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REVIEWS

RECORDINGS

Title: "François Couperin: The 18th-Century French Harpsichord"
Performer: Carol lei Breckenridge
Recording Company: Arabesque Recordings, 2013
Reviewed by John O'Donnell

"Who will dare flatter himself that he has a fortunate nature, endowed with sure and clear ideas of the good, the beautiful, the true? We have all brought into the world the foundation of these ideas, more or less clear and certain, but since our birth we have received, and this it is sad and painful to correct, a thousand false impressions, a thousand dangerous prejudices, which have weakened and stifled within us the voice of uncorrupted nature."

These words of Le Cerf de La Viéville, as translated by Oliver Strunk in his *Source Readings in Music History*, occur in a dialogue on good taste in music. They serve to remind all of us that our own concepts of good taste may be wayward, and I have quoted them here because it was clear from my first listening to this CD that Carol lei Breckenridge and I are poles apart in our understanding of good taste, at least as it applies to the music presented on this recording, two of Couperin's best-loved *ordres*, the sixth and the eighth.

It has always seemed to me that Couperin, perhaps more than anyone else of his time, took considerable pains to let us know how he expected his works to be performed. Once we study the works themselves along with his treatise *L'art de toucher le clavecin* and marry all this information with the writings of other Frenchmen of the time, we have a remarkable store of information on tempi, rhythm, articulation and everything that is covered by *le bon goût*; and while this does not preclude a degree of individuality in the playing, I'd have thought that the areas of agreement would necessarily have been stronger. Can a passacaille really be played so slowly (around half the contemporaneous dancing tempo), and can some of its couplets suddenly set off at twice the speed (the actual dancing tempo)? Is it within the realms of taste that a movement in so-called common time, *Les Langueurs-Tendres,* should sound as if it has eight beats to the bar? Is a dry *staccato* touch for the semiquavers of *La Bersan* tasteful, or for so much of the bass's crotchet movement elsewhere? Are continual changes of registration, such as occur throughout *Les Bergeries*, typical of the composer's practice or indeed of keyboard music generally in this period? Does the interpretation of ornaments agree with Couperin's own detailed thoughts on the subject? Does the playing portray the various dance characters with conviction?

Regrettably I also found the recorded sound of the 2006 Zuckermann instrument (restrung and re-voiced by Paul Irvin in 2012) a strain on the ears. In its proliferation of harmonics and lack of fundamental tone it was a reminder of typical harpsichord making of 50 years ago, but again this has to be acknowledged as a matter of taste.

The CD is presented in a simple cardboard sleeve containing a list of the movements (in English where translation was deemed possible), along with a few sentences on the works and the instrument.

Title: Handel: Suites for Harpsichord, vol. 2
Performer: Gilbert Rowland
Recording Company: Divine Art dda 21220
(2 CDs: 67: 22; 66: 58)
Reviewed by Brian Robins

CD 1: Suite in G Minor, HWV 432; Suite in D Minor, HWV 437; Suite in F, HWV 427; Suite in F# Minor, HWV 431, Suite in B-Flat, HWV 434
CD 2: Suite in G, HWV 450; Suite in C Minor, HWV

444; Suite in F Minor, HWV 433; Suite in D Minor, HWV 436, Chaconne in G, HWV 435

This completes Gilbert Rowland's comprehensive survey of the Handel harpsichord suites, the earlier instalment of which was reviewed by me in *Harpsichord & Fortepiano*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2012). One omission from the data provided with the earlier set can now be rectified, Rowland's harpsichord here identified as being based by Andrew Wooderson (2005) on a two manual French instrument by Goermans (Paris, 1750). As noted in the earlier review, it is a fine instrument, with silvery, bell like timbres in the upper register and a richly sonorous bass. As before, Rowland's changes of registration for repeats are judicious and tasteful, revealing fully the many beauties of his instrument.

