melody and in its shape and figuration. A couple of bars are missing from the second strain in 2; this may be an accident, though

each strain twice

Ex. 2: ‘Hendall’s Hornpipe’, from *A Choice Collection of Country Dances* (Dublin: John and William Neal, [1726]).

<sup>4</sup> Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>5</sup> More printed editions may yet come to light. For example, Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 264, refers to ‘an earlier collection’ in Dublin (National Library), containing ‘A Minuet by Mr. Hendell, and Hedel’s (*sic*) hornpipe’. This could be a reference to source 1, which, however, contains no minuet by Handel.



Ex. 3: 'Handel's Hornpipe', from *Caledonian Country Dances*, vol. 2, part 1 (London: J. Walsh, [1748]).

it does facilitate the fitting of the words to the tune. This idiosyncrasy is not repeated elsewhere, so this version was not the source for any of the others. Indeed, it seems impossible to establish which version is closest to the original form of the tune.

The Hornpipe is presented as an unaccompanied melody in all but one of the sources. In 4, however, it is given a noteworthy-Handelian bass line that may have turned the piece into a harpsichord solo or provided for continuo accompaniment (see Ex. 3).

Sources 3, 4 and 5 call for a violin, flute or oboe, but the range of the piece fits it only for violin. The engraving on the title-page of 5 shows four couples dancing to a quartet comprising oboe, two violins and a cello;<sup>6</sup> since the instrumentalists are not playing from music, perhaps the repertoire was held in their memory.

Sources 1, 3, 4, and 5 also provide full instructions for the dance itself, as was fairly common in social dance books of the period. The 'easier Method' promised on the title-page of 1 probably refers to these instructions, which are, however, more complex than those in the other volumes (there is nothing special about the engraving of the music). Sources 3, 4 and 5 place the tune in the context of 'court' dancing, but a drawing room, theatre stage, assembly room, village green, fairground or tavern would have been an equally suitable arena.

Despite the apparent confidence with which the Hornpipe is named, there is at present no means of fixing the paternity of the foundling on Handel. It contains nothing he could not have written nor anything that is unmistakably his. A personal name attached to a dance tune could be that of its composer (as in 'Felton's Gavotte'<sup>7</sup>) but could refer, alternatively, to its dedicatee ('The Bishop of Chester's Jig'; 'Princess Amelia') or to a choreographer. All of Handel's known hornpipes are in triple time, as are Purcell's, but the example under discussion is not. Another 'hornpipe' in C by Handel was published in *Thompson's Compleat Collection of 120 Favourite Hornpipes* (London, 1775), p. 10, but this

turns out to be the Gavotte in the overture to *Ottone*.

Is it significant that 'Handel's Hornpipe' makes its putative debut in Ireland? The Neals evidently depended on musical imports from England ('Likewise there are to be had all the New Peices [sic] as they come out in London'<sup>8</sup>), yet the Hornpipe is almost the only piece in his book that claims a connection with the world of mainstream establishment composers. Most of its contents appear to belong to vernacular traditions. While it contains many English and Scottish dance tunes that had been part of the English repertory for many years (e.g., 'Red House', 'Portsmouth' and 'Yellow Stockings'), it also presents several tunes that are almost certainly of local origin (such as 'The Humours of Dublin', 'Lastrum Pone', 'Bonny Lad' and 'Ragg'<sup>9</sup>) – probably the work of the 'Best Masters of this Kingdom' [Ireland] – and at least one ('Captain Mc.Cann') that is generally attributed to the great Irish harper Turlough Carolan (1670–1738). Like the Hornpipe, these Irish tunes soon spread to mainland Britain and were several times reprinted there. In the absence of a mainland source predating the Neal print, or of evidence that the Hornpipe is by Handel, it is possible that this piece, too, is by a local 'master' – one of those who 'Gathered, Composed and Corrected' the tunes and (unless the publisher did this) attached Handel's name to it as a compliment or an act of homage.

It is not certain whether Handel was well-known in Ireland by the date of the Hornpipe's publication. Brian Boydell documents many performances of his large-scale works after the Dublin première of *Acis and Galatea* (1 May 1734)<sup>10</sup> and states that reported performances of arias and duets are too numerous to catalogue. But he also records that the first known Dublin performance of a Handel aria occurred in 1725, when the soprano 'Signiora Stradiotti, lately arrived from Italy', sang 'A Cantata compos'd by Philip Percival Esq', consisting of arias from Handel's operas;<sup>11</sup> the music was presumably arranged (rather than 'compos'd') by Percival, a Dublin-based amateur musician.

