



THE HANDEL INSTITUTE  
NEWSLETTER

It is not often that a Handel autograph comes up for sale, but this is what happened in 2015. Furthermore, the autograph in question was a full score of a complete work that had been inaccessible for many years. Richard Chesser opens this issue with an account of its acquisition and significance for the British Library. Thousands of people must have performed Handel's music from a Novello vocal

score: the history and contribution of the Novello Handel Edition over the last 45 years are outlined here by its General Editor, Donald Burrows, who also reports on the annual Handel festival in Göttingen. Terence Best reviews this year's festival in Halle, and we end with announcements about forthcoming conferences and Handel Institute awards.

Colin Timms

## GRANVILLE REUNITED: A 'NEW' HANDEL AUTOGRAPH AT THE BRITISH LIBRARY

The British Library's acquisition of important research materials has remained at healthy levels even over the past few years, when financial pressures have been at their tightest. When particularly expensive items become available for purchase, additional funds are appealed for. That a significant number of these acquisitions have been in the field of music shows how lively the music market is, how well the British Library (BL) is known as a suitable repository for musical treasures, and how keen it is to continue its great tradition of music collecting and to support musicology in Britain and internationally. In recent years, for example, some of the BL's most important purchases have been music acquisitions, whether they be single items (e.g., *My Ladye Nevells Booke*, the draft score of Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance' March No. 6), larger collections (autograph manuscripts of Sullivan, Berkeley, Maxwell Davies; editions and manuscripts belonging to the late Christopher Hogwood) or business archives (Boosey & Hawkes, D'Oyly Carte Theatre Company).

A very recent acquisition, however, will be of great interest to Handeliens. It is well known that the BL holds most of the surviving Handel autographs, which form part of the Royal Music Library. Over a hundred years ago Streatfeild wrote that, apart from these, only a few others were in the possession of public institutions and that those in private collections could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand.<sup>1</sup> Since then, it is possible that only three Handel autographs have passed through the

salerooms. It is not surprising therefore that, when speaking about manuscripts which he particularly valued in his own collection, the writer Stefan Zweig remarked that Handel's were the rarest of all.<sup>2</sup>

The appearance of the autograph manuscript of Handel's vocal trio 'Se tu non lasci amore' in a catalogue of the Berlin auctioneers J. A. Stargardt, in March 2015, therefore attracted immediate attention. Though the possibility of acquiring such a rarity must have appealed to many international institutions, the estimate of €250,000 – €300,000 no doubt deterred all but a few. In the event it was bought by the US dealers J. & J. Lubrano, who subsequently offered it to the BL. After a lengthy period of negotiation, in which Julia Rosenthal from Otto Haas played a crucial role, agreement to purchase was reached in January 2017. It is a pleasure to record here the financial assistance of the Handel Institute towards this purchase, making a generous donation in memory of Anthony Hicks. Other contributions were received from the Friends of the National Libraries, the Friends of the British Library, and the legacy of my predecessor, Oliver Neighbour, who would no doubt be delighted to know that the funds he bequeathed for such a purpose have so soon been put to good use. The autograph has now been incorporated into the BL's collections as MS Mus. 1818 and is available for study in the reading room; in due course it will be added to the Digitised Manuscripts section of the BL website, alongside the Handel autographs already there (see Fig. 1).

1 See R. A. Streatfeild, 'The Granville Collection of Handel Manuscripts', *Musical Antiquary*, 2 (1910–11), pp. 208–24.

2 Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (London, 1943), p. 266.



Fig. 1: George Frideric Handel, autograph score of the beginning of 'Se tu non lasci amore' (HWV 201a): BL, MS Mus. 1818. By permission of the British Library Board.

'Se tu non lasci amore' is an example of a type of small-scale chamber work for two or three solo voices with basso continuo that was enormously popular in the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century. Not quite cantatas, they had developed from earlier secular forms such as monodies and madrigals, with Agostino Steffani establishing a reputation as a master of the form around 1700. Steffani preceded Handel as Kapellmeister in Hanover, and the inscription 'G. F. Hendel / Roma 1706' in a volume of Steffani's duets, also owned by the BL (Add. MS 37779), shows that Handel had some models before him when he composed 'Se tu non lasci amore'. Seven of Handel's duets and two trios date from his Italian period. They show elements of the musical style he was to develop most effectively and dramatically in the works of his maturity, after his arrival in London. The present trio has no recitative but employs counterpoint, homophony, solo arioso, and the texture so typical of the Baroque in which two treble voices perform a duet in thirds above the bass.

