

Editorial

Tartini: Is He a Music Legend without Music?

This current issue of *Ad Parnassum* is devoted to a series of studies about Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770). These articles, the results of research and investigation into the supremely important violinist, composer and teacher born in Pirano d'Istria, in some way continue and enhance the work of the late Pierluigi Petrobelli.

Why is Tartini worth studying today? Why is the 'Maestro delle Nazioni' (as the astronomer de La Lande described him in 1769) so little known and infrequently performed today, despite the fame he enjoyed during his own lifetime? Tartini's widespread influence on the development of 18th- and 19th-century instrumental style has recently been reconsidered through the analysis of the contribution of his pupils to the European musical scene¹. Various factors established Tartini's prominence in 18th-century Europe, including his influence on other composers: the European circulation of his music, the originality of the production by composers related to the 'Basilica di Sant'Antonio' (Vallotti, Callegari, Vandini, Bissoli, Guadagni) where Tartini had been '*capo dei concerti*' since 1721, and the personal and epistolary communication between him and various eminent musicians and men of culture. Despite such contemporary celebrity, deficits persist in the study of his output and in particular the dissemination and appreciation of his work via both performance and scholarship. His lacking presence in concert halls is surprising because, unlike composers such as Vivaldi, his name was never forgotten. Yet, how did it remain?

The 19th century's anecdotes about dreams, the Devil's Trill, Tartini's Pupil (Hoffmann) established the violinist as both a legendary and evanescent personality as far as music was concerned. Something else was added at the end of that century, namely patriotic commemorations on the anniversary of his birth, the erection of a monument dedicated to him in the square of Pirano, and other initiatives. A reference to his musical production is present in transcriptions and reworked versions such as the *Pastorale* by Respighi or the

¹. International Musicological Society Conference, Rome, Study session 2 July 2012, Study group: *Questions of Stylistic Identity and European Dissemination in Tartini's School of Nations*.

Tartiniana by Dallapiccola. The will to keep the Maestro's name alive appears to have taken precedence over the actual revival of his music, however. Tartini's music had, after all, been considered outdated as early as the first decades of the 19th century, and something similar to the silence of Rossini had taken place. Tartini's harmonic idea of violin composition that could include the bass accompaniment into the violin part or the use of double stopping in ornamental passages would not be the path followed by violin composers or teachers in the 19th century. The idea of the chords would become less important to the development of the scales and arpeggios technique so fundamental to 19th-century Paganinian virtuosity and in the teaching traditions centred on bravura melodic study (Mestrino, Fiorillo, Kreutzer, and so forth). Therefore, despite the subsequent development of various elements latent in Tartini's musical language, within several decades of his death, both his performance style and his melodic construction (anticipating as it did Classical-era construction, with its sentence-based articulation) began to be considered old-fashioned. The great adagios' singability, which was praised by the contemporaries and that would pave the way for the Italian instrumental model embodied by Paganini, would not be sufficient to keep Tartini's music in the repertory.

One may pose the question: why are Vivaldi's concertos performed today in preference to Tartini's? This may be attributed to various historical factors, but it was surely connected fundamentally to the widespread publishing of Vivaldi's works, by important publishers. It may also have been because, as established by the revival of Vivaldi's instrumental music at the beginning of the 20th century, the characteristics of the Venetian composer's compositional style were in line with and useful for re-enhancing the 20th-century instrumentalism. Is perhaps Vivaldi's style instrumental and Tartini's basically vocal? Might the recent rediscovery of 18th-century Italian opera and of the *belcanto* repertory restore the appeal of Tartini and his circle?

With a view to reviving interest in Tartini, the following collection of essays aims to provide a cross-section of his production and related problems through different methods, highlighted pending issues and investigation branches which are still in progress. Sergio Durante's 'Tartini Studies: The State of the Art' opens the issue with an overview of the studies of Tartini from the last forty years. Margherita Canale Degrassi's 'The Solo Concertos of Giuseppe Tartini: Sources, Tradition and Thematic Catalogue', examines the violin and orchestra, cello and orchestra, and flute and orchestra solo concertos by Tartini, with the aim of proposing a new catalogue for Tartini's works. The contributions by Vanessa Elisabetta Ruggeri, 'Per un'edizione critica dei *Sei concerti* Opera seconda di Giuseppe Tartini: riflessioni sui problemi di edizione

e di datazione' and Sofia Teresa Bisi, 'Contributo per un'edizione critica dei *Sei Concerti Opera prima libro primo di Giuseppe Tartini*', present a text as the basis for a review of Op. 1 book I and Op. 2 book II. The two authors analyze the relationship between prints and manuscripts, copies and autographs, and examine the different versions of the sources, scrutinizing the problems posed by close engagement with Tartini's works and editions.

In 'Orchestral Ensembles and Orchestration in Violins Concertos by Tartini and His Entourage' Tommaso Luison enriches the investigation on aspects of orchestration testified by some sources relating to the concertos. These indicate that Tartini's compositions were still performed in the 19th century, while some revised concertos with wind instruments illustrate a trajectory of stylistic development that points to Classical-era orchestration. In 'Dissemination and Tradition of Tartini's Compositions within the 'School of the Nations'' Guido Viverit presents the results of a comparative philological study that sheds light on how the School of the Nation propagated and maintained its tradition. The study of Tartini's copies sheds light on the dissemination of Tartini's music in eighteenth-century Europe and its influence on contemporary and later musical production. In 'From the 'Devil's Trill' to Nineteenth-Century Bravura Studies: The Presence and Reception of Tartini's Music in Early 19th-Century France' Agnese Pavanello examines Tartini's influence on the 19th-century French violin school, Gregorio Carraro, in 'Hidden Affinities. Accompanied Solo, Tartini and Germany', discussing the context and use of the solo violin in eighteenth-century Germany with regard to a group of sonatas Tartini sent to Berlin in the mid-18th century. The article by Candida Felici, '«Non suona, canta su'l violino»: From Aesthetics to Compositional and Performance Practice in Tartini's Instrumental Music' deals with both aesthetics and aspects of performance practice, leading to insights into the relationship between instrumental music and contemporary vocal production. To conclude, Alessandro Zattarin ('«Vidi in sogno un guerrier»: Tasso, Metastasio e altri fantasmi nelle sonate di Tartini'), deploying a mixed methodology combining musicology with 'Italian studies', focuses on the 'mottos' (literary sentences) written by Tartini in several instrumental works and in particular upon the quotes of the Aria by Tasso in certain sonatas.

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