If the Hornpipe originated in Ireland, which 'master' with

<sup>6</sup> Similar pictures are found in other dance collections: Wright's *Compleat Collection of Celebrated Country Dances* (London, 1740) shows an eight-part ensemble, including harpsichord.

<sup>7</sup> From William Felton's keyboard Concerto, op. 1 no. 3 (1744): a copy of this tune follows the Hornpipe in source 6.

<sup>8</sup> *A Collection [sic] of the most Celebrated Irish Tunes* (Dublin: John and William Neal, 1724), title-page; see second facsimile edition by Nicholas Carolan (Dublin, 2010), p. 53.

<sup>9</sup> Later known as 'The Irish Ragg'.

<sup>10</sup> Brian Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar 1700–1760* (Blackrock, c. 1988), p. 56ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.



an interest in Handel could have written it? We should perhaps exclude composers with no known link to Handel or the Neals – the various members of the Roseingrave family, Musgrave Heighington, Edward Viner and the obscure ‘Mr Ximenes’. In addition, we should probably exclude Johann Sigismund Kusser (Cousser), who may have met Handel in Germany or London and who worked in Dublin from 1707 to 1727. Kusser could conceivably have taken a hornpipe by Handel to Ireland but is unlikely, if he had written the tune, to have attributed it to Handel. Carolan cannot be entirely ruled out. Although his music was influenced by ancient bardic traditions and medieval dance forms,<sup>12</sup> he also enjoyed up-to-date Italian music, so much so that he could finish off tunes with a Corellian ‘jig’; furthermore, ‘Sig<sup>r</sup>. Carrollini’ is named as the composer of ‘Fairy Queen’ on p. 13 of the Neals’ *Collection* [sic] of the most Celebrated Irish Tunes (1724). However, tunes attributed to Carolan and containing accidentals are generally late and ‘dubious’, having been transcribed from performances given by later ‘traditional’ players.<sup>13</sup> The correctly managed modulation to the dominant at the end of the first strain of the Hornpipe might have been outside the range of his style.<sup>14</sup>

Another candidate is the Italian composer, cellist and gambist Lorenzo Bocchi.<sup>15</sup> Bocchi’s origins are unknown, but in 1720 he was in Scotland and three years later in Dublin. There he took part in concerts and became associated with the Neals, publishing with them a collection of sonatas and some short dances. The title-page of the Neals’ *Collection of ... Irish Tunes* draws attention to his setting and performance, ‘with diferent divitions after y<sup>e</sup> Italian manner’, of Carolan’s song ‘Plea Rarkeh na

Rourkough’.<sup>16</sup> Bocchi was influenced by several works by Handel, including the ‘Horn Minuet’ from the *Water Music*, part of the overture to *Il pastor fido* and the finale of the D-minor harpsichord Suite (HWV 428).<sup>17</sup> Having a relationship with the Neals, an interest in the popular tunes that make up their *Collection* and a knowledge of music by Handel, Bocchi must be considered a possibility as the composer of ‘Handel’s Hornpipe’.

Be that as it may, what can be said for certain is that the piece is an eighteenth-century hornpipe that appears to have been attributed to – and could have been written by – Handel, and that it therefore deserves a place in any list of the composer’s ‘doubtful’ works.<sup>18</sup>

Blaise Compton

<sup>12</sup> Joan Rimmer, ‘Patronage, Style and Structure in the Music attributed to Torlough Carolan’, *Early Music*, 15 (1987), pp. 164–74.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>14</sup> Triadic formations appear in Carolan’s tunes, but it seems that an understanding of functional harmony was not part of the older Irish harpers’ training.

<sup>15</sup> See Peter Holman, ‘A Little Light on Lorenzo Bocchi: An Italian in Edinburgh and Dublin’, in *Music in the British Provinces, 1690–1914*, ed. Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman (London, 2007), pp. 61–86.

