

NEWSLETTER

of

The American Handel Society

Volume VIII, Number 3

December, 1993

Professor Dr. phil. habil.
Bernd Baselt (1934–1993)
In memoriam

Bernd Baselt died on October 18, 1993. Because he had carried out his multitudinous responsibilities as teacher and director of the Institute for Musicology at the Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg with characteristic energy and ability through the end of the academic year 1992/93, his death came as a completely unexpected shock to his colleagues and students.

Born in Halle on September 13, 1934, Baselt studied at the Academy for Music and Theater (1953–55) in his native city and at the same time (1953–58) studied at our alma mater in Halle with Max Schneider and Walther Siegmund-Schultze, among others. In 1963, he advanced to the doctorate with a dissertation on Philip Heinrich Erlebach (1657–1714), a topic that defined for him further research in the history of music in central Germany. Substantial articles on Johann Schelle (1648–1701) and Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow (1663–1712) followed, as well as editions of works by these and other central German composers.

In 1975, Baselt gained professorial rank (*habilitierte*) with a thematic catalog of Handel's stage works. This laid the foundation for his most important publication, the three-volume *Thematisch-systematische Verzeichnis der Werke Georg Friedrich Händels* (HWV), in which he not only listed the works with great precision but also provided extensive comments about their origins, transmission, and characteristics. Baselt published many penetrating studies on the life and works of Handel (his scholarly focus) in periodicals and conference reports in Germany and abroad; these have served to define our present (and future) image of Handel. Baselt also contributed significantly to Telemann scholarship; we have him to thank for the editions and performances of various operas by this master from Magdeburg and friend of Handel's. In his lectures and seminars, Baselt consistently directed his students towards source studies and encouraged inves-

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Handel's House, 24 Brook Street, London

Report from London

On November 27–28, the Handel Institute (London) held its triennial conference at King's College, London, with a series of papers about Handel and his music in the 1730s. Timed to coincide with a regular meeting of the editorial board of the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe*, the conference carried as its sorrowful subtext the tragic demise of Bernd Baselt on October 18. Reinhard Strohm, who on Sunday presented the first of eleven papers, offered a few words about the loss of a great colleague and friend; clearly Strohm was greatly moved, as were we all.

On Saturday evening, November 27, the distinguished historian Jeremy Black presented a keynote address. In it, he depicted the political and cultural world of London in the 1730s with particular attention to the tensions between Whigs and Tories, the endemic anti-Catholic prejudice, the fears of a return of the Stuarts, and a xenophobia that found a convenient target in Italian opera and its stars. Black's lecture related especially well to papers presented on Sunday by

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Handel Calendar

The American Handel Society welcomes news or information about events of interest to Handelians. If possible, please include the address and phone number where readers may obtain details.

Music of Handel and Bononcini for Prima Sopranos, January 22, 23, 1994. Ensemble Courant, Richard Luby, Brent Wissick, co-directors. Music Department, University of North Carolina, CB 3320, Chapel Hill, NC 27599. David Arons, (919) 942-2660.

Alcina, February 5, 1994. Zurich Opera House, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, conductor.

International Händel-Akademie, Karlsruhe, February 16–March 1, 1994. Geschäftsführer Wolfgang Sieber, Baumeisterstrasse 11, D-76137 Karlsruhe.

Alexander's Feast, February 20, 1994. Emma Kirkby, soprano. Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montréal, Christopher Jackson, director. 3575 boulevard Saint-Laurent, bureau 422, Montréal, PQ, Canada H2X 2T7. Isabelle Marchand, (514) 843-4007.

A Handel Celebration, February 20, 1994, 3:00 pm. Trio sonatas, sonatas for recorder and violin, German songs, and arias. Carolina Baroque, Dale Higbee, Music Director, 412 S. Ellis Street, Salisbury, North Carolina 28144-4820. (704) 633-9311.

Giulio Cesare, March 21, 1994. Ann Murray. Munich Staatsoper, Charles Mackerras, conductor.

Cantatas, April 18, 19, 1994. Derek Lee Ragin, countertenor; Claron McFadden, soprano; James

Weaver, bass-baritone. Capriole, Gayle Johnson, director. P.O. Box 558, Williamsburg, Virginia 23187. Charlotte Burcher, (804) 220-1248.

