HANDEL FESTIVAL IN HALLE 2003

The theme for this year’s Handel Festival in Halle and its accompanying scholarly conference was “Les goût réunis, The Europeanization of National styles in Handel’s time.” There was, not surprisingly, a good deal of French music performed and the winner of the 2003 Handel Prize was Marc Minkowski, director of Les Musiciens du Louvre, who has become a great favorite in Halle. Because the first weekend of the festival fell on Pentecost, the schedule of events was slightly different from the norm, but as always there were more concerts than any one person could attend, generally two or three taking place simultaneously in different venues. There were also church services, exhibitions, receptions, and expeditions to places of interest at some remove from Halle.

The official Opening Ceremonies and Festival Concert took place on Thursday, June 5 in the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Halle. The music included the Dettingen Anthem and two of the Coronation anthems performed by the Choeur des Musiciens du Louvre and the Händel-Festspielorchester under the direction of Uwe Grodd. There were also soloists from the Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne and a new feature of the festival, trumpeter Reinhold Friedrich that should also have included the chorus but for some reason did not. The Festival Concert has yet to settle on a satisfactory format, reminding one yet again how difficult it is to extract movements from the contexts for which Handel designed them.

This year’s new production by the Halle Opera was of Imeneo, presenting the text of Donald Burrows’ new edition of the work for the Hallische Händel Ausgabe. The staging by Michael McCaffery was laudably straightforward and without gimmicks. Singers, dressed in eighteenth-century attire, were allowed to address each other and the audience without being upstaged or being required to engage in unlikely activities themselves. The action took place in a single room, the back wall of which occasionally parted to reveal interesting vistas. The slender tale of the heroine Rosmene having to chose between Tirinto, with whom she is in love, and Imeneo, who has rescued her from pirates and to whom she feels gratitude, was taken seriously, as was the secondary plot involving her sister Clomiri’s love for Imeneo. Although the libretto fails to specify what should happen to the two unhappy lovers after Rosmene chooses Imeneo, the collapse on stage of Tirinto and the attempted suicide of Clomiri during the final chorus of rejoicing (in the minor mode) was perfectly consistent with the course of the drama and also very moving.

Strongest among the singers were the mezzo-soprano Ulrike Schneider as Tirinto (a role originally written for a castrato) and soprano Martina Rüping, a local favorite, as Clomiri, but soprano Alexandra Coku as Rosmene and basses...
**HANDEL CALENDAR**

The American Handel Society welcomes news or information about events of interest to Handelians. If possible, please include an address, telephone number and URL where readers may obtain further details. For information on Handel concerts around the world, please also visit http://ghandel.org/

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**Alicia**

- **Sonata in Italian with English subtitles**
  - New York City Opera
  - Alicia: Christine Goerke
  - Orchestra: Jennifer Decker
  - Ruggiero: Maximilian Acquisto, mezzo-soprano
  - Harpies: Tony Caridi, counter-tenor

**Jepthah**

- **Is 44 from The Little Organ Book. Vol. II**
  - Susan Bates, harpsichord & organ
  - Gretchen Tracy, baroque cello

**Der Harmonische Gottesdienst**

- Handel: HWV 17, Act I, Scene 8, Aria, Durchsuche dich, O stolzer Geist,
  - Jephtha: John Mark Ainsley, tenor
  - Les violons du Roy
  - Conductor: Bernard Labadie

**Angel: Greta Feeney / Saundra DeAthos, sopranos**

- **http://www.nycopera.com/**
  - New York State Theater, Lincoln Center, New York City, New York
  - 9, 13m, 18, 21m, 24, 26 September 2003
  - Producer: Francesca Zambello
  - Conductor: Daniel Beckwith
  - Melisso: Joshua Winograde
  - Oronte: Keith Jameson
  - Bradamante: Jennifer Dudley
  - Alcina: Christine Goerke

**New York City Opera**

- Sung in Italian with English surtitles

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**Philharmonia Baroque**

- **http://www.philharmonia.org**
  - 19 September 2003, 7:30 pm - San Francisco, California
  - Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra
  - Philharmonia Chorale
  - Jephtha: John Mark Ainsley, tenor
  - Dono: Wilke te Brummelstroete, mezzo-soprano
  - Harpies: Daniel Taylor, counter-tenor