<sup>16</sup> Bocchi’s setting, with these spellings, appears on pp. 6–9; another version, possibly copied from Bocchi’s, is found in source 2. For further information on the song and its association with Swift, see Donal O’Sullivan, *Carolan: The Life, Times and Music of an Irish Harper* (London, 1958), where it is referred to as ‘O’Rourke’s Feast’.

<sup>17</sup> Holman, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>18</sup> It has just been given one! See Hans Joachim Marx / Steffen Voss, *Die G. F. Händel zugeschriebenen Kompositionen, 1700–1800 (HWV Anh. B)* (Hildesheim, 2017), p. 241, HWV Anh. B 413, where Rutherford (source 5 above) is cited as the earliest source.

## RECORDING PEPUSCH’S *VENUS AND ADONIS* (1715):

### A TERCENTENARY METAMORPHOSIS

I was delighted to be awarded a Handel Institute Research Award in January 2015 to help with the costs of researching and recording Pepusch’s finest work for the theatre, his 1715 two-act English masque *Venus and Adonis*, with my ensemble The Harmonious Society of Tickle-Fiddle Gentlemen. The recording was released on Ramée (RAM 1502) in September 2016 and by November had been awarded the prestigious Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik. Not only was the recording a success, but the research side of the project should help challenge the frequently touted belief of a bitter rivalry between Pepusch and Handel, who were practically of different generations.

*Venus and Adonis* is one of four masques that Pepusch composed for Drury Lane between 1715 and 1717, presumably to help the theatre compete with the lavish entertainments at Lincoln’s Inn Fields [LIF] as well as the Opera. What the composer ultimately achieved is to shape the ingredients of a modern Italian *opera seria* into the mould of an English masque or afterpiece. It was premièred at Drury Lane on 12 March 1715 as an

afterpiece to the Beaumont and Fletcher play *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*. It consists of two ‘interludes’ (or ‘Acts’, as it is in the manuscript sources) for a cast of three singers (Venus, Adonis and Mars) with a total of fifteen solo arias, two duets, final chorus, substantial recitative (including several examples of *accompagnato* and *arioso*) and an orchestral overture for each act. The libretto was by the actor-manager Colley Cibber (1671–1757), whose antiquated (and occasionally poor) verse was probably saved from sharp critique by the high quality of Pepusch’s musical setting. The text is, as Koon has pointed out, occasionally ‘pure Cibberian bathos’,<sup>1</sup> but in spite of this – and the heavy public criticism that Cibber would soon face – the libretto did not get a hostile reception.

*Venus and Adonis* tackles one of the main obstacles to the successful importation of the modern Italian style to the English theatre in the early eighteenth-century – namely, that most of the English singers on the stage lacked the exhaustive training in singing *coloratura* opera arias (with virtuoso improvisations) as well as dramatic

<sup>1</sup> Helene Koon, *Colley Cibber: A Biography* (Lexington, Ky., c. 1986), p. 78.



*secco* recitative. Pepusch was ideally placed to overcome these obstacles through clever use of his musical and personal partnerships with two leading singers of Italian opera in London who could also sing in English: his future wife Margarita de l'Epine (c. 1680–1746) (often billed as 'the Italian lady'), who sang *en travesti* as Adonis, and the contralto Jane Barbier (d. 1757) as Venus. The small part of Mars was originally allocated to James Blackley – later a tenor at Cannons – but soon passed on to the young theatre singer Purbeck Turner (c. 1693–1717), who has only two short arias and one duet with Venus. Although Barbier was not a household name like l'Epine, by the time she moved to Drury Lane in 1715 she had three seasons at the Opera behind her, including roles in Handel's *Rinaldo*, *Il pastor fido* and *Teseo*.

From a Handelian perspective, *Venus and Adonis* marks the beginning of a period that suggests a collaboration of sorts between Pepusch and Handel. The most obvious part of this is that Handel seems to have used *Venus and Adonis* as a model for his *Acis and Galatea* of 1718. A table of contents might suggest a rather unsurprising outline of *Venus and Adonis*, but the two acts are anything but balanced. In our recording, the first act came in at just under 35 minutes, whereas the second was just over 50 minutes long – nearly double the length of a typical afterpiece. A number of factors contribute to this seeming imbalance. First, the arias of the second act are frequently longer, but the bulk of the additional time is accounted for by the length of the recitatives and *accompagnato*. Although a few of the arias are preceded by the very short recitatives one would expect from English theatrical music of the time, in other places Pepusch provides extended dramatic scenes in recitative – the longest is 63 bars, by far the longest example of recitative in English at the time.