Alexander's Feast, Dettingen Te Deum, April 17, 1994, 3:00 pm. University of Maryland Chorus, Paul Traver, conductor. (301) 405-5568.

The Dragon of Wantley, May 6–8, 12–16, 1994. The Folger Consort. The Folger Library, 201 East Capitol Street SE, Washington, DC 20003. Susanne Oldham, (202) 544-7077.

La Resurrezione, May 11, 12, 1994. Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montréal, Christopher Jackson, director. 3575 boulevard Saint-Laurent, bureau 422, Montréal, PQ, Canada H2X 2T7. Isabelle Marchand, (514) 843-4007.

Anthems and Cantatas, May 13, 15, 1994. The Handel and Haydn Society, Christopher Hogwood, director. 300 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02115. Deb McKinnon, (617) 266-3605.

Händel-Festspiele, Halle (Saale), June 3–7, 1994. Händel-Festspiele, Halle, Händel-Haus, Grosse Nikolaistrasse 5, 0-4020 Halle (Saale), Germany, 2 46 06.

Göttinger Händel-Festspiele, June 10–14, 1994. "Handel and the Duke of Chandos." Geschäftsstelle der Göttinger Händel-Gesellschaft, Hainholzweg 3-5, 3400 Göttingen, Germany, attn. Frau Eva-Maria Starke, 05 51 / 5 67 00.

Baselt from page 1

tigations into performance practice and interpretation of music of the eighteenth century.

In his forty years of activity at his alma mater in Halle, Baselt repeatedly demonstrated the personal integrity that was so characteristic of him. From 1982, he directed the Institute for Musicology scrupulously and responsibly. In 1983, he was named Ordinary Professor, and his post was reconfirmed in 1992. In recognition of his extraordinary service to international Handel scholarship and in keeping with the value and significance of his scholarly work, Baselt was named a member and later chairman of the editorial board of the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe; he was also vice president (1987–91), academic secretary (1990–91), and, from 1991, president of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-

Gesellschaft, Internationale Vereinigung e.V. He was named to further offices and responsibilities—among others, to the board of the music council of Sachsen-Anhalt, to the Saxon Scientific Academy of Leipzig, and to the board of directors of the International Musicological Society.

We, his friends and colleagues, fellow-workers and students, stand in awe of the immense achievements of the deceased, who will continue to live on in his works and in the honor which our memories will pay to him.

Prof. Dr. Günter Fleischhauer
Martin-Luther-University
of Halle-Wittenberg

Donald Burrows and Howard Serwer, both of which were concerned in part (Burrows) or entirely (Serwer) with the use of Italian opera stars in productions of English oratorios. In his paper on "Handel's 1738 'Oratorio': a Benefit Pasticcio," Burrows provided newly uncovered information about how the Italians were used in this production and in a revival of *Athalia* in 1735. We hope a publication will be forthcoming before very long.

At a step removed from this topic was Richard King's discussion of the origin and use of the term "Rival Queens" in reference to the competition between Faustina Bordoni and Francesca Cuzzoni from 1726-28, and the continuing use of the term in subsequent decades. Other papers on Handel's operas included an exploration by John Roberts of "Handel's Adaptation of Vinci Recitatives in his London Pasticcios," a compositional study of *Poro* by Graham Cummings, and Strohm's discussion of "Ethos and Pathos, Image and Message in Handel's Later Operas." William Gudger contributed a paper on Handel's borrowings from Telemann, and Sarah McCleave explored the role of Marie Sallé and her company in Handel's 1734-35 season. Graydon Beeks's discussed the role of Chandos Anthems in the composition of *Deborah*, op. 5, and *L'Allegro*. Ruth Smith, in a paper charmingly titled "Alexander's Baggage," reminded the conference that in writing the poem *Alexander's Feast* and in setting it to music, Dryden and Handel could count on their audiences being familiar with the literature of classical antiquity in a way that today's audiences are not.

Julie Anne Sadie delivered the final, and for many, the most intriguing presentation, "Handel and the Composer Museum." The occasion for her paper is a plan now in the making to turn Handel's London residence on Brook Street in Mayfair into a museum and research center. Until recently, the house (built in the early 1720s) was occupied by an interior decorator on the ground floor and private tenants in flats on the upper floors. In the last two years, it and many of the houses near it on Brook Street were allowed to fall vacant as the first stage of a large-scale commercial development. The development recently became a casualty of the recession, and a group led by Mrs. Sadie and her husband, Stanley Sadie, hopes to place the property under the control of a charitable corporation set up for the purposes of preserving the building and establishing a museum and research center in it.