**É 21 December 2003, 2 p.m.**

- Dominion-Chalmers United Church, Ottawa, Canada
- 6 December 2003, 8 pm
- 21 December 2003, 2 p.m.
- Église Saint-Dominique, Québec, Canada
- Tickets are $22 for the dress rehearsal and $15 for the performance
- Subscriptions: (416) 645-8131
- http://www.violonsduroy.com

**Messiah**

- 20 December 2003, 3:00 pm
- 6 December 2003, 3:00 pm
- Symphony Hall, Boston, Massachusetts
- http://www.handelandhaydn.org

**Messiah**

- 5 December 2003, 7:30 pm
- Claude-Champagne Hall, Université de Montréal, Canada
- Subscriptions: (514) 987-6919

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**The American Handel Society**

**OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

- Richard G. King, President, University of Maryland
- Robert Ketterer, Vice President, University of Iowa
- Marjorie Pomeroy, Secretary/Treasurer

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**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY**

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**State**

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- **FRIEND**
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- **SUBSCRIBER**
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**AHS OFFICERS 2003-05**

The Board of Directors for The American Handel Society is pleased to announce the following slate of officers for the 2003-05 term:

- Gaydon Becks, President, Pomona College
- Richard G. King, President, University of Maryland
- Robert Ketterer, Vice President, University of Iowa

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**NEWSPAPER**

of The American Handel Society

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The Editor welcomes comments, contributions, and suggestions for future issues.

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**The American Handel Society**

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production. The text was sung in Italian, and the supertitles, extracted from three sources for the New York City Opera, were not literal and tended to reinforce a darkly ironic view of the action. That was emphasized again by the treatment of the ‘sera ultima’ that climaxed the first scene, in which the entire cast and chorus were present. Claudius announced the general resolution of difficulties, ‘Habibian termine g’ odi...’ but while the combined cast sang the final phrase, the audience laughed at the ironies of it all, and then rose to its feet in an ovation that, historically, were to follow for the entire cast: that Nero would don the toga of Caesar after his murder of Agrippina; that Nero would make this observation in self-defense, because I am already eagerly awaiting the Lieto il Tebro increspi l’Onofrio!; that the ugglification of the mise en scéne was to be one of Halle’s most interesting recent productions. Unfortunately, Miss Schirren’s coloratura was too brilliant for fans of fine gleam, who had done their own of Rodrigo in a manner more than made sense when she had nothing to sing.

The operagator at this year’s festival was Messiah given by the Choeurs des Musiciens du Louvre and the Laurent Company Berlin. This performance I did not hear, but the press release stated that the ensembles and the conducting were justly memorable. The first memorable item was the cast, which did not bode well. Among the concerts, ranging in size from solo keyboard recitals to full orchestral evenings, there was the most controversial. The second final point is that I found memorable. One final point: may one plead for two intermissions rather than one? A Handel opera is long, but the music is good and we don’t mind sitting through it, especially when it is being served as well as it was on this occasion. But it is a strong desideratum to have a couple of short pauses to stretch the legs and take a breath. A discussion of what we have seen and heard. Grattling and Handel knew this, and provided natural dramatic breaks between acts; it is a favor that we were left to work them out for ourselves rather than having our arms folded by the director. I must also mention the fact that the story was taken seriously and the singers were not required to play the fiddle and dance to the beat of the orchestra. The conductor Wolfgang Katschner could occasionally relax his tempo, make the orchestra sound harsh, and the Lautten Compagney of Berlin did nothing to moderate this tendency. They might have been better advised to eliminate the harp, which Handel does not require, and replace it with another string instrument. In the case of Messiah, the violin soloist Johannette Ziegler struck me as being overworked, with a repertoire of vocal music that was not to my taste. She also convincingly portrayed Achille as a young man and Deidamia in the third scene from Handel’s Alcina. This performance I did not hear, but the press release stated that the ensembles and the conducting were justly memorable. The second concert took place in the Marktkirche and featured the music of Handel’s teacher Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow, the founder of the church, and Handel himslef. The concert was well attended, and featured various combinations of voices and wind instruments described by Praetorius in his Syntagma Musicum. The performance was good enough to merit a repeat.