The text deals with the familiar subject of unrequited love, but the attribution of the words to Steffani's Hanover

librettist, Ortensio Mauro, is now questioned. Handel's inscription on the manuscript – 'G. F. Hendel / li 12 di luglio / 1708 / Napoli' (f. 15) – indicates that the work was completed in Naples in 1708, about a month after he had written the dramatic cantata *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* (HWV 72) for the nuptials of the Duke of Alviato. Initial analysis of the paper and stave-rulings, however, suggests that the work may have been started before Handel arrived in Naples, perhaps in Rome. Comparison with the autograph manuscript of *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, also held by the BL, may help us further in dating and placing the composition of 'Se tu non lasci amore'. In the early 1720s Handel set the text anew as a duet (HWV 193), though making use of a distinctive melodic phrase from his earlier work.

The autograph of the trio is an oblong quarto score written on sixteen folios of paper in four gatherings of two bifolios (not two of eight, as conjectured<sup>3</sup>), numbered 1–4 in the top left-hand corner. There are two four-stave systems – eight staves – on every page and significant text on all but two. Further analysis will confirm whether the watermarks are as proposed by Burrows and Ronish, who

<sup>3</sup> Donald Burrows and Martha J. Ronish, *A Catalogue of Handel's Musical Autographs* (Oxford, 1994), p. 267.



did not have proper access to the manuscript when compiling their catalogue. Handel's music and verbal text is fluent, relatively neat, and with no substantial evidence of revision or working-out. The manuscript is in very good physical condition, the inner leaves showing hardly any sign of wear – a result of its having been in private hands for so long.

'Se tu non lasci amore' exists in two forms, this manuscript being the only known autograph of the complete version (HWV 201a). Most subsequent copies and editions, including Chrysander's, present a shorter version (HWV 201b) in which the final 52 bars of the first section are replaced by a few bars of coda for the figured bass. That Chrysander did not publish the longer version is difficult to understand, since his quoting the date and place of composition suggests that he was aware of the present manuscript: perhaps the information was reported to him and he did not see the manuscript himself. As a consequence, the original version of the work was not published in authoritative form until the edition by Konstanze Musketa in the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* in 2011, and even this may have been prepared without direct access to the autograph, of which the owner at that time was reported as 'unknown'.<sup>4</sup>

The provenance of the manuscript presents an interesting narrative. For a long time Handel's inscription was the only proof that the composer visited Naples. At some later date he gave the manuscript to his friend Bernard Granville (1709–75), who noted (f. 16v) that it is 'the only Copy extant' and that Handel had also given him an edition of Johann Krieger's *Anmuthige Clavier-Übung* (1698), which he regarded highly. Granville went on to record Handel's view that a good keyboard player must begin by learning on the clavichord rather than the organ or harpsichord – a minor point on musical education, but not without interest since it stems from the composer himself. Thereafter the autograph was evidently loaned to King George III, who in 1785 returned it with a 'Song in Eight Parts' (now lost) to Granville's sister, Mary Delaney, together with a letter in his own hand that has remained with the manuscript to the present day. The fact that this letter, which testifies to the king's knowledge of (and enthusiasm for) Handel's music, and the autograph of 'Se tu non lasci amore' are now united in the BL with other Handel manuscripts from the Granville collection – 37 volumes of copies (Egerton MSS 2910–16) – makes the present acquisition additionally gratifying.

The autograph of the trio and all the volumes of manuscript copies remained in the Granville family into the nineteenth century. Financial pressures caused them to be offered for purchase by the British Museum (BM) in the mid-1850s, but the negotiations came to nothing and so the collection was offered for sale by Puttick & Simpson in 1858. On that occasion the manuscripts – autograph and copies – were bought by a cousin, Lady

Augusta Hall, and thus remained in the family until being put up for sale at Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge in 1912. In the following year the trio was auctioned by Henrici in Berlin, where it was purchased by Siegfried Ochs (1858–1929). It then passed to Louis Koch (1862–1930) and, on his death, was inherited by his daughter Marie (b. 1895), who married Rudolf Floersheim (1897–1962). The last recorded owner was their son, Georges Floersheim (d. 1997), whose family consigned it to the Stargardt sale.

