

COMPOSER ANNIVERSARIES IN 2009

John Collins, *Worthing*

with contributions from Peter Bavington on Purcell and Paul Simmonds on Mendelssohn

An unusually large number of composers' birth and death anniversaries fall this year. Among them are several whose works are worth exploring on the clavichord.

Johann Gottfried Albrechtsberger (died 7 March 1809), organist at Melk Abbey and later St Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, and teacher of counterpoint to the young Beethoven, published several collections of Preludes and Fugues; many more survive in manuscript, as well as sets of Versets for the Mass. Apart from the monumental *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* edition of selected instrumental works (first published in 1909), those available in modern editions include *Six Fugues* of c. 1809, edited by Greg Lewin (see review on pp. 27-9), *Six Fugues* Op. 7 published by Edition Peters, and six books of selected preludes and fugues in Doblinger's *Diletto Musicale* series. One of these contains twelve *Themata vel Praeludia* each one of which finishes in E major, a later parallel to a collection by Gottlieb Muffat. An interesting selection of some seventeen pieces is also published in an anthology of *Wiener Orgelmusik um 1800* edited by Erich Benedikt, and *Douze Fugues* Op. 1 and *Douze Preludes et une Fugue* Op. 3 are available in facsimile by Musica Repartita, Utrecht.

It is to be hoped that more of these most attractive, not too difficult pieces will be made available in modern editions.

George Frideric Handel died on 14 April 1759. Among his best-known works are the eight 'great' keyboard suites, published by the composer himself in 1720 as *Suites de Pieces pour le Clavecin*; numerous other suites and individual movements survive in unauthorized publications and in manuscript. These works can be effectively performed on the clavichord as well as on the harpsichord, and we should need no excuse for playing them. The *Six Fugues or Voluntaries for the Organ or Harpsichord*, published by Walsh c. 1735, should also need no introduction; they may well have been selected from a manuscript now in the British Library which contains, as well as these six, the fugues in D minor, E minor and F minor from the 1720 publication, plus one more fugue in F major which has been published by Novello in Robin Langley's *English Organ Music* anthology. A most interesting manuscript of these fugues (and the 1720 suites) with copious ornamentation compiled by Gottlieb Muffat has been edited by Christopher Hogwood for Ut Orpheus. A Fugue in E major found in the Southgate manuscript at the Royal College of Organists' Library was edited by H. Diack Johnstone for Novello in 1974. During Handel's life Walsh published at least eleven sets of *Overtures fitted to the Harpsichord or Spinnet* which sound well on the clavichord; sixty of them have been republished by Dover, and there are also contemporary transcriptions of the *Water Music* and *Music for the Royal Fireworks* for organ or harpsichord solo.

Johann Christian Kittel (died 17 April 1809) was a pupil of J. S. Bach in Leipzig and organist in Erfurt; composer of many organ works and a treatise on that instrument, he also published *Six Klavier sonatas of various kinds together with a fantasia - first collection* in 1789, which has been edited by Laura Cerutti for Cornetto. No second collection seems to have survived if, indeed, it was ever published. There is also a set of variations on *Nicht so traurig 'für das Clavier'*, in a volume of organ pieces edited by Willem Twillert.

Franz Josef Haydn (died 31 May 1809) left many keyboard sonatas, partitas, divertimenti and variations which are, surprisingly, still not as widely known as they should be. The early sonatas in particular were almost certainly composed with the clavichord in mind, and contain some fine music that makes only modest technical demands: for available editions, see pp. 7-8. The great popularity of Haydn's orchestral music resulted in many arrangements for organ and harpsichord being published in England during the late eighteenth and through the nineteenth centuries, although there are no modern editions of these. However, in Spain there are accounts of movements from the symphonies being played in Barcelona during the Mass, some of which were arranged for keyboard by F. M. López in his *Musica de Clave* and are available in an edition published by ICCMU. Haydn approved a keyboard setting made in 1787 by the Viennese publishers Artaria of his orchestral work *The Seven Last Words of*

our Saviour on the Cross, consisting of an introduction and seven slow movements, with a final representation of the earthquake described in Matthew, Chapter 27. This makes surprisingly effective clavichord music, though the repeated notes and Alberti-type figuration need care. It is available in a modern edition (see below) and has recently been recorded on the clavichord by Aapo Häkkinen (see p. 32).

Henry Purcell (born 10 September 1659) left a small corpus of keyboard pieces, all of which can be effective on the clavichord; and since it now seems clear that the instrument, though rare, was not entirely absent from seventeenth-century England, there is no reason for clavichordists to avoid them. Eight suites were published by his widow in 1696, the year after his death, in a volume entitled *A Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord or Spinnet*. I think we can assume that they were written for Purcell's keyboard pupils: they contain the most interesting of his keyboard writing, and perhaps should be better known than they seem to be. Many movements show the influence of the French *style luthé*. The remainder of Purcell's keyboard works are mostly arrangements of instrumental pieces, taking the form of a right-hand melody with a simple left-hand accompaniment, sometimes on a ground bass. A manuscript containing twenty keyboard pieces by Purcell, some previously unknown, and one by Orlando Gibbons was discovered in 1993 and is now in the British Library: the contents, edited by Davitt Moroney, are available from the Associated Board at remarkably little cost.

