

# NEWSLETTER

of

## The American Handel Society

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August, 1995

### Schoenberg and Handel in 1933

It is no secret that Schoenberg was not a great admirer of Handel; indeed it is reported that he would become furious "if one mentioned Handel in the same breath as Bach or even Haydn and Mozart."<sup>1</sup> Schoenberg described what he called "the defects of the Handelian style" in a 1932 letter to Pablo Casals concerning the Cello Concerto, based on a piece from 1746 by Georg Matthias Monn:

Just as Mozart did with Handel's *Messiah*, I have got rid of whole handfuls of sequences (rosalias, "*Schusterflecke*"), replacing them with real *substance*. Then I also did my best to deal with the other main defect of Handelian style, which is that the theme is always best when it first appears and grows steadily more insignificant and trivial in the course of the piece.<sup>2</sup>

In the essay "New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea," first given as a lecture in Prague in 1930 and then revised several times in the following years, Handel serves primarily as a foil to illustrate the greatness of Bach. In contrast to the sophistication of Bach's counterpoint, Handel's seems, "bare and simple . . . his subordinate voices [are] really inferior."<sup>3</sup>

It is surprising in light of such criticisms that Schoenberg devoted nearly six months of a very difficult period of his life in 1933 to the composition of the Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra, "freely transcribed" from Handel's Concerto Grosso, Op. 6, No. 7. Unlike his Bach and Brahms arrangements, which largely preserve the pitch content of the sources, the concerto alters—sometimes dramatically—Handel's melodic and harmonic structure. In a 1935 program note for the concerto, Schoenberg compared his recomposition to the arrangements of Handel by Brahms and Mozart, acknowledging that he had not limited himself as they had "to expunging sequences and uninteresting figure-work and to enriching the texture . . . especially in the third and fourth movements, whose insufficiency with respect to thematic invention and development could satisfy no sincere contemporary of ours."<sup>4</sup>

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Carlo Broschi, called Farinelli (1705–82), by Bartolomeo Nazari (1699–1758) (Courtesy of the Royal College of Music, London)

### Review of *Farinelli*

With the number of films about composers in recent years—including *Amadeus* about Mozart (and Salieri), *Impromptu* about Chopin, and *Immortal Beloved* about Beethoven—it was probably inevitable that the silver screen would at some point tackle the era of the castrato. The film *Farinelli* chooses history's most famous castrato for the title role; its dramatic conflict revolves around a clash of musical values between the castrato and Handel.

*Farinelli* was clearly researched carefully. The singer is seen as a young boy studying with the composer Porpora. As a young man he engages in a public competition with a trumpet player (here done *ex tempore* and out of doors). He sings primarily the music of his brother Riccardo Broschi. Farinelli is invited to

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## Handel Calendar

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

**Tamerlano**, August 4, 7, 10, 13, 19, 21, 1995.

Dana Hanchard, David Daniels, others to be announced. Jane Glover, conductor. Glimmerglass Opera, P.O. Box 191, Cooperstown, NY 13326 (607) 547-2255.

**Saul**, September 16, 17, 21, 22, 23.

Dominique Labelle, David Daniels, Steven Stolen, David Evitts, University of California Chamber Chorus, Marika Kuzma, director, Nicholas McGegan, conductor. Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, 57 Post Street, Suite 705, San Francisco, CA 94104 (415) 391-5252.

**Xerxes**, in English. September 22, 26, 29, October 5, 7, 9, 15, 18, 21, 1995. Ann Murray, Amanda Roocroft, Christopher Robson, Kathleen Kuhlmann, Alison Hagley, Kevin Langan, George Hogan, John Nelson, conductor. Lyric Opera of Chicago, Box 70199, Chicago, IL 60673-0199 (312) 332-2244 ext. 500.

**Händel-Festspiele in Karlsruhe**, February 23-March 5 1996. Geschäftsführer Wolfgang Sieber, Baumeisterstrasse 11, D-76137 Karlsruhe.

**Göttinger Händel-Festspiele**, May 31-June 3, 1996. Geschäftsstelle der Göttinger Händel-Gesellschaft, Hainholzweg 3-5, 37085 Göttingen, Germany, attn. Frau Eva-Maria Starke, 05 51 / 567 00.

**Händel-Festspiele Halle**, June 7-11, 1996. Händel-Festspiele, Halle, Händel-Haus, Grosse Ulrichstrasse 51, 06108 (Saale), Germany, 2 46 06.