On reading the foregoing account, it is easy to overlook a puzzle, or a gap in our understanding. The autograph trio and the 37 volumes of copies originally formed part of a single collection. The copies had long been appreciated as important sources (Burney had written about them at the time of the Handel centenary celebrations in 1785) and were bought by the BM. Why did the Museum not also buy the autograph which, as Streatfeild had acknowledged, was the jewel in the Granville collection? After all, in 1911 the BM had received the loan of the Royal Music Library, with nearly 100 volumes of Handel autographs: it would have made perfect sense to acquire the autograph of the trio at the same time as the copies.

One can only speculate on what happened, but one vital piece of evidence is the fact that the BL catalogue entry for the Granville copies gives the acquisition date as 1915, not 1912. The manuscripts were sold by Sotheby's on 29 March 1912 (as lot 459), but not to the BM: the Museum's annotated copy of the sale catalogue, now held by the BL, indicates purchase by the dealer Attwood for £105. On that date, too, the autograph of the trio (lot 460) went for £310 to the dealer Sabin, after which, as we have seen, it developed a life of its own. The manuscript copies, however, appeared for a second time at Sotheby's on 22 December 1915 (lot 440), and on this occasion they were bought by Quaritch for the BM, for £50.

Unfortunately, no departmental records have been identified showing how the BM regarded these prospective acquisitions a hundred years ago. At that time, however, the acquisition budget for the entire Department of Manuscripts was around £1,800 per annum, supplemented with up to £250 from additional sources such as the Bridgewater and Farnborough funds.<sup>5</sup> In 1912, therefore, even £105 for the copies was a considerable amount, while the hammer price of £310 for the autograph was a proportionately huge figure, suggesting great interest and very competitive bidding. Perhaps this was a consequence of publicity surrounding the arrival of the Handel autographs in the Royal Music Library the previous year and of the realisation that, as Zweig was to recognise, opportunities to acquire Handel autographs are very rare; the publication of Streatfeild's article on the Granville collection in 1910/11 must also have heightened interest amongst collectors. In 1912, therefore, the BM may simply have been outbid in its attempt to buy the autograph, having not bid for the copies (the previous lot)

4 Georg Friedrich Händel, *Kammerduette; Kammerterzette* (Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, Ser. V, Bd. 7), ed. Konstanze Musketa (Kassel, 2011), p. 195.

5 P. R. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753–1973* (London, 1998), p. 441.



in order to save funds for the prize item. Evidently no deal was struck afterwards between Attwood and the BM, so three years later the copies were again consigned for sale.

Whether or not the BM bid for the copies in 1912, it purchased them at this second opportunity in 1915. One can imagine that in wartime the market was less buoyant. In addition, since the BM had a virtual monopoly on Handel autographs, perhaps no other institution was interested in acquiring copies whose significance could properly be appreciated only alongside the primary sources; or perhaps for altruistic reasons no other institution wanted to stand in the BM's way – a sentiment not unknown today. For whatever reason, the purchase price was now less than half that of three years earlier, and Attwood, who must have bought the material speculatively without commission in 1912, made a significant loss. Even

though the price had come down, however, the fact that the BM did not make the purchase with regular funds, but had to draw on the Farnborough bequest, suggests how straitened its finances were.

The significance of the acquisition of 'Se tu non lasci amore' is not merely that it reunites material which formerly belonged to the Granville collection. More important is the fact that the autograph manuscript of a complete, substantial work from Handel's early years in Italy is now publicly available for study at first hand, not only for its own intrinsic reasons but also in relation to the wealth of other Handel material held by the BL.

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## THE NOVELLO HANDEL EDITION: A HISTORY AND A MEMOIR

In the course of preparations for a performance of *Messiah* I became interested in the sources of the movement 'How beautiful are the feet', and this led to my reconstruction of Handel's *Anthem on the Peace*, of which I conducted the first performance (since 1749) in 1973. I naturally wondered about the possibility of publication, but five years elapsed before the idea came to life, as the result of a conversation with Watkins Shaw during a visit to the Parry Room library at the Royal College of Music.