During the last year, the Sadies visited many composer museums on the Continent, including, of course, the Händel-Haus in Halle. They brought back with them scores of slides of interiors of these houses ranging from Bach to Liszt (and beyond) to indicate what one might do, and more importantly what one ought not to do. As the project evolves, we will keep our readers informed.

Iter Facio

American Handel Society Research Fellowship

The directors of the American Handel Society invite applications for the 1994 American Handel Society Research Fellowship, an annual award of \$1,500 granted to an advanced graduate student pursuing research on Handel or related fields. This fellowship may be used on its own or to augment other grants or fellowships. The fellowship recognizes work in the area of Handel studies as well as work on Handel's contemporaries in music or theater, and more general studies of operatic or theatrical traditions. The winner of the fellowship is given the opportunity to speak at the biennial meeting of the American Handel Society.

Applicants must be currently studying at a North American university and must submit a resume, a description of the project for which the fellowship will be used (not to exceed 750 words), and a budget showing where and when the applicant plans to use the funds. In addition, applicants must have two letters of recommendation sent directly to the society at the address below.

Applications for the 1994 fellowship must be postmarked no later than April 15, 1994, and should be sent to the AHS Fellowship Committee, c/o Graydon Beeks, Music Department, Pomona College, Claremont, CA 91711. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decision by May 15.

1994 American Handel Society Meeting and Conference

The American Handel Society will meet in conjunction with the Maryland Handel Festival on November 4-6, 1994. The featured performance of the festival will be Handel's *Belschazzar*. The conference sessions will focus on *Belschazzar* as well as the topic of "Handel and His Librettists." The society welcomes proposals for papers pertaining to but not restricted to the central topics.

Abstracts of no more than 500 words should be submitted in four copies to David Hurley, Chair, AHS Program Committee, 5514 S. Blackstone Avenue Apartment 201, Chicago, Illinois 60637. Proposals should be postmarked no later than April 1, 1994. The program committee will complete its deliberations by May 15, 1994, and applicants will be notified of the committee's decisions shortly thereafter.

NEWSLETTER

of

The American Handel Society

C. Steven LaRue, *editor*

7319 University Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562

Handel's Oboe Concerto HWV 287 Contemporary Manuscript Source Rediscovered

One of Handel's early compositions, the oboe concerto in G minor (HWV 287), has long been the subject of controversy. The only known source for this work until now was the 1863 print by the publisher J. Schuberth & Co. of Leipzig. The publisher claims to have taken the work from a manuscript source and further claims that the piece was composed in Hamburg in 1703. The concerto was included by Friedrich Chrysander in the *Händel-Gesellschaft* edition (vol. 21) and by Frederick Hudson as one of the *Acht Concerti* in the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* (ser. 4, vol. 12) on the basis of the 1863 print, neither editor having been able to locate the manuscript source. It has also been published in several performing editions and arrangements, and it has been recorded on numerous occasions.

Doubts about the authenticity of HWV 287, based largely on its anomalous source transmission, have been expressed by several scholars, most recently by Hans Joachim Marx, who suggests it may have been composed by an eighteenth-century dilettante writing under the influence of Handel's op. 4 organ concertos, published in 1738 (see "Zur Echtheit des Oboenkonzerts HWV 287," in *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Konzerts. Festschrift für Siegfried Kross zum 60. Geburtstag* [Berlin, 1990], 33–40). Recently, however, a set of six manuscript parts to this concerto have come to light in the University Library of Rostock (shelfmark *Mus. Saec. XVIII.33/11*). They are part of a collection of manuscript music which once belonged to the hereditary prince Friedrich Ludwig of Württemberg (1698–1731) and are in the hand of an otherwise unidentified copyist with the initials C. H. H., whose work is well represented in the collection. The set, which can be dated circa 1720, comprises parts for *Hautb. à Flute Travers.*, *Violino 1mo*, *Violino 2do*, *Viola*, *Basso e Violono*, and *Cembalo*. The title page of the oboe/flute part reads as follows: *Concerto. à 5./1 Flute Travers. à Hautb./2 Violino/1 Alto Viola/Col/Basso Continuo/Ex Gb:/Di/Sigr. Hendel/Script. C. H. H.*

Händel-Jahrbuch

The publication of the 1993 *Händel Jahrbuch* has been delayed, first by the illness of editor Bernd Baselt, and thereafter by publishing delays. We have been informed that the volume will be shipped within the next few weeks. The *Händel Gesellschaft* thanks its American members for their patience and understanding.