**The Handel Institute Conference**, "Handel and his Rivals," November 30-December 1, 1996. King's College London. Professor Colin Timms, Department of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

## NEWSLETTER

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## Marcello's Bear and a St. Paul *Alcina*

The running joke of the spectacular production of *Alcina* mounted jointly by Ex Machina and the Lyra Concert last Spring in St. Paul revolved around the infamous bear of Benedetto Marcello's *Il Teatro alla Moda*. Ever more outrageous quotes from Marcello's satire about obligatory bears and the like peppered the tongue-in-cheek program book, unabashedly setting up an uproarious moment in Act III when a bear lumbered onto the stage. The resulting laugh was completely contrived, since the libretto actually calls for a lion.

This change of species seems at first blush a rather trifling matter. Yet the preoccupation with *Teatro alla Moda* reminded me of the common neo-Marcellian attitude that leads many directors and critics reflexively to interpret old theater pieces—comedies and tragedies alike—as satires. (Consider Peter Sellars's half-baked interpretation of *Giulio Cesare*, for example.) Was this what James Middleton meant when he wrote in his director's notes that "Marcello teaches us how to enjoy 'serious opera'—because it isn't *seria* at all"? What, indeed, does the *seria* of *opera seria* mean?

The answer provided by the St. Paul *Alcina* is that *opera seria* is certainly not humorless—but neither is it sophomorically satirical. In short, this production was done with a genuine devotion to the idea that *opera seria* is an entertainment that does not need cheap gimmicks to entertain. One could even say that the appearance of the bear reflects this: while Marcello's bear is gratuitous, Middleton's is invested (by intention or not) with a modicum of dramatic significance, since it turns out to be Oberto's father, Astolfo, who had been turned into an animal by *Alcina*!

A refreshingly dynamic spirit infused the entire production. From the marvelously lavish costumes, to the hip but faithful translation of the libretto, to the spectacular special effects accompanying *Alcina*'s mad scene, this production brought Handel's opera to life.

The performance was based on the Händel-Gesellschaft score, which combines aspects of the original 1735 production and the 1737 revival. As a practical matter, some lines of recitative were cut, a few arias were moved or eliminated, and several scenes were deleted altogether. *Alcina*'s hauntingly beautiful "Mi restano le lagrime" was, sadly, among those eliminated. Still, these changes had relatively minor ramifications for the drama, even though (strangely enough) scenes involving the principal pair of lovers, Ruggiero and Bradamante, bore the brunt of the cuts.

The cast was lead by the wonderful soprano Maria Jette, whose portrayal of *Alcina* was nothing short of enchanting. Jette's liquescent voice, creative ornamentation, and good acting make her a natural for prima donna roles in *opera seria*. Her portrayal of *Alcina*'s mad scene at the end of Act II was an absolute powerhouse of emotion and virtuosity.

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The Forty-fourth Händel-  
Festspiele, Halle/Saale  
June 1995

For the first time in memory, the 1995 Händel-Festspiele in Halle failed to present one of Handel's Italian operas; instead we were treated to a staged production of *Semele* and a "semi-staged" performance of *La Resurrezione*. In the previous issue of this newsletter a certain disgruntled contributor criticized the Washington Opera's production of *Semele* for its lackluster performance and a modicum of silly directing, and insisted that *Semele* is not a work suitable for staging—especially not its second and third acts. The Halle production represented a far better performance, but surpassed Washington in the department of silly direction. It also confirmed the view that *Semele* should not be staged.

Conducted by Howard Arman, the Handel Festival Orchestra of the Halle Opera House began the overture to *Semele* a bit uncertainly, but soon warmed to the task and played well. The cast, which featured the wonderful young American singer Janet Williams as Semele, the redoubtable Axel Koehler as Athamas, Patricia Spence as Juno (but not doubled as Ino as was Handel's intention), and Nils Giesecke as Jupiter, was as good as can be found anywhere. The opera house chorus was also very fine. Had this been a conventional production in the manner in which Handel first produced it, it would have made for an excellent evening's entertainment and a glorious opening to the Festival itself. But this was not to be.

The overture began with the curtain open on a dark stage. During the overture's fast section, an upstage door opened and a janitor in traditional blue German workman's garb appeared. He spent this part of the overture sweeping and picking up trash, including a couple of bottles that obviously once held hard drink. During the minuet that followed, the chorus, garbed in eighteenth-century attire and what appeared to be black-face appeared and were shown to their places by the janitor and a similarly attired colleague. When all were seated (facing the audience), a downstage scrim depicting an arcadian scene was illuminated and the Paramount Pictures logo was projected thereon. While the audience was thus distracted, the chorus put on what appeared to be fencing masks, each decorated with a large Cyclopedan eyeball transforming them into eighteenth-century Star Wars creatures—and of course(!) the eyeballs symbolized their roles as witnesses to a royal wedding. The rest of the first act, and indeed, the entire production was marred by an avalanche of annoying stage activity, most of it intrusive, some of it gratuitously x-rated, and much of it amateurish in the tradition of junior college variety shows.