It so happens that this coincided with the foundation of a new series of publications as the Novello Handel Edition (NHE), with Shaw as the General Editor. The publishing house of Novello has a long and honourable history in the publication of Handel's choral music, beginning with innovative vocal scores in the 1840s.<sup>1</sup> The expansion of choral singing reflected in the Crystal Palace Handel Festivals provided a basis for commercial expansion, but in parallel with this Novellos also developed the publication of Handel's lesser-known oratorios along with the staple repertory of *Messiah*, *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Israel in Egypt*. The impetus was lost in the first half of the twentieth century, but revival began with Shaw's edition of *Messiah*, timed to coincide with the Handel anniversary year in 1959. Occasional new editions appeared (Walter Emery's *Dettingen Te Deum* in 1962 and Shaw's *Utrecht Te Deum* in 1968), but by the 1970s there was a new environment, in scholarship and in the 'authentic' performance (and recording) of Handel's works. The Novello Handel Edition met a need in this situation, adding new repertory and providing for the still-active British choral tradition by supplying modern editions to replace the old vocal scores. Thus, the *Anthem on the Peace* happily came into print and, in a way that I could not have foreseen, I became further involved, first as the editor of *Alexander's Feast* (a consequence of another of my performances) and

then, from 1991, as General Editor in succession to Shaw.

From the beginning of the NHE, the intention was that it should be both 'scholarly' and practical. The music and words are based on a careful critical inspection of all the relevant sources, to establish the details of the texts and the content of Handel's various performing versions; with major works, this inevitably entails extended first-hand study of the performing scores at Hamburg. The main point of public contact is through the vocal score, where essential information from the sources (and some matters relating to performing practice) need to be covered in a preface.

Equally important, however, is that the keyboard accompaniment should be playable by a musician of average virtuosity who may not have seen the music before the first choir rehearsal. The keyboard accompaniments in old-style Novello vocal scores included many passages only theoretically capable of execution (with 'orchestral' left-hand octave doublings), even given the assumption of very sedate tempos: one of the principles of the new edition was to maintain clarity of the bass part in the accompaniment. The Edition had also to cater to the practical needs of a wide range of performing groups, from fully professional Baroque ensembles to amateur choirs around which soloists and orchestra are employed. Thus, it was essential that the hire material should contain a practical realisation of the continuo parts that could be used by non-specialists and also serve as a working basis for creative professionals.

One consequence of this was that an editor had to do everything three times: edit the score, construct the vocal score and write the keyboard realisations. In the case of oratorios, this actually meant four times, with separate parts for harpsichord and organ (as in the surviving original parts for *Alexander's Feast*). This did, however, provide an opportunity to encourage correct usage, by

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<sup>1</sup> See Donald Burrows, 'Making the "classic" accessible: Vincent Novello's vocal scores of Handel's Oratorios', *Händel-Jahrbuch*, 53 (2007), pp. 103–20.

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following Handel's practice: in the airs, don't give the organist any music (except, occasionally, *tasto solo*). Furthermore, my first years of writing the music meant, literally, that the full score of the *Anthem on the Peace* was written on 24-stave acetate sheets, while the vocal scores were written in black and red ink in uncountable manuscript books. Up to 1990 these were sent off to the engravers in Borough Green; I regret not having seen the men at work with their chisels, though I did see the comparable men (and women) at Leipzig in 1990. It is always a pleasure to look back at the solidity of the hand-engraved music of the earlier NHE editions, which, compared with the thinner, computer-set images of the more recent volumes, have the advantage of legibility in adverse lighting conditions on stage or in church.

Another change came over the Edition in 1993, when the page size of the vocal scores increased and the NHE became part of a larger enterprise in the Novello Choral Edition. Changes in commercial circumstances now mean that the recent edition of the *Comus* music will be the last in the series. I was aware throughout that publishers were more dependent on rights than on sales, and that many performers will make use of the work of editors and publishers but stop short of committing to the use of a published edition, even though this may represent a relatively small proportion of their overall costs. The situation has also been changed by 'do-it-yourself' computer programmes. But while the music remains available in print, the Edition is not dead, and the achievements of more than thirty-five years, as listed below, are substantial, offering performers a repertory not only of Handel's major oratorios but also of his Latin church music and his music for the Chapel Royal.

