

Editorial

2006 IS AN IMPORTANT YEAR FOR *AD PARNASSUM*. First of all we are pleased to observe the number of distinguished scholars and young researchers assembled by the journal over the years, and to see how its pages have generated profound debate on many significant, and indeed often innovative, issues. A tangible sign of this vitality is the fact that so many musicologists from all over the world have decided to take part in the International Conference on «Instrumental Music and the Industrial Revolution», an event organized in Cremona from 1 to 3 July by *Ad Parnassum*, in collaboration with the *Fondazione-Stichting P.A. Locatelli* and *Ut Orpheus Edizioni* (which will publish the proceedings) and under the auspices of the City and Province of Cremona.

The present writer confesses that he is moved to witness such an authoritative response to the ‘modest proposal’ advanced in these very columns in October 2003. This event is the result of a long-meditated and deeply-felt need to finally put into focus a whole sphere of research that is not only unquestionably fruitful, but also quite simply unavoidable. So let me thank in advance both the scholars presenting papers (and thus getting to grips with the fundamental issue of the relationship between music and industrial revolution) and those who will make the event physically possible through their enthusiasm and dedication: in other words, my friends and colleagues on the editorial staff of *Ad Parnassum*.

The conference will also feature two texts closely concerning this debate: *New Perspectives on the Keyboard Sonatas of Muzio Clementi* by Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald; and *Giovanni Battista Viotti between the Two Revolutions* by Massimiliano Sala. Both will be published by *Ut Orpheus Edizioni* of Bologna, respectively in the series ‘Quaderni Clementiani’ and ‘Ad Parnassum Studies’, inaugurated last year with the volume on *Hector Berlioz. Miscellaneous Studies*, edited by Fulvia Morabito and Michela Niccolai.

As we await the much-delayed — but not for that matter any less crucial — encounter between musicology and Toynbee & Co., *Ad Parnassum* continues its regular business. The present issue offers a fairly robust cross-section of the possibilities open to investigation concerning the instrumental music bridging the 18th and 19th centuries. The figures discussed are all artists of stature, ranging from Paganini to Fanny Mendelssohn (Rita Steblin and Susan Wollenberg), from Beethoven to Viotti (Benedict Taylor and Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald), and from Hummel to Brahms (Derek Carew). Also worth noting is the article by Germán Labrador, *Música y vida cotidiana en la corte española (1760-1808): la afición musical de Carlos IV*, which tells of the Spanish king’s partiality for the violin and how he engaged both the Italian Gaetano Brunetti as composer and virtuoso and Francisco Goya y Lucientes as ‘first court painter’.

Thanks to fresh interpretations, working hypotheses and biographical acquisitions, the problematic picture of an artistic world undergoing tumultuous transformation has been

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greatly enriched, and the individual manifestations of this occurrence can be examined critically, without resorting to comforting, yet sterile, attempts at academic ordering. And seeing that one sincere methodological proposal has been generously embraced (as I said at the start), I will here hazard another (with due discretion): that the study of music — and instrumental music in particular, which by its very nature particularly runs this risk — should never lose sight of the close rapport with art and history, and more specifically the relationship between phenomenon and context. In this way we scholars could effectively bypass the marshlands of the absolute (a swamp that is never completely drained), focus resolutely on the concrete clarity of the sources and pay no heed to the incessant appeals of an increasingly embarrassing *Zeitgeist*.

Roberto De Caro