Christopher Hogwood's complete edition of Purcell's keyboard music for the Purcell Society, to be published by Stainer and Bell later this year, is still in preparation; meanwhile, Howard Ferguson's two-volume edition from the same publishers remains available.

Three Spanish composers have anniversaries in 2009. **Felipe Rodriguez** (1759–1814), organist at Montserrat, left several rondos and multi-movement sonatas in manuscript, most of which sound well on the clavichord. Fifteen of these are available in *Mestres de l'escolania de Montserrat*. Lesser Spanish composers include **Pedro Nuez** (1739–1809), organist of San Pablo, Zaragoza, by whom two sonatas, both in G, are available in a modern edition which also contains a Pastorela and two Sonatas by **Joaquin Nebra** (1709–82), youngest of three brothers and organist of La Seo, Zaragoza. All three sonatas are in the Scarlatti/Soler bipartite single-movement style.

And, last but not least –

Felix Mendelssohn (born 3 February 1809). Paul Simmonds writes:

It is Felix Mendelssohn's two-hundredth anniversary this year, but is this any justification for performing his music on the clavichord? This was my initial reaction when it was suggested I play some of his music for the AGM on 11 July 2009. On reflection this idea is by no means bizarre. Although relatively few clavichords were made at the beginning of the nineteenth century, they were still around and being used. I have a clavichord which was carefully restored in 1877! I have the *Songs without Words* in my library, so this seemed a good starting point, particularly as they are in the German *Singspiel* tradition much favoured by typical clavichord composers such as Wolf, Reichardt and Hiller. Amateur musicians would sing and accompany themselves at the clavichord, and from this tradition to songs without words is a small step.

Whether Felix Mendelssohn had access to a clavichord I cannot state with any certainty, but the family may well have done. Felix's grandmother, Sara Levi, née Itzig, was possibly the only 'Klavier' student of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach during his last years in Berlin. Whether 'Klavier' meant keyboard in the generic usage or indeed a clavichord is unclear, but in her library we find a number of compositions by Bach, including two Fantasies. Certain is, that she shared her musical inheritance with the young Felix; echoes of W. F. are to be found in one of Mendelssohn's songs (see Martin Falck, *Wilhelm Friedemann Bach*, Leipzig, 1913, p. 51 ff).

The ultimate justification for interpreting anything on the clavichord is whether it works musically. Many of the *Songs without Words* work reassuringly well; the range required is often within the eighteenth-century five-octave compass, despite dating from the 1830s onwards, and a sustaining pedal is not missed. Mendelssohn's keyboard music is not my natural pasture, but I hope that the pleasure I receive from working on these pieces will be reflected in my performance of some of them in July.

A selection of currently available editions

Albrechtsberger

Instrumentalwerke, ed. Oskar Kapp in the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* series, originally published 1909, reprinted by Adeva, DTÖ 33. <http://www.adeva.com>

6 *Fügen für Orgel/Cembalo* Op. 7, ed. Imre Sulyok, Peters Edition EP 8209.
<http://edition-peters.de>

Doblinger *Diletto Musicale* series <http://www.doblinger-musikverlag.at>:

- 4 *Fügen für Orgel*, ed. Otto Biba, DM 432
- 5 *Praeludien für Orgel*, ed. Biba, DM 658
- 8 *kleine Praeludien*, ed. Biba, DM 657
- 12 *Themata vel Praeludia*, ed. Alois Just, DM 983
- Pastorale (C major) and Fuga (B major)*, ed. Biba, DM 654
- Praeludium und Fuga for four hands*, ed. Biba, DM 780
- Anthology: *Wiener Orgelmusik um 1800*, ed. Erich Benedikt, DM 1328

Six *Fugues for the Organ or Pianoforte* Op. 16, ed. Greg Lewin: see p. 27

Douze Fugues Op. 1 and *Douze Préludes et une Fugue Op. 3*, facsimile edition, *Musica Repartita*, Vol. 31; see p. 27

Handel

Handel's keyboard works were edited by Friedrich Chrysander in the nineteenth century, and a selection of pieces from this edition is available in an inexpensive reprint from Dover. A modern critical edition has been produced by Terence Best for the *Hallische Händelausgabe*, which is available from Bärenreiter in two versions: (a) complete, with full critical commentary; (b) a less expensive 'playing score' with the full text of the edition but with minimal commentary.

Reprinted editions from Dover Publications Inc. <http://store.doverpublications.com>

Keyboard Works for Solo Instrument, from the *Deutsche Händelgesellschaft* edition (selection) edited by Friedrich Chrysander, ISBN 048624338-9

Sixty Handel Overtures, a republication of John Walsh's *Handel's Sixty Overtures from all his Operas and Oratorios . . .* (published in London some time before 1756): ISBN 048627744-5

Hallische Händelausgabe <http://www.baerenreiter.com>

(a) critical edition; (b) playing score:

- Klavierwerke I*, 8 'Great' suites HWV 426–433. (a) BA 4049; (b) BA 4224
- Klavierwerke II*, the 1733 collection HWV 434–442. (a) BA 4009; (b) BA 4221
- Klavierwerke III*, separate suites and pieces, part 1. (a) BA 4028; (b) BA 4222
- Klavierwerke IV*, separate suites and pieces, part 2. (a) BA 4032; (b) BA 4223

Ut Orpheus editions, Bologna <http://www.utorpheus.com/utorpheus/index.php>:

6 *Fugues for Keyboard* (1735), HWV 605–610, 'mises dans une autre applicature pour la facilité de la main' by Gottlieb Muffat (1736), ed. Christopher Hogwood. ES 48

8 *Suites for Keyboard* (1720) HWV 426–433, 'mises dans une autre applicature pour la facilité de la main' by Gottlieb Muffat (1736), ed. Hogwood. ES 46

English Organ Music – an anthology from four centuries in ten volumes, edited by Robin Langley, Volume 4: 'From Henry Purcell to John Stanley' includes the fugue in F major from the British Library manuscript. Novello, 01 0194. <http://chesternovello.com>

Fugue in E major, ed. H. Diack Johnstone: Novello, 61 0027. <http://chesternovello.com>

Kittel

'Six Klavier sonatas of various kinds together with a fantasia – first collection' ed. Laura Cerutti, Cornetto Verlag CP479. <http://www.faksimiles.org/verlag.htm>

The six variations 'für das Clavier' on 'Nicht so traurig, nicht so sehr' are included in: *Variationen über 2 Choräle & VI Variationen über Nicht so traurig*, ed. Willem Twillert, available from Muziekhandel Saul B. Groen, Amsterdam. <http://saulbgroen.nl>

Haydn

Haydn's keyboard sonatas are available in an inexpensive two-volume edition from Dover: this is reprinted from the 1918 Breitkopf & Härtel edition, and it includes a useful concordance unravelling the complexities of the various numbering systems of the Haydn sonatas. The two standard editions for serious players are the *Wiener Urtext* (3 volumes, edited by Christa Landon) and the *Henle Urtext* (3 volumes, edited by Georg Feder). A reduced-

size photoreproduction of the latter, again in 3 volumes, very legible and well produced, measuring 7 by 24 centimetres, is a convenient and cheaper alternative. The great Variations in F minor, the *Sauschneider* Capriccio and other sets of variations (some well within modest capabilities), are available in a Henle volume edited by Sonia Gerlach.

Dover Publications <http://store.doverpublications.com>:

Complete Piano Sonatas, Vol. 1 ISBN 048624726-0; Vol. 2 ISBN 048624727-9

Wiener Urtext edition <http://www.wiener-urtext.com>:

Complete Piano Sonatas UT 50080

Henle Urtext edition <http://www.henle.de>: (a) full-size, paper bound; (b) study edition

Piano Sonatas, Vol. 1 (a) HN 238; (b) HN 9238

Piano Sonatas, Vol. 2 (a) HN 240; (b) HN 9240

Piano Sonatas, Vol. 3 (a) HN 242; (b) HN 9242

Piano Pieces and Variations (a) HN 224

Félix Máximo López, *Integral de la Música para clave y pianoforte*, ed. A. Cobo, ICCMU, Madrid, Series C No. 7, includes López' arrangements of orchestral music by Haydn. <http://www.iccmu.es>

Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuz für ein Tasteninstrument (the 1787 keyboard version of *The Seven Last Words*) ed. Erich Benedikt, Doblinger, *Diletto Musicale* series, DM 1202. <http://www.doblinger-musikverlag.at>

Purcell

Complete Harpsichord Works, ed. Howard Ferguson, Stainer & Bell <http://www.stainer.co.uk>:

Book 1 (Eight Suites) K 21

Book 2 (Miscellaneous pieces) K.22

Twenty Keyboard pieces and one by Orlando Gibbons, ed. Davitt Moroney. Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, ISBN 9781860961281. <http://www.abrsmpublishing.com>

Rodriguez, Nuez and Nebra

Mestres de l'escolania de Montserrat, Vol. V, *Música instrumental II*, ed. P. Josep Vinyals, contains fifteen keyboard pieces by Rodríguez. <http://www.pamsa.com>

Doce Compositores Aragoneses de tecla (s. XVIII), ed. Dionisio Preciado, Editora Nacional, Madrid (no known website) contains two sonatas by Nuez and a *Pastorela* and two Sonatas by Nebra.

Mendelssohn

There are countless editions of the *Lieder ohne Worte*; Bärenreiter (<http://www.baerenreiter.com>)

and Henle <http://www.henle.de> both produce Urtext editions, and a complete edition is available in one volume from Edition Peters <http://edition-peters.de>. You can even download all of Mendelssohn's keyboard works free from <http://imslp.org/wiki>.