The area of recitative in English is perhaps one of the most important signs of musical exchange between Handel and Pepusch. The problems of the English language and recitative are well known, but Pepusch adopted a particular approach in *Venus and Adonis* which enabled longer recitatives that might be more easily digested by the notoriously *secco*-resistant London audiences. The success of this approach (in musical and dramatic terms anyway) is attested to by the fact that it was soon adopted by Handel in his English-language works. Rather than long passages of uninterrupted *secco* recitative, Pepusch frequently inserts *arioso* passages in the middle or near the end of a recitative. Moreover, he avoids patches of repeated notes, which one finds so often in Italian recitatives. Occasionally he even uses snippets of melodic motives from the *arioso* passages (he never labels them) to link dramatic events within the masque.

Perhaps the most obvious link between *Venus and Acis* – amongst the arias – is the possible influence of Pepusch's Act 2 aria for Venus, 'Chirping warblers' (with its charming birdcalls played by an obbligato flageolet) and Handel's 'Hush, ye pretty warbling quire'. Pepusch, however, already owes this debt to Giuseppe Fedeli's 'Warbling the birds

enjoy' from the pasticcio *The Temple of Love* (1706). Unlike *Acis*, however, *Venus* does not have a comedic element – Mars and Polyphemus are not analogous characters. Moreover, Venus's final scene of fury and madness must surely be the most dramatic and gripping passage of music that Pepusch ever composed. Its combination of virtuosic *accompagnato* and *secco* recitative with vocal fireworks has no parallel in *Acis and Galatea*. My suspicion is that by the time of *Acis*, Handel knew enough about the London public to keep Italian wine in Italian bottles.

*Venus* also provides the earliest set of performing parts for an English operatic work (from the 1717 revival at LIF). Without going into other details here, the parts not only prove that part-sharing took place in the orchestra but also show that the double bass played in all the recitatives. Whether that is a practice carried over from the Italian opera is a topic for another time.

By November 1715 Blackley was replaced by another tenor, Purbeck Turner, the young son of the composer William Turner (1651/2–1740). Pepusch left Drury Lane in 1717 to take up the position of music director at LIF, and also around this time he became associated with Cannons, the residence of James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon (Duke of Chandos in 1719). The reason for Blackley's departure in 1715 is not known, but his involvement in singing English masques did not end then, as he almost certainly sang the role of *Acis* in the first private performances of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* at Cannons in 1718 – probably alongside l'Epine as the original Galatea. I would also second Graydon Beeks's suggestion that it was probably Pepusch who led the orchestra for the Cannons performances of *Acis*. According to the diary of James Brydges' younger brother, Rev. Dr Henry Brydges, Handel and Pepusch even dined together on at least one occasion (27 April 1718), just months before the probable première of *Acis*:

this day my Cosen Walcot, Col. Dobbens & I dined at Cannons where we met Dr Pepuis, Mr Handle, Dr Arbuthnot, Mr Desaguilliers, Captain Innwood & Mr Lowthorp. We were back at Stanmore by 7.<sup>2</sup>

Although areas of influence on Handel are evident, a direct comparison is not fair to either composer: there are no comedic characters in Pepusch's *Venus* with its dramatic and tragic ending, greater focus on virtuoso singing and much more extensive use of recitative. Moreover, Pepusch was nearly two decades Handel's senior – a difference of a generation in eighteenth-century terms. Finally, the appearance of James Blackley and (probably) l'Epine at the first Cannons performances of *Acis and Galatea* suggests a more congenial relationship between Pepusch and Handel than is generally thought. When Pepusch essentially retired from the life of professional composer and performer and focused on teaching and running the Academy of Ancient Musick (after 1726), it was he who oversaw Handel's oratorios performed there. Of particular note is the Academy's production of Handel's *Esther* under Pepusch's direction – a work that owes its genesis to

<sup>2</sup> Graydon Beeks, 'A Club of Composers', in Stanley Sadie and Anthony Hicks (eds), *Handel Tercentenary Collection* (London, 1987), 212.