But it was the Paramount logo and the casting of Jupiter as a sleazy, white-suited movie director, who

entered and exited aboard a huge white rolling movie camera propelled by white-overalled grips, that revealed the mind-set of stage directors who invent such productions. For them the music of a Handel (or a Verdi or Wagner for that matter) is merely background music to a film. It escapes them that in opera and oratorio the music lies at the heart of the drama, and is not a mere auditory prop as in the movies.

Such a directorial mind-set finds the da capo aria or the leisurely, expansive ensemble insupportable. For them the question is, "how shall we help the audience pass the time during all this boring music?" While *Semele* swings precariously on a crescent moon singing "Endless pleasure," the director had the embodied eyes taking flash photos of her. It apparently never occurred to the director that the audience might want to savor, without distraction, one of Handel's most breathtakingly beautiful airs exquisitely sung. Years hence, when the production comes to mind, I fear I will remember not the fine singing and playing, but the eyeballs.

The following afternoon, Les Musiciens du Louvre, a cast of soloists and four dancers, presented *La Resurrezione* in a "semi-staged" production at the Goethe Theater in Bad Lauchstadt. The comings and goings of the principals made good sense, but the activities of the dancers, doubtless meant to be symbolic, on the black stage were mostly mystifying and distracting. Mark Minkowski directed a very fine baroque orchestra (except for what seemed to be an electronic organ) about the size of that used in the original production of 1708. The soloists did full justice to this astonishing work of Handel's youth. If only the money spent on the mysterious dancers had been used to revive the amply-documented decor of the original...

In remembrance of the tercentennial of the death of Henry Purcell, the Händel-Festspiele presented a public lecture by Professor Erik Fischer of Bonn, a performance of the incidental music to *King Arthur* by the English Concert and its choir directed by Trevor Pinnock, and a chamber music concert at the Händel Haus entitled "The Matchless Man, in memoriam Henry Purcell" which featured the Purcell Ensemble of Leipzig. The music from *King Arthur* was impressive in its power and beauty. "Fairest Isle," sung by Nancy Argenta would, by itself, have made the evening a joy, and a rousing performance of "Harvest Home," to which the audience joined its voice, made this occasion a high point in music-making and Anglo-German relations. One longs for a production of Dryden's play with Purcell's music.

Other musical events included a performance of *Theodora* directed by Marcus Creed. The performance of the first part struck me as loud and coarse; I retreated at the interval. Ton Koopman presented a recital of organ and harpsichord music that included works by Purcell, Gottlieb Muffat, and Handel. Koopman's elegant performance of Muffat's *Componimenti musicali VI* in G major was especially notable, not only for

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sing with the company in London (here called the Nobles Theater) that is directed by Porpora, supported by the Prince of Wales, and set up in competition with Handel. While in London, Farinelli not only sings the music of Hasse, Porpora, and his own brother, but sings the music of Handel as well. And after his stint in London he travels to Spain where he takes up residence in Madrid and sings only privately for the King. One has the sense that the writer and director of this film had read Burney closely.

In between these bits, however, there is much historical license, a lot of prurient interest in castration, and even more sex. A naked young castrato flings himself to his death from an upper balcony of a Naples conservatory. The moment of Farinelli's castration is at first deceitfully presented by Broschi as a horseback riding accident and only slowly revealed as a business decision Broschi made and executed when his younger brother was ailing. The grown Farinelli is portrayed as a matinee idol with women swooning for him much as happened two hundred years later with the Beatles, and Farinelli engages in many sexual encounters. He is asked directly by one aristocratic admirer whether he is capable of performing sexually, and the question of his ability to perform sexually and musically lies very much at the heart of the film. Music and sex are openly paralleled, and the moral of the story is that virtuosic, technically astonishing, and exhibitionist sex or music is emotionally unfulfilling. The film thus equates the music of Broschi and Hasse to the early triangular sex scenes in which Farinelli takes the first act, after which Broschi "plants the seed." The music of Handel is equated with beautiful, sensual, and emotionally fulfilling sex. All of the sex, rather ahistorically, is heterosexual.

Except for his music, Handel (played by the well-known actor-of-villains Jeroen Krabbe) is depicted as a rather despicable character. He is arrogant, rude, offensive, abrasive, manipulative and particularly hates castrati. Overwhelmed by Farinelli's beautiful singing of his music, however, he vows never to write opera again, and during one performance collapses in his box. Of course, Burney could be the source of all this as well—from the anecdote in the *Sketch of the Life of Handel* of the composer threatening the castrato Carestini if he didn't sing "Verdi prati" ("upon which [Handel] went, in a great rage, to his house, in a way which few composers, except HANDEL, ever ventured to accost a first-rate singer, cries out: 'You toc! don't I know better as your seluf, vaat is pest for you to sing? If you vill not sing all de song vaat I give you, I will not pay you ein stiver.')

to the statement in the *General History* (II, 817) that in the summer after Farinelli's departure from London that Handel "had been too ill in health and humor to form any plan for carrying on operas" and further that at this time "he at once labored under the double misfortune of insanity, and a stroke of the palsy."