For the Board, William Gudger, Chair, Fellowship Committee

The winners of the Fellowship since it was established in 1989 are listed below:

1989 David Ross Hurley University of Chicago
1990 Richard G. King Stanford University
1991 John Wimmenaur University of Chicago
1993 Michael Corn University of Illinois
1995 Channah Wiltner City University of New York
1995 Mark Risinger Harvard university
1996 Barbara Durost Claremont Graduate school
1998 Todd Gilman Massachusetts Institute of Technology
1999 Kenneth McLeod Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2000 Stanley C. Pelkey Eastman School of Music
2001 Major Peter C. Giotta United States Military Academy
2002 Minh Kong Brandeis University

Robert Ketterer
contributions to Handel scholarship. Dr. Best, who is a Vice-President of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft and co-ordinator of Handel Calendar, recently gave a lecture on ‘French influence on German keyboard music: Froberger, Bach, Handel,’ providing generous illustrations at the meeting. At the annual Membership Meeting of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft greetings from The American Handel Society were conveyed by outgoing President Richard Keen who also presented a complete set of program booklets from the Maryland Handel Festival to the Handel-Haus Library. The meeting was preceded by a delightful lunch at the Anselm Gerhard of the University of Bern and concluded with the election of a new Vorstand and Präsident. Next year’s festival will take place from June 3-13, 2004 with the theme “the Handel and the German Tradition.” It was featured a staging of Aeneas and a concert performance of L’Olimpiade – one of Handel’s least-known operas – as well as performances of Messiah, L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato, and Judas Maccabaeus. There will also be concerts of choral, orchestral, and chamber music, as well as a scholarly conference, all focusing on the general theme. Further information is available at the festival website (www.handelfestival.de). Tickets will go on sale in January at the latest, so anyone interested in attending should plan ahead.

Graydon Beeks

THE HANDEL INSTITUTE AWARDS FOR RESEARCH

Applications are invited for Handel Institute Awards (up to £1,000) in support of research projects involving the life or works of Handel or his contemporaries. Deadline 1 September 2003.

Further details from:
Dr Elizabeth Gibson
Handel Institute
University of Abdergh
Suffolk IP1 5PF
elizabeth@hisbone-free-online.co.uk

SPECIAL OFFERS FROM THE AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY

The American Handel Society is offering sets of back issues of the Newsletter (for the price of $10 per three issues each), going back to the first year, 1986. All volumes are available, but some numbers are in short supply. We reserve the right to supply photocopies of individual numbers where necessary. In addition, the AHS has a limited number of copies of Handel and the Opera Glass in short supply. These are an attractive and important booklet, written by Rosemary Dunhill, provides a useful introduction to the rich Harris family archive, recently purchased by the Harris Trust & Prospective Office in Winchester and discussed by Donald Burrows in the December 1998 issue of the Newsletter. For further details, contact the Newsletter Editor.

HANDEL

HANDEL is a discussion list open to everybody wishing to discuss the music, life and times of George Frideric Handel and his contemporaries. Members can exchange views on a wide variety of topics. “Lurkers” are welcome to monitor the discussion.

All Handel enthusiasts, at any level of specialisation, are encouraged to provide reports and feedback concerning recordings, opera productions, concerts, and literature. HANDEL currently has an average of 35 messages per day in short reports, and discussion from scholars, performers, and music lovers from around the world. The list is maintained in electronic format by Groupserve’s ListServe. Access the list, or subscribe, at the following site: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/handel/

UPCOMING HANDEL PERFORMANCES OF NOTE

New York City Opera opens 2003-04 season with Alcina.

Carolina Baroque offers performances of works by Handel... See Handel Calendar for details.

CONGRATULATIONS!

DR. TERENCE BEST

Over two decades of scholarly work on the music of Handel was recognized this summer through the appointment of TERENCE BEST as a junior honorary doctorate from the Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg.