

## Editorial

WHEN CONSIDERING THE IMPRESSIVE AMOUNT of scholarly work generated over the last four years (and eight issues of *Ad Pamassum*) in the attempt to satisfy the thirst for studies on the instrumental music bridging the 18th and 19th centuries, it is gratifying to note that many contributions tackle the problem of the relationship with performance, either explicitly or implicitly. Of course not all the subjects require the matter to be raised; nor does it always need stressing. Yet it would seem that most musicologists today are well aware of the importance of connecting their own hypotheses of research to the expressive results of their objects of study. In itself this is excellent news, both from the methodological point of view and because such attention makes a historical and (one might also say) ethical contribution to the correct study of performance practice. It is also grounds for much satisfaction because performers today are capable of giving magnificent performances of a repertoire that often gains new meaning and strength precisely from the proper reassessment of the materials of expression. Indeed we should be thankful to be working in the field of instrumental music, for our colleagues studying the great opera repertoire with the same expectations all too often have to put up with agonizing experiences. I say this with good cause, because for years I have rashly campaigned for the great masterpieces of 17th-century opera to be performed also in Italy. And, as the saying goes, when God wishes to punish us, he fulfils our desires. The miracle has happened and nowadays, for example, even the Maggio Musicale in Florence can stage a *Dafne* by Marco da Gagliano without excessively scandalizing the Mascagni fans. Nonetheless, the excellence of the singing and the mastery of the orchestration are unfailingly devastated by virtuosic fits of sadism thinly disguised as ‘stage direction’ – displays that amply repay the spectators’ masochistic tendencies and (equally inescapably) attract fulsome praise from the critics. I see little chance of such barbarities ending in the short term. We shall have to wait for the end of the dark ages.

In the meantime we can console ourselves by reflecting on Ludwig van Beethoven’s 33 *Veränderungen über einen Walzer für das Piano-Forte* Op. 120, a musical monument to which Walter Schenkman dedicates his comprehensive «Rethinking Diabelli’s Waltz in Relation to Beethoven’s Variations». Here, among other things, is a case where the scholar, on the strength of his analyses, takes pains to offer the player suggestions. Obviously, these may be accepted or not, but they should not be ignored.

In his «An Insular World of Romantic Isolation: Harmonic Digressions in the Early Nineteenth-Century Piano Concerto», Stephan D. Lindeman takes his cue from Mendelssohn’s Concerto no. 1 in G minor Op. 25. By tracing his investigations back to Beethoven’s Fifth Concerto Op. 73 and sifting through the piano concertos by composers such as Ries, Field, Moscheles etc., he succeeds in identifying a «particularly interesting area of experimentation» for the solo instrument.

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In his article «Early Music in Victorian England: The Case of the 1845 Concert» Peter Holman offers wide scope for historical and aesthetic reflection on the rediscovery of Early Music in England by illustrating the genesis of a movement that came to fruition with Arnold Dolmetsch, but did not at all begin with him, as is sometimes thought. Among other things, he investigates the connections with Fétis's Parisian *Concerts historiques*, and even touches on the subject of musical forgery, a phenomenon well known in the artistic field, then as today.

Finally Keith Chapin deals with «Classicist Terms of Sublimity» in the work of the philosopher and theorist of music aesthetics Christian Friedrich Michaelis, testing his arguments through an analysis of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fugue in C minor from Book II of *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* and the *Freie Fantasie* in F $\sharp$  minor by his son Carl Philipp Emanuel.

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