The music in the film is remarkable. Not only is Riccardo Broschi's "Son qual nave ch'agita" performed (just as it appears in Burney's *History* as an example of the sort of divisions Farinelli excelled in) by an opulently costumed Farinelli with a wave machine in the background, but the performance of "Lascia ch'io pianga," the aria that proves Handel's musical superiority and sensitivity, is performed with the ornamentation of the da capo taken exclusively from William Babell's so-called keyboard version. The ornamentation turns out to be delicious in the voice. Never mind that Farinelli actually sang a secondary role in Handel's *Ottone* that included none of Handel's original arias. Here Farinelli sings Rinaldo, stolen from Handel for him by an adoring female admirer (who becomes his consort in Spain and bears him a child with the help of Riccardo), and the three arias allotted to him include not only two for Rinaldo ("Cara sposa" and "Venti, turbini") but also one for Almirena ("Lascia ch'io pianga")! Nevertheless, his stage presence is accurately portrayed. As Burney writes, Farinelli sang "without the assistance of significant gestures or graceful attitudes" and "during the time of his singing he was as motionless as a statue" (II, 789). In all of the elaborate operatic scenes, no other characters or singers are seen on stage or off.

Clearly, *Farinelli* is not history but historical fiction. It is diminished by its sexual obsessions, and it misses the opportunity to present baroque opera as it was performed in the theater. On the other hand, it is based in history and has introduced the extraordinary diversity of baroque music through the performance of rarely heard arias by Broschi, Hasse, and Porpora as well as arias by Handel, one of which is given in ornamented version from the eighteenth century. The digitally "homogenized" voice of countertenor Derek Lee Ragin and soprano Ewa Mallas Godlewska, which is the film's attempt at recreating the castrato sound, does not have the power or richness of an Alessandro Moreschi, but it is intriguing, and Stefano Dionisi in the role of Farinelli lip-syncs extraordinarily well.

Ellen T. Harris

## Handel and His Rivals Call for Papers

"Handel and His Rivals" is the theme of the next conference to be organised by the Handel Institute (London). The conference will take place on Saturday November 30 and Sunday December 1, 1996 at King's College London. The theme may be interpreted broadly to include colleagues and associates, as well as competitors, mainly living in London but not necessarily exclusively so. As in previous conferences, papers will probably have to be restricted to about 30 minutes' duration. Offers of papers and other enquiries should be addressed to Professor Colin Timms, Department of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

Schoenberg always focused his criticisms of Handel on stylistic features, but it can be argued that broader political and cultural factors can help explain both his level of hostility as well as why Handel in particular should have come to occupy so much of his attention during the early 1930s. More specifically, I want to suggest that Schoenberg's verbal and musical polemics need to be understood in the context of what Handel had come to represent in Weimar cultural life. The post-World War I "Handel Renaissance" in Germany originated with the 1920 Göttingen performances of *Rodelinda*, under the direction of Oskar Hagen, which inspired numerous other performances and festivals in the following years.<sup>5</sup> Handel's operas found adherents early on from all sides of the political spectrum, including composers such as Krenek, Weill, and Hindemith, who were seeking formal and expressive alternatives to the music drama.<sup>6</sup> Yet there is clear evidence that the figure of Handel was increasingly appropriated by conservative and anti-Semitic forces as a nationalist symbol and as a weapon against what they viewed as the "degenerate" trends of new music. As with all such historical debates, when Schoenberg and others discussed Handel during this period they were not simply arguing about the past but were fighting to define the future.<sup>7</sup>

The implication of the String Quartet Concerto with political realities is suggested by the coincidence of its composition with Schoenberg's departure from Germany and the end of the Weimar Republic. Shortly after he completed the first two movements of the concerto in early May 1933, it became clear that the newly elected National Socialists would not permit him to retain his position as director of a master class of composition at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin. Leaving Germany on May 17, he fled with his family to France where he remained until October when he traveled to the United States. His only substantial compositional work during these months was the completion of the final two movements of the String Quartet Concerto in August and September. The time and energy he devoted to the project, as well as his ambivalence about it, are clear in a letter to Berg from the end of the summer: "It's very tedious work. I need about 4-5 times as long as I had thought and about 8-10 times as long as I have at my disposal. But in the end it will be a very good piece and that won't be Handel's doing, if I do say so. I liked the piece better in the beginning."<sup>8</sup>