Although separated by two years, the performances unsurprisingly display similar traits to those on the earlier set, although overall I sense that the playing here is a little more relaxed. The opening G Minor Suite, from the 1720 publication of "Great Suites", provides a good illustration of both the strengths and weaknesses of Rowland's playing. The opening, a grandiose French overture, demands and receives the strong fingerwork and precise articulation it needs, characteristics again very evident throughout the set. The following *Andante* is given an agreeable flow, though without quite dispelling the impression that Rowland might occasionally give the music a little more rhythmic freedom, to sometimes allow himself to "bend" the music a little more. He in fact later provides a perfect example to himself in this respect with the wonderful opening *Prelude: Adagio* of HWV 433, a movement that seems to steal in on the listener from the deep, like the rising song of a siren. Here Rowland gives the dotted rhythm a beguiling, gentle swing that seems to release all its expressiveness.

As in the earlier set, we are here given two rarities in the shape of HWV 450 and HWV 444, the latter otherwise currently unavailable on CD, so far as I can see. Both are early works, most likely composed before Handel left Germany in 1707. The G Major opens with an exuberant quasi-improvisatory prelude typical of the spirited young Handel and continues with an allemande characterised by simple repose. This is one of a number of movements that occur throughout the set where I feel that Rowland, as he did in the earlier set, over eggs the pudding when it comes to ornamentation. Such things are, of course, always a matter of personal taste, but for me there are too many occasions when the performer strays too far from the original spirit of the music, or even too far from the melodic line. It is difficult to account for the neglect of the C Minor suite that means no other recordings are available. It is a five movement work that opens with a prelude and allemande that both include some ripe harmonies, while the former also features surprising modulations. I suspect that with mean tone tuning it would sound even more remarkable.

There can be no doubt that the two sets make for a highly satisfying version of Handel's suites, with strengths that far outweigh the weaker points, especially in the present set. And if you want to hear those impressive strengths at their most persuasive, listen to Rowland's virtuoso performance of the magnificent and flamboyantly elevated *Chaconne* with which he brings this recording to a close. As the final floods of notes die away, one is simply left with a strong temptation to shout out "Bravo!"

Title: Daniel Gottlob Türk: *Easy Keyboard Sonatas Collections I & II* (1783)
Performer: Michael Tsalka
Recording Company: Grand Piano GP629-30 (2 CDs)
Reviewed by Adrian Lenthall

Shudi and Broadwood harpsichord (1781), grand piano by J.A. Stein (1784), grand piano by Vincenzo Sodi (1785), upright grand piano by A. Stein (1820)

This release continues Michael Tsalka's survey of Türk's keyboard oeuvre with the two sets of sonatas which he published for amateurs. These 12 pieces (each in three movements) are a step up, in terms of difficulty and substance, from the *120 Handstücke für angehende Klavierspieler* which Türk issued for use in conjunction with the *Klavierschule* treatise of 1789 for which he undoubtedly remains most famous, while remaining simpler than his three collections for professional players.

Whatever its pedagogical usefulness, such repertoire does not always recommend itself to the listener; who but a student, after all, would listen to the CDs of exam pieces currently put out by the music exam boards? Yet Tsalka's recordings convince otherwise, revealing Türk's prolix variety of material and *Affekt*, inventive to the point where the sonatas actually gain from being heard successively. The use of four different instruments, all from the Marlowe A. Sigal Collection in Newton Centre, Massachusetts, USA, further helps in this respect. The Shudi and Broadwood harpsichord is a typical richly coloured instrument which, despite its foreignness to German repertoire, suits the music well. Like the other instruments, it is very closely recorded, one suspects to the point where it is not heard to best advantage. The two Stein pianos – by father and son – in fact sound similarly forthright and focussed, the upright grand having rather an "early" sound, wirier than the grand, despite its late date. The Sodi grand piano, said in the excellent sleeve notes to be the only extant piano by this mainly harpsichord maker, contrasts quite markedly with the Steins. Despite a noisy action it is shown to have a limpid, pliant tone heard to loveliest effect in the slow movements of the three sonatas entrusted to it. The only disappointment here is not to have any of these pieces performed on a clavichord, surely a natural choice for a keyboard educator of Türk's time and place. We are told, by the way, that the instruments are tuned at a^1 = 415 Hz, but all of the pianos are nearer modern concert pitch.