### THE NOVELLO HANDEL EDITION

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| <p>1978 <i>Let God arise</i> (HWV 256a), ed. Janet Beat</p> <p>1979 <i>Dixit Dominus</i> (HWV 232), ed. Watkins Shaw<br/><i>The Ways of Zion do mourn</i> (HWV 264), ed. Watkins Shaw; includes alternative text for Part I of <i>Israel in Egypt</i>, to go with the Novello edition of Parts II and III</p> <p>1981 <i>The Anthem on the Peace</i> (HWV 266), ed. Donald Burrows; first edition<br/><i>Messiah</i> (HWV 56), ed. Watkins Shaw; revision of his 1959 edition; further revised version 1991</p> <p>1982 <i>Alexander's Feast</i> (HWV 75), ed. Donald Burrows; includes alternative movements for Handel's 1736 and 1751 versions</p> <p>1984 <i>Theodora</i> (HWV 68), ed. Watkins Shaw</p> <p>1985 <i>Nisi Dominus</i> (HWV 238), ed. Watkins Shaw</p> <p>1988 <i>As pant the Hart</i> (the orchestrally accompanied setting, HWV 251a/c), ed. Donald Burrows; the first edition to present the Chapel Royal and <i>Oratorio</i> versions of the anthem</p> | <p><i>Laudate pueri Dominum</i> (HWV 237), ed. Watkins Shaw</p> <p>1990 <i>Three Antiphons and a Motet for Vespers</i> (HWV 243, 235, 240 and 241) and Chants for Vespers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, ed. Graham Dixon; with <i>Dixit Dominus</i>, <i>Nisi Dominus</i> and <i>Laudate pueri Dominum</i> this provides for a full reconstruction of Handel's music for Vespers (1707, Rome)</p> <p>1993 <i>Belshazzar</i> (HWV 61), ed. Donald Burrows; includes variant movements for Handel's 1745 and 1751 versions</p> <p>1994 <i>My song shall be alway</i> (HWV 252), ed. Damian Cranmer<br/><i>Utrecht Jubilate</i> (HWV 279), ed. Watkins Shaw; complements the Novello edition of the <i>Utrecht Te Deum</i>, ed. Watkins Shaw (1968)</p> <p>1999 <i>Judas Maccabaeus</i> (HWV 63), ed. Merlin Channon; Handel's 1750 version; includes alternative music for the 1747 and 1758–9 versions</p> <p>2000 <i>As pants the Hart</i> (organ-accompanied setting, HWV 251a), ed. Donald Burrows</p> <p>2002 Four Coronation Anthems (HWV 258–261), ed. Donald Burrows and Damian Cranmer</p> <p>2005 <i>Samson</i> (HWV 57), ed. Donald Burrows; gives the original 'long' version from 1743, and the shorter scheme from Handel's later performances</p> <p>2007 <i>This is the day</i> (HWV 262), ed. Donald Burrows</p> <p>2008 <i>O praise the Lord with one consent</i> (HWV 254), ed. Graydon Beeks</p> <p>2009 <i>Ode for St Cecilia's Day</i> (HWV 76), ed. Donald Burrows; includes variant movements for Handel's 1739 and 1743 versions</p> <p>2011 <i>Te Deum</i> in A major (HWV 282), ed. Donald Burrows<br/><i>Let God arise</i> (HWV 256b), ed. Donald Burrows; Chapel Royal version; a partner to the <i>Te Deum</i> in A major</p> <p>2013 <i>In the Lord put I my trust</i> (HWV 247), ed. Damian Cranmer; includes alternative arrangements of the ensemble movements, for SATB choir</p> <p>2014 <i>L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato</i> (HWV 55), ed. Donald Burrows; includes alternative music for Handel's three- and two-part versions of the work</p> <p>2016 <i>Comus</i>, ed. Colin Timms; reconstructs performances (including some music by Arne) for which Handel composed a new finale (HWV 44); first edition</p> |
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**Donald Burrows**



## GERMAN HANDEL FESTIVALS, SUMMER 2017

### HALLE

A couple of years ago, as reported in last autumn's *Newsletter* (vol. 27, no. 2), the City of Halle authorities decided to extend the period of the annual Händelfestspiele. The change was unwelcome to visitors from abroad – mostly from the USA and the UK, including members of the Editorial Board of the *Hallsche Händel-Ausgabe* (HHA) – and there have also been criticisms from within Germany itself. But although I therefore missed the traditional opening ceremony with speeches and music, this year's festival offered a wealth of fine performances of some of Handel's greatest works. These, combined with friendly hospitality and good eating and drinking among friends, made the festival as enjoyable as ever.