The figure of Handel was used against Schoenberg from the beginning of his time in Berlin. An article from the end of 1925 by the musicologist Alfred Heuß in the *Zeitschrift für Musik* described Schoenberg's appointment to the Prussian Academy as "a blow against the cause of German music that is so provocative in nature that it would be difficult to

imagine anything worse in the present situation." Characterizing Schoenberg as the quintessential "rootless Jew," whose fanatical rejection of tradition threatened to "muddy the sources" of German music from his new position of power, Heuß concluded his attack by interpreting Schoenberg's arrival as a sign that "the days of the current musical regime in Prussia are numbered. Thus, one way or another, Schoenberg, the musician and the teacher, can no longer do damage to German music. . . . And if so, why shouldn't we intone a Handelian Hallelujah!"<sup>9</sup>

While Handel is only brought in by Heuß for the benediction to his attack, others used the composer for political purposes more explicitly. Richard Eichenauer's influential *Musik und Rasse*, published in 1932, championed Handel as one of the "purest representatives of the Nordic race," while vilifying Schoenberg as the incarnation of the Jewish obsession to "destroy harmonic polyphony, which is totally foreign to them."<sup>10</sup> In his study of the modern performance traditions of Handel's operas, Hellmuth Christian Wolff states that the number of performances began to decline around 1928 until a new wave of interest began in 1933. Wolff claims that coinciding with the reorganization of the Händel-Gesellschaft in Göttingen in that year there was a turn away from Hagen's manner of performing the operas in adaptations influenced by expressionist theater, to a strong interest in "authentic" performances featuring uncut works, historical instruments, and naturalistic staging.<sup>11</sup> In the coming years Handel became one of the primary models of the German composer for the National Socialists. His most popular compositions were the oratorios, though the works with Old Testament texts and titles required alteration; thus *Judas Maccabeus* became *William of Nassau* (also known as *The General*), while *Israel in Egypt* was reworked as *Mongol Fury* [*Mongolsturm*].<sup>12</sup> An article from the *Deutsche Mitte* (February 1935) coinciding with the festivities for the 250th anniversary of his birth, praised Handel especially for his choruses, which allowed the "individual personality to sink away before the fate of the 'Volkes.'" The article described the "Handel-Renaissance" as "a protest against the form-dissolving tendencies of impressionistic and atonal music," which in their form and content are utterly contrary to the "steadfast architecture" of Handel's works.

The clarity and simplicity of his musical language, which raises itself to heroic sublimity, is so much an expression of the German people that one must let its rejoicing song of triumph ring forth as the echo of the awakening Germany in order to let the whole people take part in this expression of the German spirit.<sup>13</sup>

The Halle Handel Festival in the same month included a speech by Alfred Rosenberg, and culminated with a

midnight torchlit ceremony at which Hitler was to appear—though it was reported that he slept through the event.<sup>14</sup>

Schoenberg obviously could not have known in the spring of 1933 the role that Handel would later play, but there is little doubt that already by the time of the composition of the String Quartet Concerto he had come to represent for Schoenberg a misunderstanding of the German tradition. Such a conclusion is supported by Adorno's comments from 1932 on the ideological implications of what he called the "ludicrous coupling" of Bach and Handel. Like Schoenberg, Adorno disparaged the musical qualities of the majority of Handel's works, but in addition to the "technical criteria" he continued: "Behind the official pharisaically emphatic admiration for Handel's expressive power, simplicity and objectivity what lies concealed is resentment and the inability to judge the music as composition."<sup>15</sup>

When viewed in the context of the ways in which the figure of Handel had been and would be usurped for political reasons, Schoenberg's radical reworking of Op. 6, No. 7 should be interpreted not simply as further evidence of his disrespect, but perhaps as an attempt to reclaim Handel as part of what he understood as the true German tradition. Against those who would erect a pure and unchanging monument with which to reproach the modern world, Schoenberg's recomposition with its marked stylistic juxtapositions exposes the effects of the passage of time. By challenging the "heroic sublimity" of the National Socialist caricature, Schoenberg returned Handel from the realm of myth to a heterogeneous and ever-changing reality. Hermann Hesse's 1927 novel *Steppenwolf* uses a Handel Concerto Grosso in a similar way to comment on the complex interaction of art and life. In the Magic Theater episode Mozart appears setting up a radio apparatus that broadcasts a Handel Concerto Grosso in F major. Responding in horror to the resulting "mixture of bronchial slime and chewed rubber" that the "devilish tin funnel" of the radio emits, the protagonist Harry Haller cries out, "what are you doing, Mozart? Do you really mean to inflict this mess on me and yourself, this triumph of our day, this last victorious weapon in the war of extermination against art?" Instead of stopping the torture, Mozart lets the "distorted, the murdered and murderous music ooze out and on," replying:

"Pay attention and you will learn something. . . . Exactly, my dear sir, as the radio for ten minutes together projects the most lovely music without regard into the most impossible places, into respectable drawing rooms and attics and into the midst of chattering, guzzling, yawning and sleeping listeners, and exactly as it strips this music of its sensuous beauty, spoils and scratches and beslimes it and yet cannot altogether destroy its spirit, just so does life, the so-called reality, deal with the sublime

picture-play of the world and make a hurly-burly of it. . . . Everywhere it obtrudes its mechanism, its activity, its dreary exigencies and vanity between the ideal and the real, between orchestra and ear. All life is so, my child, and we must let it be so; and, if we are not asses, laugh at it."<sup>16</sup>

Joseph Henry Auner

1. Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, *Arnold Schoenberg, His Life, World and Work*, trans. H. Searle (New York: Schirmer Books, 1978), 365. This study draws upon Auner, "Schoenberg's Handel Concerto: Deconstructing Tradition at the End of the Weimar Republic," *American Musicological Society*, Minneapolis, Oct. 1994, and "Schönbergs Händel Konzert: Eine Konfrontation mit der Tradition gegen Ende der Weimarer Republik," *Schriftenreihe der Musikhochschule des Saarlandes* (Saarbrücken: Paar, 1995), 34–53. Special thanks to John Winemiller for advice on this project.
2. *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, ed. E. Stein, trans. E. Wilkins and E. Kaiser (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 171.
3. Arnold Schoenberg, "New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea," *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. L. Stein, trans. L. Black (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1984), 117–18.
4. Cited in *Arnold Schönberg Sämtliche Werke*, ed. N. Kokkinis, Abteilung VII: Bearbeitungen, Reihe B, Band 27, Teil 2 (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne), xxi (my trans.)
5. Rudolf Steglich and Uwe Martin, "Die Göttinger Händeloperen-Renaissance," *Musica* 10 (1956): 585–91.
6. Susan C. Cook, *Opera for a New Republic: The Zeitoper of Krenek, Weill, and Hindemith* (Ann Arbor and London: U.M.I. Research Press, 1988), 10–11.
7. Other discussions of the String Quartet Concerto include, Klaus Kropfinger, "Bemerkungen zu Schönbergs Händel-Bearbeitungen," *Bericht über den 2. Kongress der Internationalen Schönberg Gesellschaft*, ed. R. Stephan and S. Wiesmann (Wien: Verlag Elisabeth Lafitte, 1986), 57–63; Frank Schneider, "Händel in Schönbergs Händen. Zum 'Konzert für Streichquartett und Orchester B-Dur in freier Umgestaltung nach dem Concerto grosso opus 6 Nr. 7,'" *Händel-Jahrbuch* 30 (1984): 107–20; and Joseph Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991).
8. Juliane Brand, Christopher Hailey, and Donald Harris, eds. *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters* (New York: Norton, 1988), 444.
9. Cited in Alexander Ringer, *Arnold Schoenberg: The Composer as Jew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 226 (with modifications). Heuß contributed the article "Das Textproblem von Händels Judas Maccabäus" to the first volume of the *Händel Jahrbuch* from 1928.
10. Pamela M. Potter, "Trends in German Musicology, 1918–1945: The Effects of Methodological, Ideological, and Institutional Change on the Writing of Music History" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1991), 68.
11. Hellmuth Christian Wolff, *Die Händel-Oper auf der modernen Bühne: Ein Beitrag zu Geschichte und Praxis der Opern-Bearbeitungen und-Inszenierung in der Zeit von 1920 bis 1956* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1957), 21. Also see Potter, "German Musicology and Early Music Performance, 1918–1933," *Music and Performance During the Weimar Republic*, ed. B. Gilliam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 103–105.
12. William C. Smith, *A Handelian's Notebook* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1965), 141. See also Michael Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich* (New York and Bern: Peter Lang, 1991), 272–76.

13. Josef Wulf, *Musik im Dritten Reich: Eine Dokumentation* (Gütersloh: Sigbert Mohn Verlag, 1963), 235, and see 393–94 (my trans.).
14. Smith, *A Handelian's Notebook*, 134–39.
15. Theodor W. Adorno, *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. R. Livingstone (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 25–26.
16. Cited and discussed in Marc Weiner, *Undertones of Insurrection: Music, Politics, and the Social Sphere in the Modern German Narrative* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 144–46.