Michael Tsalka's playing is artistic throughout; his tempi in particular seem always very well judged. Perhaps he relies too heavily on de-synchronisation between the hands, especially on the pianos, and I was not convinced by the rhetorical/witty pauses in the finales of the first sonatas of each set. Two of the "sonatas" are in fact "sinfonias"; in the first the tone and phrasing are somewhat timid and do not seem to inhabit the concerted grandness of the piece, with its orchestral sounding sweep, quite as well as Tsalka makes them in the second. The close microphones also pick up rather too much sniffing and humming for my taste.

Nevertheless, Tsalka's sensitive shaping and intense commitment to this music give a very satisfying result, making this neglected repertoire available as it deserves to be (four of the sonatas are world premiere recordings). This music displays "sonata process", but within a predominant aesthetic of sophisticated placidity rather than tension; the emotional range and depth are varied and exquisite, but never to the point where its aesthetic containment is unsettled. Surely this balance is defined and maintained in part by Türk's genuine and sincere pedagogical intent.

Title: Beethoven/Liszt, Symphony no. 6 Pastoral (transcription by Liszt)
Performer: Ashley Wass
Recording Company: Orchid Classics ORC 100024, 2012
Reviewed by Sergei Istomin

"The phonograph can eternalize musical performance. Artists, beware!" Anton Rubinstein (1829 – 1894). I have listened to Ashley Wass's recording again and again, getting used to the sound of the Girikowsky piano and the acoustics of the Great Chamber at Restoration House in Rochester, Kent. On the whole, it is a very interesting project which demonstrates the current interest of some mainstream performers in the timbre and tone colour potential of period instruments.

A video presentation about the CD complements the printed booklet well. At one point Wass mentions the bassoon register, which is useful information for someone who may wonder about the "sound effects" to be heard in the first movement of the symphony: "*Erwachen heiterer Empfindungen bei der Ankunft auf dem Lande*" ("More cheerful feelings awaken on arrival in the country") and especially in the "*Gewitter Sturm*" ("Thunderstorm").

In the YouTube video we can see from the nameboard that the Girikowsky fortepiano comes from Prague, which, to be precise, is situated in Central Bohemia (formerly a part of the Habsburg Empire and later the Austrian Empire). It is possible to be sceptical when one hears that a performer had to practise a piece on a modern Steinway before recording it on a period fortepiano. Ashley Wass honestly confesses to doing that in his YouTube presentation. Of course a Steinway can be regulated to a very light touch, but I doubt that it can be anything similar to the touch of a Viennese fortepiano.

The recording definitely made me think, and several questions came to mind. Is it wise to jump from one kind of instrument to another? How long would it take to get used to the very light touch of the original Viennese fortepiano action? I am convinced though that if one has an inborn sensation of fortepiano touch one can adjust to playing any type of instrument very quickly. Do we therefore adapt the instrument to our acoustic image or does the instrument help us to perceive it? It would be very instructive for me to hear the Liszt transcription of Beethoven's 6th Symphony on an English Broadwood, on a French Pleyel, an Erard or even on a Boisselot in order to compare the timbre with that of the Girikowsky.

I do not want to impose my idiosyncratic judgments about a performer's exact reading of Liszt's score, though I would like to mention that one can enjoy the tempi and tempo flexibility in Ashley's interpretation. I also would like to draw your attention to some beautifully performed sections, where I most appreciate the musicality and imagination of the performer, as well as the tone qualities of the Girikowsky fortepiano, for example at the end of the "*Am Bach*" movement in the "gentle bird trio" coda. I appreciate the joyful and peaceful character of the symphony without any forced or exaggerated *affekts*. In considering the performance, only a few places, for my taste, sound peculiar. The tempo in *"Lustiges Zusammensein der Landleute"* is perhaps too relaxed, and not all the bassoon register episodes sound convincing. I suggest that you listen to the recording with the score in your hands (The Liszt transcription is easily available on the Internet).

The legato passages are wonderfully played. True legato is a delicate quality to accomplish, especially on an original fortepiano. The "Storm" is one the most impressive and brilliantly performed movements. Its sound image and *Affekt* could be used as an excellent reference and a source of inspiration to conductors. I wish that orchestras would perform this movement in the same manner, with the same rhythm, energy and expressiveness as is obtained by Wass. The bassoon register definitely triumphs there.

I congratulate Wass for his courage, enthusiasm and curiosity. I think that this recording is musically remarkable and definitely fun.