The main event at Halle is always a production at the Opera House, and in recent years it has usually been the première of one of the latest works to have been published in the HHA. This year it was different, in that it was a staged presentation of *Jephtha*, based on the edition by Kenneth Nott published in 2009. It is obvious that the staging of oratorios can present problems: this performance was indeed dramatic, with dozens of extras and a lively production. In general, however, this did not spoil one's enjoyment of one of Handel's greatest works: the music, which was very well played and sung, always trumped what was happening on the stage.

As always the stage-director felt compelled to add his own interpretations. The most egregious of these occurred near the end, after the Angel had appeared (*angelus ex machina!*) to deliver God's solution to the prospect of Jephtha's daughter Iphis being condemned to death because of her father's rash vow – namely, that she should be spared but consigned to perpetual virginity. When the Angel had finished, Iphis advanced to the edge of the stage and cuffed the ear of the little boy who had sung the role. The libretto makes clear that Iphis accepts the deal, so what were we to make of this incident? Either she had welcomed martyrdom and the little beast had spoiled it, or she considered perpetual virginity distasteful. As always, in such cases of trying to interpret the stage-director's notion, her action was completely baffling – as was a trivial introduction to the overture on a few wind instruments, played three times, and a foolish invasion of the auditorium by some of the extras.

Many years ago our revered departed colleague Winton Dean wrote this now famous judgment: '*Deborah* is a failure'. His reasoning, of course, was the fruit of his thesis that the oratorios are dramatic works. However, most people now agree that if we listen to this piece, in which much of Handel's recent music was offered to an audience that had never heard it in its original setting (most obviously the Coronation Anthems), it is musically very powerful. The Halle performance was given by a Polish ensemble from Cracow: it was splendid, and the

work came over well, although to my ear some of it was taken too fast.

Among the subordinate themes of the festival was the question of the authenticity of works attributed to Handel somewhat doubtfully. One event on this theme, in the beautiful surroundings of the great hall in the Leopoldina, was a concert of six chamber works (trio sonatas and concertos); one of them was identified as being by Telemann, while I and my friends were convinced that in the other five works we heard nothing by our composer.

Another concert that might have been considered a fringe event turned out to be magnificent. It was given in the Bartholomäuskirche in Giebichenstein, a northern suburb of Halle, by a group of four solo singers accompanied by a viola da gamba and keyboards (organ and harpsichord). We had Handel's 'Alleluja amen' settings, and anthems by Blow, Purcell, Croft and Zachow. I made a note on my pad: 'Utterly superb; the best thing so far'. *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, one of the finest of the works that Handel composed in Italy, was given in the Aula (main hall) of the University, and once again was spectacularly beautiful.

The final performance that I attended was of *Giustino*, in the Goethe-Theater at Bad Lauchstädt. A visit to that lovely place is always, for me, one of the highlights of the festival. On hearing that the production was to be a marionette show, I was somewhat apprehensive, but in the event it was a revelation. The puppets were not a barrier to enjoying the work: they were life-size and performed on the full stage, while the singers were in the upper side-galleries. For some strange reason that I cannot explain, this format made me listen to the splendid music – *Giustino* really is a fine piece – without having to bother following the plot and working out who was doing what to whom. Don't ask me to explain that, gentle reader; just attribute it to the fact that your reporter is in his dotage.

At the annual meeting of the Händel-Gesellschaft (German Handel Society) there was a presentation by a former Intendant of the Handel House, Edwin Werner, of all the surviving images and portraits purporting to be of the young and the more aged Handel. He showed slides of all of them, and tentatively identified one as the most likely to represent the composer in his youth. The musicological conference was on the theme 'Between genius and plagiarist: Handel's compositional method and its interpretation' – a familiar concept that has sometimes obsessed Handelians. Among many interesting papers were those by the senior American and English scholars Graydon Beeks, Donald Burrows and John H. Roberts, and by their younger colleagues Matthew Gardner, Jonathan Rhodes Lee, Mark Risinger and Silas Wollston. It is encouraging that Handel scholarship is in such vigorous health among a new generation of scholars.

Terence Best



## GÖTTINGEN

A couple of decades have passed since I last visited Göttingen, so it was a pleasure to renew my acquaintance with this attractive provincial German city, where the University had been founded in the 1730s by Elector Georg August. Since the Elector doubled as King George II, the university's opening ceremonies were reported in London newspapers. The Göttingen theatre has an honourable place in the history of modern revivals of Handel operas, beginning in 1920, and this year's programme showed that the annual festival is in excellent artistic health under the management of Tobias Wolf. There was a full and varied programme of events from 11 to 28 May, with a production of Handel's opera *Lotario* as the centrepiece.

*Lotario* is not well known, but it is good enough in both musical and dramatic terms to deserve a place in the modern performing canon. First given in 1729, it was Handel's first opera for the new venture that he undertook in collaboration with Heidegger to maintain opera at the King's Theatre after the financial collapse of the Royal Academy of Music. This meant an entirely new cast: no doubt Londoners regretted the absence of Senesino, Cuzzoni and Faustina, but the score suggests that Handel enjoyed the challenge of making the best of his new voices. Although attention tends to focus on Bernacchi, the new castrato, the key to the drama of *Lotario* lies in the two competing women, Adelaide and Mathilde. (Reports of Handel's rehearsals show that this was matched by the competition between the singers of the roles, Strada and Merighi, and Alan Kitching told me that it was the problem of finding suitable performers for these parts that had made him delay the first British revival of the opera until 1975.) Suffice it to say that, in Göttingen, Marie Lys and Ursula Hesse von den Steinen rose brilliantly to the vocal and dramatic challenges, and were well complemented by the performances of Sophie Rennert as Lotario, Jorge Navarro Colorado (Berengario), Jud Perry (Idelberto) and Todd Boyce (Clodomiro), and by the playing and pacing of the score by the Festspiele Orchester Göttingen under Laurence Cummings's direction.

There was also a performance of Handel's opera *Silla*, at the Stadthalle, by a good group of soloists accompanied by Ensemble 1700, directed by Dorothee Oberlinger. *Silla* may be described as a 'phantom of an opera': a complete copy of Handel's score survives, and one copy of the wordbook dated in London on 2 June 1713, but there is no record of a production (the Göttingen programme note suggested a performance at Burlington House, but the libretto obviously required the stock sets at the King's Theatre). *Silla* was the last of Handel's operas to receive a modern revival, but if the listener can forget the pre-echoes of music that Handel subsequently reused, it is a musical drama worth performing and attending. The libretto opens with a triumphal procession accompanied by 'military instruments', for which there is no provision in Handel's score. In this performance the gap was filled

by one of his later marches, including the use of a trumpet; this led to the curious further addition of the opening section of 'Eternal source of light divine' (with the trumpet representing the alto soloist) just when we were ready for the final *coro*.

This solecism aside, the performance was very engaging throughout, not least because of a production style that contrasted refreshingly with that of *Lotario*. Authenticity in musical performance was matched by appropriate eighteenth-century costumes and gestures, good singing and, above all, respect for the stage directions: 'Silla solo' was unencumbered. What was lacking were the necessary scenic effects, since the production was presented on the bare stage of the Stadthalle; but this did not add up to a 'concert in costume': there was strikingly effective accumulation to the drama as the chain of arias proceeded.

I regret that my schedule did not allow me to balance the operas with the oratorio performances (*Israel in Egypt* and *Messiah*), the Galaconcert with Dominique Labelle (which included Telemann's *Ino* cantata) or the many interesting events that illustrated the Festival theme of 'Faith and Doubt' in this Luther anniversary year. I was, however, able to attend a rehearsal of the *Brockes Passion*, with an array of good soloists and the Festival Orchestra directed by Laurence Cummings, in which the work emerged as stronger and more dynamic than I remembered it from previous encounters in performance.

Donald Burrows

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## HANDEL INSTITUTE AWARDS

### CONFERENCE AWARDS

Handel Institute Conference Awards are intended to help individuals attend an overseas conference to read a paper on a Handel-related subject that has already been accepted by the conference organisers. The awards, which relate to the cost of travel and/or accommodation, are open to UK residents who wish to attend a conference elsewhere and to overseas residents who wish to attend one in the UK; preference will be given to postgraduate students and early-career academics. For further details see <http://www.gfhandel.org/handelinstitute/hi-grants.html>

Applications, before expenditure is incurred, to Dr Helen Coffey ([helen.coffey@open.ac.uk](mailto:helen.coffey@open.ac.uk)). Deadlines: **30 November 2017; 30 April** and **31 August 2018**.

