

## Editorial

To introduce our ninth issue, I will write only a few lines on the three substantial contributions included.

Maiko Kawabata's work, *Violinists 'Singing': Paganini, Operatic Voices, and Virtuosity*, develops the fertile links between music-historical study and performance practice: a topic raised in the editorial to the previous issue and one that is crucial to the very justification of *Ad Parnassum*. Here the author discusses the relationship between virtuosity and expression in the violin performances of Paganini and his contemporaries, particularly focusing on the comparison with vocal practice (and also taking into account technical aspects). The category of musician we are dealing with is essentially that of the interpreter-orator, an artist capable not only of expressing 'affects' during performance, but also of arousing and guiding the passions of the listeners. As a subject of discussion it was at least two centuries old, yet Classicism and Romanticism gathered the ripe fruit of the debate and elaborated it in a special way.

Walter Schenkman, on the other hand, proposes to throw fresh light on one of the best-known, and indeed most frequently performed and recorded, works of the last decades: the *Goldberg Variations*. Here he stresses the intricate connections between the numbers 14 and 21, the name Bach, the letters of which it is composed, and much else. Clearly, the rich spring of Bach's speculative labours continues to pump out a steady flow of precious material. I have no doubt that we will sooner see the oil reserves exhausted!

Finally, the article by Elio Matassi, already read at the International Conference on «Instrumental Music and the Industrial Revolution» held in Cremona (1-3 July 2006), offers a perspective on 18th- and 19th-century instrumental music that we can surely not afford to disregard: that of Ernst Bloch. Naturally we are dealing with a philosophical viewpoint that sits somewhat uncomfortably with the customary musicological methodologies. Yet this is precisely why it seemed important to anticipate the publication of the proceedings and include the article in the journal. Research must always remain open to discussion and to criticism: i.e. it must be discouraged from boasting of definitive achievements and, equally, be protected from the welcoming ferocity of the various orthodoxies.

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