SCORES

Work: Johann Pachelbel, Complete Works for Keyboard Instruments, Volumes VII and VIII
Editor: Michael Belotti
Publisher: Wayne Leupold Editions WL600105 and 600265
Reviewed by John Collins

The two volumes under review here of the new edition of Pachelbel's Complete Keyboard Works contain the Chorale Partitas (Vol. VII) and the Arias with variations (Vol. VIII). The Chorale Partitas comprise the four sets now considered to have been published in Erfurt in1683 under the title of *Musicalische Sterbens-Gedancken* (*Christus der*

ist mein Leben with 12 partite or variations, *Alle Menschen müssen sterben* with eight, *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* with seven and *Was Gott tut, das ist wholgetan* with nine) with three further sets taken from manuscript sources (*Ach was soll ich Sünder machen* with six, *Freu dich sehr* or *Treuer Gott, ich muss dir klagen* with four and *Werde munter, mein Gemüte* with four), plus a set of five variations on *Gleich wie ein Hirsch begehret* that is anonymous in the unique source (the Plauen Organ Book). A further set of 12 variations on *Freu dich sehr* which, although attributed to Pachelbel in the Gerber manuscript, is considered to be of dubious authenticity. Whilst most of the pieces included in these two volumes have been available for some years in editions from Peters and Bärenreiter, others were included in Seiffert's original Denkmäler editions which are long out of print. More recently discovered manuscripts have been examined, and variant readings have been evaluated, and there are also several pieces that have been newly edited and published in a modern edition for the first time.

The extensive introduction to Volume VII provides a comprehensive and detailed overview of Pachelbel's activity in the field of variations both sacred and secular, and provides a full commentary on the sources used for this volume. A comparison of Pachelbel's variation style with that of his Viennese predecessors Wolfgang Ebner and Froberger is particularly illuminating. The four opening sets comprise some 36 variations, which display a multitude of techniques; only *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* is in triple time. Each set, apart from the manuscript set based on *Freu dich sehr* or *Treuer Gott ich muss dich klagen* (the only other piece in triple time in this volume) is preceded by the harmonised chorale. Pedals are required for only the final variation of both *Ach was soll ich Sünder machen* and *Freu dich sehr* or *Treuer Gott,* although they can be used in other places if the player so wishes – for example where the melody is in the tenor, or in the bass in a two-part setting. The critical commentary listing all variants is of great value. Apart from *Christus der ist mein Leben* and *Ach was soll ich Sünder machen* which are through-composed, the chorales and variations are in two sections with just the first being repeated.

The volume devoted to the secular arias includes not only the well-known set of six published in 1699 as *Hexachordum Apollinis* (the printed version in The Hague adds an manuscript fascicle with an introductory prelude and an extra variation to the sixth and last known as *Aria Sebaldina*, here published for the first time) but also brings together in one readily accessible volume the Arietta in F with nine variations, the Arias in D (six variations), A (three variations) and A Minor (four variations) as well as the first modern edition of an Aria in G found in three sources with differing numbers of variations up to seven, and two Arias, in C Minor and A Minor from the Mylau Tablature that are considered of dubious authenticity. The very brief introduction to this volume contains information on the source in The Hague; the player is expected to purchase Volume VII as well for the full discussion of the sources and technical analysis.

This volume contains its own critical commentary of different readings from various sources. Both volumes contain several facsimiles. All of the arias are in binary form, with both sections being repeated, offering much scope for added embellishments. The only ornament sign found in the authentic works is the letter *t*; some editorial guidance on its possible performance would have been helpful to the player inexperienced in 17th-century practice.

A cursory glance will reveal that many variations both sacred and secular utilise identical compositional techniques, which embrace a wide range of writing, including arpeggiated passages, melodic lines concealed within passagework, fast runs in either hand, and melodic lines in various voices against passagework. With very few variations requiring pedals, these pieces sound as effective on stringed keyboard instruments as on the organ; there are similar sets from other north and south German predecessors of J.S. Bach. The

chromatic variations are particularly expressive. The printing is of the customary clarity with five or six systems per page for the authenticated works, with the opera dubia relegated to a somewhat smaller, but still quite readable, font. Although not all of them are of the highest standard, the great majority of these variations are very attractive pieces that are quite accessible to a player of a more modest technical attainment; when presented in recitals they will delight audiences today with their freshness.

Work: The Peter Pelham Manuscript of 1744 – an early American Keyboard Tutor
Editor: H. Joseph Butler
Publisher: Wayne Leupold, as *American Classic and Romantic Organ and Keyboard Music* no. 7. WL600204
Reviewed by John Collins

This volume presents the contents of a manuscript dated compiled by Peter Pelham, (born 1721, London) who emigrated to Boston c.1727. From 1733 he received training for nine years from Karl Theodor Pachelbel, son of Johann, who had was as organist in Charleston, South Carolina, where Pelham gave lessons on the harpsichord and spinet. Considered as the leading musician in Williamsburg, his copybook of spinet lessons (1744) contains almost all that is now known of his compositions, the melody of a minuet being the only other surviving work. This book contains anonymous works probably by Pelham himself, a piece by Karl Pachelbel, and a selection of pieces popular in Anglo-American society. It is the earliest collection of keyboard music in colonial North America.

Of the 19 pieces in this volume, seven are vocal including a four-movement cantata "Allexis" by Johann Pepusch with arias and recitatives, and plenty of Alberti bass work. Also included is "A song set to Musick", one of only three known pieces by Karl Pachelbel. It would have been helpful if the opening ritornello had actually been printed in full after b. 67 rather than the manuscript indication "etc".

Other vocal pieces include "The Modest Question" set by the prolific song composer Mr. Russell, and songs in Thomas Arne's *Masque of Comus*. The first Arne piece repeats its opening passage at the end, but this time with quaver octave runs in the left hand. Also included is "A Song on a Lady of Quality" set by Mr. Marchant which contains some florid vocal passagework in semiquaver runs and dotted rhythms, and "The Happy Shepherd", a short ditty by Doctor Greene. It is interesting that keyboard style ornaments are written in the vocal part; all these pieces are on two staves only and the performer must decide whether to double the vocal line or treat the bass as an unfigured bass to be used for improvising an accompaniment. Of course these pieces can be performed on keyboard alone.

The instrumental pieces vary considerably in quality and standard. The first is a simple setting of "King George's March" originally in Handel's opera *Rinaldo*, that is similar to the marches of Jeremiah Clarke. The second piece, a minuet mainly in two voices, may well have been composed by Pelham himself. The next piece is an Allmand originally from a ballet produced by Campra and Danchet, but in b.12-13 Pelham has modified the melodic line perhaps to provide a kind of five-finger exercise in quavers. Then comes a Minuet by Robert Valentine, probably a transcription of an instrumental work (there being no known surviving keyboard pieces by him) with further scale passagework increasing the pedagogical value of this collection. The next piece is an anonymous setting of the Scotch air "Through the Wood Laddie" with quite a selection of ornaments that will test the performer.

A Gavotte by Handel is taken from the middle section of the Overture to *Ottone*, and has four bars of crotchet octaves in the left hand with some leaps that make the piece more difficult. A Minuet by Lully (in A Minor, the second minor-key piece in the collection), is considered to be by the Belgian Jean-Baptiste Loeillet; published also in Prelleur's

and Bremner's books. In Pelham's manuscript it is regrettably incomplete, so from b. 37 onwards the editor has included Prelleur's version, which is certainly similar in style. Bremner's version, being somewhat different, is included in an appendix. There are several octave passages in the left hand, particularly in the Prelleur section.

The next two pieces are no. 5 and 11 from Handel's *Water Music*. Again, the first page being missing in the manuscript, the editor has provided a transcription in a similar style to Handel's original. The first piece is simpler than the second, which is very effective on the organ, with plenty of left hand semiquaver scales and quaver passagework. Selections from the *Water Music* were popular in America and are included in several early American keyboard books. After this, a Minuet in C may well be another composition by Pelham; similar to a Minuet in G in a copybook of 1739 (Included in an appendix, Pelham's version is certainly superior in compositional skills, with greater tonal interest.). The next piece, a setting of "*Combatti di Forte*" from Handel's *Rinaldo*, is of considerable difficulty in comparison with the dance movements, with tricky left hand octaves in conjunct movement as well as leaps, and much ornamentation. Of considerable interest is the written out cadenza by Pelham which contains the only fingering indications in the manuscript. The final keyboard piece is a setting of "Bonny Jean, a Scotch Tune", in similar vein to "Through the Wood Laddie".

Two further pieces in appendices include a treble line only to a minuet by Pelham, and a Bass Minuet by Pachelbel, complete with fingering, taken from a manuscript of 1739. The preface gives a most valuable detailed introduction to Pelham's life (as well as his descendants), to the manuscript, and also to the ornamentation. Pelham's own table included just the names and signs without any explanation, but the editor has included facsimiles of the explanations from Purcell's Rules for Graces, and Prelleur's ornament table and fingering illustration from 1731. This edition presents pieces of varying quality and difficulty (the simpler dances are typical of those found in so many early 18th-century English publications) but the quantity of ornaments in some of the pieces will warrant careful practise. The volume is an essential purchase for all who are seriously interested in the development of keyboard music in 18th-century America. The editing and printing are excellent and two facsimiles are included; it is hoped that Wayne Leupold will be able to publish further editions of early American manuscripts.

Title: *An das Clavier: Eine Sammlung von Liedern mit Texten und/oder Musik von Frauen,* 979-0-50227-016-2
Editor: Sally Fortino
Publisher: Music's Delight, 2012
Reviewed by Owen Daly

Because musicians tend to focus on the big names of our chosen era, we often overlook the fact that many gestures we associate with them were in play in the wider culture, even among relatively unknown composers.

In this context we owe much to Sally Fortino's recently published *An das Clavier*, a collection of late 18th-century German texts set for solo female singers with, most likely, the clavichord as accompaniment.

The 17 pieces published here — out of a total of more than 40 surviving — represent a curious genre: the *Clavierlied* ("Keyboard Song") which is not only sung accompanied by the keyboard, but is sung *to* the keyboard, often praising its ability to console the troubled — often lovelorn — breast.

We are familiar with this almost cult like view of the clavichord, but in these pieces we get to experience first hand what it may have meant to accomplished amateur musicians.

Fortino tells us that the poets who wrote these texts, particularly the novelist Johann Timotheus Hermes, were well known in their day, but virtually all of the names were new to me.

Of particular interest, and forming the bulk of the collection, are multiple musical settings of texts by two authors, Philippine Gatterer (1756-1831) and

Henriette von Hagen (1760-1794). There are nine different settings of Gatterer's *"Mit stillem Kummer in der Brust"* ("With Quiet Grief in my Breast") and four of von Hagen's *"Erleichtre meine Sorgen"* ("Soothe my Sorrows"), and the musical textures by the various composers form a wonderful compendium of the *empfindsam* clavichord style.

The pieces are accessible to a moderately skilled clavichordist — perhaps on a par with the simpler pieces by C.P.E. Bach — and fit the hand gracefully. I was obliged to play them at home on the harpsichord, on which, using a soft register, it was possible to imagine the sweetness and soulfulness they would convey on a good late 18th-century style clavichord.

Because the "speaker" in the poems is presumed to be consoling herself at the keyboard of the clavichord, I think perhaps the most successful approach would be for the player to sing to her own accompaniment, allowing a very intimate adjustment of balance, emotion and phrasing. Even if the modern clavichordist (like the present writer) is not a competent singer, there is great value in applying vocal phrasing and gesture to our keyboard playing. Although a good singer can very successfully balance the clavichord, for an intimate performance the ideal would be a clavichordist who can sing softly and beautifully.

I have one small quibble. Although the introduction is translated into English, the texts to the pieces are not. The German texts of Gatterer's and von Hagen's poems are reprinted nine and four times respectively. Surely some of this space could have accommodated an English translation. There are English speakers, with only rudimentary German, who could quite easily assimilate the phrasing and substance of the German texts if this had been provided.

But it is a lovely collection, carefully edited with obvious affection and presented very nicely. It gives us a better perspective on the *empfindsam* style, would make for exquisite intimate performance, and could teach any clavichordist much about playing soulfully.

