

Editorial

The Critical Edition of Muzio Clementi's Complete Works is an Italian National Edition

MUZIO CLEMENTI, WHO WAS BORN in Rome in 1752 and died in Evesham (England) in 1832, was called the «father of the piano», thanks to his perception (and exploration) of the instrument's multiple timbral and sonorous potential. As a composer he exploited the expressive resources of the piano to the full, thereby approaching the sonorous and formal investigations of Beethoven, who duly gratified Clementi with an artistic approval that the German master accorded only very rarely to other composers. As a teacher his work operated on two fronts. This led to the publication of the *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte* [...] (1801), a method that was taken as a model by the majority of subsequent theorists, and the one hundred studies of the *Gradus ad Parnassum*, which turned him into the head of a piano school of international standing and created a landmark for piano studies until our own day. But neither should we neglect Clementi's role as a music publisher and piano builder of European stature. He was an emblematic figure in a world in which profound social and economic changes were busy paving the way for the so-called modern age.

The debate on the life and work of Muzio Clementi began about eight years ago. The research began with *Muzio Clementi. Studies and Prospects*, a monograph published for the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the composer's birth and edited by me, together with Luca and Massimiliano Sala, with an Introduction by Leon Plantinga (Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2002). The great interest displayed by the twenty-six scholars who took part in that project subsequently persuaded us to create a tool that might offer a periodical account of the state of the international scholarship on the composer. In 2004 we therefore inaugurated a series of studies, the *Quaderni Clementiani* (Ut Orpheus Edizioni). To this point the following titles have been published: *Muzio Clementi. Cosmopolita della Musica*, edited by Richard Bösel and Massimiliano Sala (2004, Quaderni Clementiani, 1) and *New Perspectives on the Keyboard Sonatas of Muzio Clementi*, by Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald (2006, Quaderni Clementiani, 2).

This year, with a ministerial decree dated 20 March 2008, the *opera omnia* of the composer Muzio Clementi was promoted to the status of ITALIAN NATIONAL EDITION. The official ceremony took place at the Ministry for the Cultural Heritage (Rome) in the presence of Andrea Marcucci, the Under-Secretary of State, Dr. Maurizio Fallace, Director-General for the Library Heritage and Cultural Institutes, and the steering committee of the National Edition consisting of the scholars Andrea Coen (Rome), Roberto De Caro (Bologna), Roberto Illiano (Lucca – President), Leon B. Plantinga (New Haven, CT), David Rowland (Milton Keynes), Luca Sala (Cremona/Poitiers – Secretary and Treasurer), Massimiliano Sala (Pistoia – Vice-President), Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald (Cambridge, UK) and Valeria Tarsetti (Bologna).

The critical edition of the complete works of Clementi, published by Ut Orpheus Edizioni of Bologna, will consist of fifteen volumes: the first two will contain vocal and orchestral music respectively, five volumes will be devoted to the chamber music, two volumes to the keyboard works, and two volumes to the didactic works. Another three volumes will contain: 1.) the doubtful works together with the arrangements and transcriptions of Clementi, 2.) the correspondence and 3.) a thematic catalogue of his works together with documents relating to his life, iconography and an updated bibliography. Each volume will contain an analytical historical introduction, a critical edition of the music and a critical commentary (comprising a list, description and criticism of the sources, an account of interpretative problems and a list of variants).

The first volume of the *opera omnia* – *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi/La corrispondenza di Muzio Clementi*, edited by David Rowland – is already at an advanced stage of preparation and will be published in 2008. For further information go to <<http://www.muzioclementi.org>> and <<http://www.muzioclementi.com>>.

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Clementi's Italian National Edition, Lucca