The 1994 *Händel Jahrbuch*, which includes the report of the 1993 conference in Halle and additional articles of interest, is scheduled to appear in June.

Of considerable interest is the fact that the source offers two alternatives for the solo instrument, oboe or flute. Since the former owner of the manuscript, prince Friedrich Ludwig of Württemberg, was in his time a well-known flute player (mentioned as such by Telemann and praised as one of the German princes especially devoted to instrumental music), the provision of the flute as a possible solo instrument undoubtedly reflects the princely interest.

The discovery is described in full by Gerhard Poppe in his article, "Eine bisher unbekannte Quelle zum Oboenkonzert g-Moll HWV 287," in the latest issue of the *Händel-Jahrbuch* (1993). A revised edition of this concerto, based on the new source, is being prepared by the present writer. It will be published by Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel, and issued as a supplement to the HHA volume of *Acht Concerti*.

Bernd Baselt

Editor's note—This article was written by Bernd Baselt and submitted to the newsletter shortly before the author's death.

Report from Montpellier

The staged performance of Handel's *Hercules* on March 26, 1993, was, with Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*, the apogee of the "Baroque Month" of the Montpellier opera house. The result, however, did not quite match one's expectations, which were nothing short of high (all the more so since the work was a premiere in France).

The most satisfactory aspect of the performance was the staging and the decor: minimalist, electric blue, Greek-like tiers and backdrop, replaced by a giant, abstract, red-dominated panel for the famous mad scene. The orchestra, *La Grande Ecurie et la Chambre du Roy*, directed by Jean-Claude Malgoire (who recorded *Rinaldo* and *Serse* in the late 1970s, as well as *Tamerlano* in the early 1980s), played in a well-balanced way, but every now and then the string ensemble showed plainly enough that the rehearsals had not been sufficient.

As for the singing, the cast included only one singer who may be known to Handelians, the counter-tenor Jean Nirouët (since his part of Tassile in the 1985 recording of *Alessandro*, his singing seems to have improved a great deal), who, in the secondary role of Lichas, was, according to the general applause, the star of the evening. The rest of the cast were but indifferent, and the mezzo-soprano Claire Brua (who used to be a member of *Les Arts Florissants*) did not quite meet the challenge of the role of Dejanira, a role that was obviously too heavy for her (more than once, especially in the mad scene, she lacked power and sheer breath in the long melismas).

All in all, the event was decent enough, but slightly disappointing.

Xavier Cervantes

L'avant-scène opéra

The journal *L'avant-scène opéra* devotes each issue to a detailed examination of a particular opera. The most recent issue (no. 154) focuses on Handel's *Orlando*. It includes articles in French by Isabelle Moindrot, Jean-Michel Brèque, Claire Chevrolet, and Charles Burney (translated by Michel Noiray) on the background of the opera and its libretto. It also includes a survey by Ivan A. Alexandre, Joséé Bégaud, and Claire Collart of revivals of the opera to the present date (with cast lists in tabular form), a critical discography by Piotr Kaminski, and an annotated bibliography by Elisabeth Giuliani.

The centerpiece of the issue is the presentation of the Italian libretto paired with a new French translation by Piotr Kaminski. These are accompanied by a detailed literary and musical commentary by Ivan A. Alexandre and splendid photographs from various recent productions.

Previous issues of the journal have been devoted to *Rinaldo* (no. 72), *Jules César* (no. 97), and *Alcina* (no. 130). All four issues are available individually or as part of subscription to the journal from Editions Premières Loges, 15 rue Tiquetonne, 75002 Paris, France (phone 1 42.33.51.51. FAX 1 42.33.80.91.).

Graydon Beeks

The American Handel Society

Department of Music, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742 Telephone (301) 405-5523

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