Handel's time at Cannons. Hawkins suggested that on seeing those productions, Handel was more inclined to devote energy to the genre of oratorio.

Alas, subsequent music history became over-fascinated instead with stories of rivalries: l'Epine v. Tofts, Cuzzoni v. Faustina or Pepusch v. Handel. A great deal of the supposed rivalry between Pepusch and Handel was almost certainly imagined by Burney, who declared that 'Handel despised the pedantry of Pepusch'.<sup>3</sup> We are unlikely ever to learn meaningful details about their true relationship or much about how each viewed the other's work, but Burney's claim cannot possibly be true. As in the case of Gottfried Finger (c.

1655–1730), another European émigré, Burney seems to have been happy to pass judgment on a composer the bulk of whose music he could not possibly have known. The story of *Venus and Adonis* and its cast – through its forty or so appearances over fifteen years on the London stage – and its relationship with its musical cousin *Acis and Galatea* point less to a bitter rivalry between their composers than to the much greater importance of musical partnerships.

Robert G. Rawson

<sup>3</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, ed. Frank Mercer (New York, 1935), ii, 987–8.

## AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY CONFERENCE

APRIL 2017

Since leaving its University of Maryland home after the completion of Paul Traver's cycle of oratorio performances, the American Handel Society's festival and conference has been on the road. Having visited places as dissimilar as New Mexico, Iowa and Seattle, the meeting returned this year for the third time to Princeton University. Proceedings opened on the evening of 6 April with the Howard Serwer Memorial Lecture, in which John Butt (University of Glasgow) spoke eruditely and interestingly on 'Handel and *Messiah*: Harmonizing the Bible for a Modern World?', addressing such topics as how to comprehend the work in light of contemporaneous theological discourses, Handel's musical rhetoric, and the continuing popularity of the work in the context of present-day secularism.

The first day of papers (7 April) consisted of three sessions. 'Text, Music & Rhetoric' included a paper by Andrés Locatelli (Università degli studi di Pavia, Cremona) on the poetical sources and musical features of Handel's only Spanish-language cantata *No se emenderá jamás* (HWV 140). Fredric Fehleisen (Juilliard School and Mannes College, New York) presented a copious analysis of tonal features in 'I know that my Redeemer liveth', while Minji Kim (Andover, Mass.) offered an illuminating examination of Handel's use of the canon *Non nobis, Domine* in selected English choral works, most particularly 'I will sing unto to the Lord' in *Israel in Egypt*.

A session on 'Oratorio' featured two papers on dramatic characterisation and librettists' ideas: Kenneth Nott (University of Hartford) argued convincingly that *Alexander Balus* is unusually rich in operatic elements, and Ruth Smith (Cambridge) examined how Priests of differing ilks are portrayed in the English dramatic oratorios. The session on 'Singers' included papers by two scholarly countertenors: Randall Scotting (Royal College of Music) gave a fascinating overview of the history of the aria text 'Son qual nave' (made famous by Farinelli but, it turns out, not composed by his brother, Riccardo Broschi), whereas Lawrence Zazzo (University of Newcastle) speculated on who might have sung the Italian opera arias inserted into Handel's December 1744 revival of *Semele*. David Vickers (Royal Northern College of Music) considered Giulia

Fraasi's repertory of English-language music by Arne, Hayes, Stanley and Smith.

The day ended with a concert of selections from *Messiah* given at Trinity Church by the excellent Princeton University Chamber Choir, the capable period instrumentalists Nassau Sinfonia, some experienced soloists (Ryland Angel, Rufus Muller, Sumner Thompson) and some younger student sopranos, directed energetically by John Butt from the harpsichord. There was nothing with trumpet. In his pre-concert lecture Malcolm Bruno explained that his forthcoming Breitkopf edition of *Messiah* was being road-tested: he is seeking to present Handel's 1741 autograph version of the work as the main text (for the first time in print), with an alternative German singing text adapted from a translation by Herder. The result was an odd pasticcio-like *Messiah*, lacking half of the oratorio's music and with half of the selected numbers sung in German.

On the third day there were four sessions of papers. 'Scribes and Editors' got off to a fine start with Natassa Varka (University of Cambridge), who revealed and evaluated Charles Jennens's verbal alterations to James Miller's words in the Aylesford manuscript of *Joseph and his Brethren*. Donald Burrows (Open University) summarised much of what we know about copyists of Handel's music in London, which led to an animated discussion about the pressing need for an up-to-date and comprehensive resource sharing examples of copyists' handwriting. The session 'Performing Matters' included two entertaining and stimulating papers: Luke Howard (Brigham Young University) talked about his thorough analysis of tempo trends in commercial recordings of *Messiah*, questioning the received wisdom that nineteenth-century performances were lugubrious or inherently bad, and harpist Andrew Lawrence-King (Moscow State Opera Theatre) offered some thoughts on the identity of Handel's occasional harpists and their instrument-types.

A session on 'Opera' included papers on the authorship of the pasticcio *Catone* (by Carlo Lanfossi, University of Pennsylvania) and on Handel's use of sicilianas in his Royal Academy operas of the 1720s, in particular 'Ritorna, o caro' in *Rodelinda* (Elizabeth Lyon, Cornell University).



In the final session, 'Handel as Politics', David Hunter (University of Texas at Austin) discussed the possible interests in music among slave owners in Britain, the Caribbean and North America; Joseph Lockwood (University of Oxford) offered some fresh thoughts on the music for the coronation of George II, and Stephen Nissenbaum (Underhill, Vermont) presented a personal hypothesis that the 'Hallelujah' chorus was some kind of rejoinder by Jennens to the text of *Zadok the Priest*. The conference dinner was preceded by a fine chamber concert by Lawrence Zazzo and student instrumentalists, featuring the cantata *Vedendo amor*, 'Se in fiorito ameno prato' (*Giulio Cesare*) and three settings of 'Ombra mai fu' (Cavalli, Bononcini and Handel).

The fourth and final day began with a presentation by Ruth Smith and Matthew Gardner (Goethe University, Frankfurt) about the Handel Institute's ideas for an international collaborative research project to create an online resource devoted to the librettos of Handel's oratorios. Gardner also gave a paper on mid-eighteenth-century performances of oratorios for the benefit of London

charities, while Jonathan Rhodes Lee (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) discussed the strong dramatic characteristic of Sentimentalism in *Joseph and his Brethren*. Nicholas S. Lockey (Benjamin School) and John Burkhalter (Princeton University) reported on work in progress on Handel's music in the West Country in 1730–80, and Beverly Jerold (Princeton) shared some stimulating reception history from Johann Friedrich Reichardt's reviews of Handel concerts during his visit to London in 1785; apparently, a mixed programme by the Concert of Ancient Music was considerably better than a dreadful performance of *Samson* at Drury Lane, even though some of the musicians were involved in both.

Much of the success of the conference was due to the hard work of Princeton academics Wendy Heller and Ileri Chávez-Bárceñas. The American Handel Society announced that its next conference and festival, in 2019, would be hosted by the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, Bloomington.

David Vickers

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## CHARLES JENNENS RETURNS TO FOREMARKE

*The Handel Institute is grateful for permission to reprint this article, which first appeared in Handel News, 68 (January 2017).*

Handel's librettist Charles Jennens was the son of Elizabeth Burdett, daughter of Robert Burdett, 3rd baronet, of Foremarke, south Derbyshire. Jennens's parents were married on 11 December 1689 in the church which still stands, unchanged since it was built in 1662, in the grounds of Foremarke Hall. The Jennens and Burdett families were near neighbours: Gopsall Hall, to which Charles Jennens senior took his new wife, was only fifteen miles south.

Jennens perhaps inherited his ideological Jacobitism from his mother's family. When the Jacobite invasion of 1745 reached its farthest southern point, the army halted less than four miles from Foremarke, and Bonnie Prince Charlie spent the evening visiting local houses to drum up support. Reputedly he called at Foremarke, where the Burdetts were known as Stuart sympathisers, but they politely declined to 'come out'.

Handel's librettist kept up his connection with his mother's family, choosing his Burdett cousin, the 4th baronet, as one of his executors. They remodelled their houses at much the same time and used the same local architects, William and David Hiorn. Foremarke Hall is now the preparatory school for Repton School.

When Ruth Smith saw Richard Merriman, the headmaster of Foremarke Hall, on the hall's steps, animatedly discussing members of the Burdett family with their descendant Frank Gardner (on BBC TV's *Who Do You Think You Are?*), she wrote to ask if the school had any Jennens material. Soon she was being shown a portrait of Jennens's maternal grandfather in the hospitable headmaster's office.

Foremarke survived World War II army occupation better than Gopsall did, and the school has added several impressively appointed specialist blocks, including a music department. At the headmaster's suggestion, the governors, apprised of the Jennens connection, decided to name the music block the Charles Jennens Music School. The Handel House Museum kindly allowed reproduction of their Hudson portrait of Jennens, to hang in the Music School's entrance hall (with explanatory caption), and its unveiling was celebrated with a delightful and well-attended concert.

Foremarke has a strong musical reputation, and the concert endorsed it. A cello trio, as able as they were (very) young, performed an arrangement of the march for trumpet and organ, HWV 34 (a repeat: they had also played it on BBC Radio Derby at 7 am that day), and 12-year-old Alex Coleston-Shields shone in 'Where'er you walk' from *Semele*. Guest soprano Mary Nelson, accompanied by Foremarke and Repton staff, gave a compelling performance of 'Rejoice greatly', with sensitive and persuasive rubato on 'peace' of which Jennens would surely have approved, and of Handel's *Gloria*, in which the closing movement's coloratura was so radiantly and fluently delivered that attribution became immaterial.

Although he was a quite private person, Jennens would probably have been pleased to give his name to the ardent fostering of musicians of the future in his mother's home.

Susan Bloor, Director of Music, Foremarke Hall  
Ruth Smith, author of *Charles Jennens: The Man Behind Handel's Messiah*

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## FROM THE GERALD COKE HANDEL COLLECTION

### HANDBOOK FOR STUDIES IN 18TH-CENTURY ENGLISH MUSIC

After a gap of several years the annual *Handbook for Studies in 18th-Century English Music* has resumed with the publication of vol. 20 (2016). Articles relating to Handel include 'Organs and organists at the Foundling Hospital', by Donald Burrows, and a study by Matthias Range of 'Handel, Croft and the music for the Peace of Utrecht'. A further article by Rebecca Gribble, "'Purchasing poverty": the wages of eighteenth-century performers in London and Bath theatres', compares the salaries of musicians in specific venues. The *Handbook* is published by the Gerald Coke Handel Foundation and available from the Gerald Coke Handel Collection, The Foundling Museum (40 Brunswick Square, London, WC1N 1AZ), price £7 plus £3 p+p (£5 p+p overseas).

### 'WATER MUSIC' EXHIBITION

The Foundling Museum will be marking the 300th anniversary of Handel's *Water Music* with a new display (from 7 July to 6 October) that will include the earliest known source of the music, a manuscript on loan from the Royal Society of Musicians.

Katharine Hogg

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## HANDEL INSTITUTE RESEARCH AWARDS

The Handel Institute offers Awards in support of research projects involving the music or life of George Frideric Handel or his associates or contemporaries. The guidelines for applicants ([http://www.gfhandel.org/research/grants\\_research.html](http://www.gfhandel.org/research/grants_research.html)) are currently being revised and will be made available as soon as possible. In addition, the autumn issue of this *Newsletter* will include an invitation to apply for the next round of awards. In the meantime, readers may wish to note that the deadline for such applications will be **Friday 1 December 2017**.

## THEODORA IN MANCHESTER

Between 24 March and 1 April RNCM Opera gave five performances of a stage production of *Theodora* at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. The director was John Ramster, the conductor Roger Hamilton. The last performance, a matinée, was preceded by a public study session during which an appreciative audience of about fifty, including staff and students of the College, heard the following papers by Council members of the Handel Institute:

**Donald Burrows** (Open University): 'Handel in 1749–50 revealed in documents'

**Ruth Smith** (Cambridge): 'Thomas Morell's libretto for *Theodora*'

**Colin Timms** (University of Birmingham): 'The composition of *Theodora* and Handel's use of Italian musical sources'

**David Vickers and Cheryll Duncan** (RNCM): 'The first cast and performance history of *Theodora*'.

The study session concluded with a round-table discussion involving Roger Hamilton, John Ramster, Lynne Dawson (Head of Vocal Studies and Opera) and members of the cast, chaired by Amanda Babington (RNCM).