### RESEARCH AWARDS

Handel Institute Research Awards are intended to help individual scholars pursue a research project relating to Handel or his associates or contemporaries. No single award will exceed £1,000, but more than one award may be made. Awards may not be used to pay university or

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college fees. There is no application form. Applicants should submit:

- an explanation of the research to be undertaken (what, when, where, how and why) and the intended output;
- an itemised statement of the expenses to be incurred;
- details of any other funding (for the same project) that has been applied for or received;
- two references (it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that these arrive; the Handel Institute does not solicit references).

Applications, before expenditure is incurred, to Dr Helen Coffey ([helen.coffey@open.ac.uk](mailto:helen.coffey@open.ac.uk)).

Deadline: **30 November 2017**.

### HANDEL OPERA PRODUCTION GRANTS

The Handel Institute offers grants of up to £5,000 towards a production of an opera by Handel. The production should be planned to take place by the end of 2019. The production company may be professional or amateur or a combination. For further particulars see <http://www.gfhandel.org/handelinstitute/hi-grants.html>

Applications and queries to Dr Ruth Smith ([res1000@cam.ac.uk](mailto:res1000@cam.ac.uk)). Deadline: **30 November 2017** (results will be made known in mid-January 2018).

## FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

### MUSIC IN 18TH-CENTURY BRITAIN

#### 33rd Annual Conference

24 November 2017

The Foundling Museum, London, WC1N 1AZ

#### Programme

- 10.00 *Coffee and Registration*
- 10.15 **Cheryll Duncan** (RNCM) – Musical life in the King's Bench Prison *circa* 1760: new evidence from the Courts of Common Pleas and Exchequer
- 10.45 **Colin Timms** (Birmingham) – First and Last: Steffani and the Academy of Ancient Music
- 11.15 *Coffee and (from 11.30) Reports*
- 11.45 **Douglas MacMillan** (Guildford) and **Isobel Clarke** (RCM) – A musical enigma: the bass recorder in the long eighteenth century
- 12.15 **Catherine Crisp** (Emsworth) – The clarinet in London's popular culture (*circa* 1760 to *circa* 1810)

12.45 **Amanda Babington** (Manchester) – The 'other' Scottish pipes: Bonnie Prince Charlie's Musette

13.15 *Lunch*

14.00 **Roya Stuart-Rees** (Royal Holloway) – Music for the Marine Society

14.30 **Micah Anne Neale** (Royal Holloway) – Erddig's Servants: Music, Space, Status

15.00 **Sally Drage** (Congleton) – 'Vital spark': music and musicians in eighteenth-century Liverpool

15.30 *Tea*

16.00 **Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson** (Chelmsford) – New light on the Baroness

16.30 **Randall Scotting** (RCM) – Influencing perceptions: Senesino in Bononcini's *La Griselda* of 1722

17.00 *Conference ends*

**Chaired** by Ann van Allen-Russell and Colin Timms

**Organised** by Claire Sharpe, Katharine Hogg and Colin Coleman

#### Registration

**Fee** – £17 in advance (£21 on the day) – to include lunch (with wine) and admission to the Foundling Museum between 10 am and 5 pm.

**Pay by cheque** (payable to 'The Foundling Museum'), addressed to: GCHC, The Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square, London, WC1N 1AZ.

**Pay by card** via <https://foundlingmuseum.cloudvenue.co.uk/musiceighteenthcenturybritain> (booking fee applies).

## HANDEL INSTITUTE CONFERENCE

24–25 November 2018

The Foundling Museum, London, WC1N 1AZ

#### 'Handel and his Music for Patrons'

Offers of papers are invited for the next Handel Institute conference. The theme will be interpreted broadly in order to accommodate contributions on all aspects of the relationship between Handel and his patrons (private or public) and of the works that he composed for them. Proposals of up to 300 words for papers lasting about thirty minutes should be sent to Dr Helen Coffey ([helen.coffey@open.ac.uk](mailto:helen.coffey@open.ac.uk)) by **31 March 2018**.

*The Handel Institute is a registered charity, no. 296615. All correspondence should be sent to the Newsletter editor, Professor Colin Timms, Department of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK (C.R.Timms@bham.ac.uk).*