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### *Ezio* in Paris

After its magnificent production of *Orlando*, the ongoing Handel series of the Theatre des Champs in Paris offered a performance of *Ezio* on June 6. As too often happens in performances of Handel's operas there was quite a discrepancy between the achievements of the musicians on the one hand and those of the stage director and set designer on the other. The latter (whose former work with Peter Sellars is evident) imposed upon the audience an ugly neo-post-Bauhaus architecture, with additional lifts and revolving doors, enhanced by colors and lights that could scarcely have been more distasteful. The costumes were a nonsensical hodgepodge of various periods of history—presumably in order to underscore the fact that the tragedy is timeless and universal. Within a single act the emperor Valentinian, for instance, changed from a German grandduke straight from a Lehar operetta to an Italian maffioso of the 1970s!

The musical dimension of the show was fortunately much more rewarding; indeed, nothing short of satisfactory could be expected from the King's Consort conducted by Richard King. The orchestra was as stylish and well-polished as ever, but one may wonder, especially after his recording of *Ottone*, if King is really in his element in Handel's operatic world. At almost no moment was there any true dramatic pulse, let alone excitement. The performance offered little to persuade the average spectator to brush aside the preconceived notion that Handel's operas are nothing more than strings of beautiful arias.

The cast was above average, although tenor Nigel Robson's voice and technical abilities were far from what they were in his 1985 recording of *Tamerlano*. Though technically impeccable, the voice of countertenor Dominique Visse is better suited to the comic roles of seventeenth-century Italian opera, which he sings with hilarious effect, than to high-brow Metastasian opera. After James Bowman's recent Handel recordings with King, I had strong reservations about his appearance in the title role before I heard the performance. His voice, however, was not as tired and strained as one might have anticipated. He is definitely no actor, but he retains much of that enthralling tone that made him so popular. The star of the evening was undoubtedly Susan Gritton, who received much applause as Fulvia. This budding

soprano seems to have much improved lately (at last she seems to have learned how to trill properly!) and her sweet-toned voice ran easily through the whole gamut of affections and nuances required by her part. One may only regret that, like most of the cast, her vocal ornaments in da capos were very scarce.

*Xavier Cervantes*

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### The American Handel Society Research Fellowship 1995

The Directors of The American Handel Society are pleased to announce that the recipient of The American Handel Society Research Fellowship in 1995 is Mark Risinger, a Ph.D. candidate in musicology at Harvard University who is completing a dissertation entitled "Derivation, Adaption, and Transformation: Understanding the Compositional Premises and Procedures of George Frideric Handel." In this study, Mr. Risinger has undertaken to elucidate the kinds of musical relationships that exist between those works written by Handel between 1733 and 1745 and their musical sources in order to distinguish among different types of borrowing and refine the terminology used by the scholarly community to discuss those issues. He has worked closely with the Handel autographs and will use his AHS Fellowship to support further manuscript studies in London and Cambridge, England. The AHS Fellowship Committee consisted of Ellen T. Harris, chair, Robert Marshall, and Lowell Lindgren. The winners of the fellowship since it was founded in 1989 are listed below.

1989	David Ross Hurley	University of Chicago
1990	Richard G. King	Stanford University
1991	John Winemiller	University of Chicago
1993	Michael Corn	University of Illinois
1993	Channan Willner	City University of New York
1995	Mark Risinger	Harvard University

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### The Handel Institute Awards for Research and Performance

Applications are invited for the next round of Handel Institute Awards of up to £1,000 to assist in the furtherance of research projects involving the life or works of Handel and his contemporaries. The deadline is September 1, 1995.

Applications are invited also for the 1996 Byrne Award (up to £1,000) which is intended primarily to support performance of Handel's music and assist young professional performers at the start of their careers. The deadline for applications is December 31, 1995.

Further particulars on both awards can be obtained from Professor Colin Timms, Department of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

A group of young professionals from the Twin Cities rounded out the fine cast, including Brian Manlove (Melisso), Lisa Habeck (Morgana), Lisa Drew (Bradamante), and Thomas Cooley (Oronte). Lauren Beatty was particularly satisfying as Oberto; it was therefore a shame that one of Oberto's three arias was not sung. The young counter-tenor Jerry Hinks, as Ruggiero, was not yet ready for the challenge of a leading castrato role.

In the pit, the Lyra Concert played beautifully with vibrancy and precision. The violins, led by Lucinda Marvin, attacked Handel's score with particular gusto and skill. Randy Bourne, the artistic director of the Lyra, served as the music director for the production. Myles Hernandez conducted, though the orchestra could have gotten along with only cues from Mr Bourne at the harpsichord.

The choice of *Alcina* was a particularly happy one, since—like Rich's Covent Garden of 1734–35—*Ex machina* boasts its own Sallé in the personage of Bob Skiba, an expert in period dance and movement. Skiba's tasteful choreography and his well-coached dancers added a vital dimension to this performance, demonstrating the integral role *balli* play in many baroque operas.