Work: Notger Ignaz Franz von Beecke, *Zwei Sonaten für Pianoforte*
Editor: Cembaloklasses der Folkwang-Universität der Künste Essen and Christian Riege
Publisher: Edition Walhall EW847
Reviewed by John Collins

Beecke (1733-1803) first took up a military career, fighting in several battles during the Seven Years War (1756-63). In about 1760 Prinz, Philipp von Oettingen-Wallerstein brought him to his court in Wallerstein where he remained for the rest of his life. His musical skills seem to have been mostly self-taught, with travels to Paris and Vienna. Friends with Jommelli and probably acquainted with Dittersdorf and Gluck, he also met Mozart and performed with him; indeed, Schobart preferred Beecke's fortepiano touch to Mozart's! His works include operas, both sacred and secular vocal music, chamber music, and sonatas, variations and concerti for keyboard, much of which remains in manuscripts, although a set of six sonatas was published in Paris in 1767. A sonata for three keyboards (cembalo and two pianofortes) is also published by Edition Walhall EW849 in the form of a miniature score.

The two sonatas presented here are taken from autograph manuscripts dated 1785 in the University of Augsburg Library. The first Sonata, in A Major, is in two movements, with the second following on immediately. The first movement is divided into five sections each with a French title, the opening *La tranquillité* being a short *poco adagio* in 6/8 which yields to *La tristesse* in the tonic minor. This in turn leads into *La Brouillerie et la Dispute* in cut time, mainly in quaver movement, with some crossed-hands passages, followed by *Le Racomodement* marked *lentando un poco*. All of these sections are copiously marked with dynamics, which point to the fortepiano (or clavichord) as the preferred medium for execution. At the same length as the previous sections combined, the final section entitled *La bonne harmonie* in D Major is a grazioso 3/4 metre with

much ornamental demi-semiquaver and triplet semiquaver writing in the right hand as well as tirades of an octave and a half, a close in E Major preparing the *allegro vivace ma tenero* of *Le joyeux contentement* of the second movement, a rollicking rondo in 6/8 with a central section in the tonic minor. Neither *La bonne harmonie* nor *Le joyeux contentement* contain any dynamic markings, although the occasional dashes for staccato appear.

The second sonata, in B-Flat, is in two movements, the first being a binary form *non tanto allegro ma grazioso* in 4/4, although the scale passages from bar 12 are marked *con brio.* The second movement is an *Allegro ma posato più tosto Tempo di Menuetto* which commences with an upbeat figure. There is a short section in the tonic minor before the coda, which includes several bars with the notes beamed into 6/8; the player must decide whether to continue this rhythm until the two final bars. Dynamic indications are sparse in the first movement and non-existent in the second, consisting of an *F* at the opening of first movement, with *pia.* in bar 17 and *for.* in bar 22,but there are plenty of slurs and staccato dashes in both movements.

These two sonatas have been published as part of the Edition Preparation Seminar of the harpsichord studio of the Folkwang University of the Arts, Essen, and are clearly printed. Whilst not of the level of Haydn, they are better than Mozart's contemptuous description as "wretched" pieces, although it is not certain which of these pieces earned that scornful accolade. They are tuneful and attractive works which form a welcome addition to the repertoire of music suitable for the pianoforte by contemporaries of the Viennese classicists; containing relatively few difficult passages, although care must be taken with the indicated phrasing, they will provide stimulating recreation for players of a reasonable technical attainment. Perhaps the University in Essen could be encouraged to investigate publication of further keyboard works by Beecke for us to enjoy.

Work: Mendelssohn, *Venetianische Gondellieder* (Venetian Gondola Songs)
Editor: Ullrich Scheideler, Rudolf Elvers, Ernst Herttrich
Fingering: Hans-Martin Theopold, Andreas Groethuysen
Preface: Ullrich Scheideler
Publisher: Henle, 2012
Reviewed by Bruce Reader

Henle Urtext Edition has brought together four *Venetianische Gondellieder* in one convenient publication that will be useful for both modern pianists and fortepianists alike. Included in this publication are three *Venetianische Gondellieder*, in G Minor, Op. 19, No.6, U78; in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 30, No.6, U110 and in A Minor, Op. 62, No.5, U151 and a fourth Venetian gondola song, not included in his *Lieder ohne Worte*, in A Major, U136.

Between 1830 and 1841 Mendelssohn composed a total of four Venetian gondola songs, originally as individual pieces or as album leaves. Three of these pieces were later taken into his *Lieder ohne Worte* ("Songs without words") collections, with only one being published separately. The *Venetianisches Gondellied* in G Minor, Op. 19, No. 6 (U78) is the only one to have been actually written in Venice. The surviving autograph, dated 16 October 1830, was included in the first volume of *Lieder ohne Worte* and published in London by Novello that same year, in 1833 in Paris by Schlesinger and in Bonn by Simrock. In this new edition, Henle have gone back to the autograph score and engraver's copy for the Novello First Edition of 1832, as well as the Novello First Edition itself, published in London in 1832, the galley proofs of which served as the engraver's copy for the first German edition by Simrock in 1833.

It was more than four years later that Mendelssohn composed another *Gondellied*. This new *Venetianisches Gondellied* in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 30, No.6 (U110) was published in March 1835, in a collection of six piano pieces that Mendelssohn compiled as the second book of

Lieder ohne Worte. It was published by Simrock in Bonn, Mori & Lavenu in London and Schlesinger in Paris. The primary source for this new edition is Simrock's first edition published in Bonn in 1835 as well as the autograph and engraver's copy.

Mendelssohn's *Gondellied* in A Major (U136) is the only one of the four pieces in this collection to be in a major key and the only one not to have been published in a volume of *Lieder ohne Worte*. It was written on 5 February 1837 and published separately that same year as a supplement to the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in the *Sammlung von Musik-Stücken alter und neuer Zeit*, by Ewer & Co., in London and in Paris by Maurice Schlesinger in an anthology volume entitled *Keepsake des Pianistes*. Here the primary source is the Robert Friese first edition published as a supplement to Volume 14 of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 1841, which Mendelssohn is thought to have authorised and, as secondary sources, a copy by Cecile Mendelssohn and further copyist with autograph dated 1837 and Were and Co. first edition (London, 1841) bearing Mendelssohn's dedication.

Venetianisches Gondellied in A Minor, Op. 62, No. 5 (U151) was subject to a number of alterations by Mendelssohn, who repeatedly wrote out new variants of the piece. The first version of the piece, dated 24 January 1841, has only 29 bars. In place of the varied, written out repeats, this version has only simple repeat signs; in addition it lacks the three introductory bars, and the ending is also different.

Mendelssohn wrote out the piece again almost two years later, on 11 October 1842. This version also has a different introduction, principally in the omission of the varied repeat of bars 4–12, so that bar 21 immediately follows bar 12. The definitive form of the *Gondellied* was not fixed until over a year later, during preparations for printing.

The piece was published in April 1844 by Simrock in Bonn as no. 5 of the op. 62 *Lieder ohne Worte*, the penultimate such collection to be printed in Mendelssohn's lifetime. The primary source for this edition has therefore been Simrock's 1844 first Bonn Edition.

It is useful to have these four pieces gathered together particularly in such a clear, well laid out edition. My own copy of the complete *Lieder ohne Worte* is the Novello and Co. 1898 edition, which apart from being cumbersome does not, of course, include the third *Venetianisches Gondellied* in A Major U136.

Staple bound in a thin card cover, this edition has a useful preface by Ullrich Scheideler setting out in German, English and French the background to the composition of these pieces. At the back of the book there is a comments section, in German and English, setting out in some detail the sources from which this new edition has been compiled and the various choices made in respect of notation, dynamics and so on, as well as any correction of perceived errors in previous editions.

With Op.19, No.6, my Novello edition has the bass notes of the right hand for the first six bars kept, with a bass clef, within what would normally be the treble stave, with the resulting effect of ledger lines above the stave. This new edition places the right hand naturally within the bass clef, which makes for clarity when sight reading. This cannot be done, of course, when right and left hands cross, such as in bars four and five of Op.62, No.5.

Professional fortepianists will have their own views on pedalling, those in this edition often seeming excessive such as in Op.30, No.6 where the editor seems to have noted Mendelssohn's comment "… you must use a lot of pedal in it, and it should not swim along too slowly."

Fortepianists wishing to have a convenient collection of these four attractive pieces, whether for use within a varied recital, as an encore, or simply for the pleasure of playing them at home, will find this new publication very useful.