The scenery, designed by Middleton, was "closely modeled" on the work of John DeVoto, the scenographer for Lincoln's Inn Fields in the 1730s. The simple sets, made up of elaborately painted scrims and side panels, created a highly effective illusion space, which switched easily and instantaneously between such locales as *Alcina*'s sumptuous palace courtyard, complete with an arresting perspective, and the "horrid desert place" where Ruggiero is restored to his wits. Middleton's costumes, in particular the snake-clad dress that *Alcina* wore in her mad-scene, were equally impressive. Thomas Valach's lighting scheme was unobtrusive, yet extraordinarily effective.

In a production marked by a careful attention to detail throughout, two refinements merit special mention. The actors' use of gesture subtly conveyed character affect and presence; one would hope future productions of baroque opera will be similarly graced. Likewise, the tasteful performance of recitative—in particular, the elision of recitative cadences—greatly helped propel the action forward: imagine hearing recitative that actually sounds like conversation! Such thoughtfulness generously nourished this performance, making for an evening of serious enjoyment.

*The performance was given at the new Pearson Theatre of Concordia College in St. Paul, Minnesota on March 31, April 1, 7 and 8, 1995. Ex Machina Antique Music Theater was founded in 1986, "as an analog to period instrument orchestras." The Lyra Concert, one of those orchestras, was founded in 1984.*

*John T. Winemiller*

## Recent Publications and Writings

The following list of publications covers the period from the last list published in the August 1994 issue of the newsletter to the present. Neither reviews of performances nor reports of festivals have been included. Readers with information about publications in progress for inclusion in future newsletters should write to David R. Hurley, 5514 S. Blackstone Avenue, #201, Chicago, IL 60637.

### Books

- Burrows, Donald. *Handel*. Master Musicians Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- LaRue, C. Steven. *Handel and His Singers: The Creation of the Royal Academy Operas, 1720-1728*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

### Articles

- Daub, Peggy, "Queen Caroline of England's Music Library." In *Music Publishing and Collecting: Essays in Honor of Donald W. Krummel*. Ed. David Hunter, 131-65. Champaign, IL: Graduate School of Library & Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana, 1994.
- Gwynn, Dominic. "An Organ for St. Lawrence Whitchurch." *Choir and Organ* 3/1 (1995): 30-34.
- Mathiesen, Thomas J. and Benito V. Rivera, eds. *Festa Musicologica: Essays in Honor of George J. Buelow*. Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995. Selected contents: Ellen Rosand, "Handel Paints the Resurrection"; Ellen T. Harris, "Paper, Performing Practice, and Patronage: Handel's Alto Cantatas in the Bodleian Library MS Mus.d.61-62"; Graydon Beeks, "Memoirs of the Reverend John Mainwaring: Notes on a Handelian Biographer"; Donald Burrows, "Handel's Teaching Exercises: Some Supplementary Materials"; David Schildkret, "On Mozart Contemplating a Work of Handel: Mozart's Arrangement of Messiah"; Alfred Mann, "Self Borrowing."
- Parker, Mary Ann, ed. *Eighteenth-Century Music in Theory and Practice: Essays in Honor of Alfred Mann*. Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1994. Selected contents: J. Merrill Knapp, "Performing Problems in Handel's Operas"; Watkins Shaw, "Handel: Some Contemporary Performance Parts Considered"; Ellen T. Harris, "Harmonic Patterns in Handel's Operas."



performance, but for the reminder that Handel knew Muffat's music well. Also noteworthy was "Two Golden Ages," a recital of music by Dowland and Purcell and their peers. The instrumentalists were from The King's Consort and the soloist was James Bowman.

This year the members of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel Gesellschaft elected a new board of directors at its annual meeting. New to the board was Howard Arman, who in the last few years has conducted a series of very fine opera performances at the Festival. In addition, the members of the society elected to the board Gert Richter, associate director of the Händel Haus, Wolfgang Ruf, the late Bernd Baselt's successor as senior professor of musicology at the Martin-Luther

University, Terence Best of Brentwood, England, and Frieder Zschoch of Leipzig. Zschoch is a founding member of the Georg-Friedrich-Händel Gesellschaft and the chief reader for the new edition of Handel's works. Best has been a member of the edition's editorial board, a member of the Handel Institute (London), and a long-time contributor of editions and of articles about Handel and his music. The Board named Ruf to the office of President, Siegfried Flesch to the post of Academic Secretary, and Winton Dean of England, Klaus Hortschansky of Muenster, and Hanna John of Halle as vice-presidents. Clearly the Gesellschaft is in excellent hands.

*Iter Facio*

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