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Georg Friedrich Haendel *Concerto a Cembalo Solo con Viola di Gambe o Braccio, C Major.* Edition Güntersberg G189

The title of this publication will be confusing for most of us, as we all know this piece as the Handel Gamba Sonata in C. For some years now we were led to believe that this piece is not by Handel at all, but by Leffloth. Perhaps part of the reasoning behind this was that it was difficult to believe that Handel actually wrote such a simple piece. It seems that recent research shows that the piece is by Handel after all, written early in his life. (What a shame that he didn't write any more inspiring pieces for the viol! We have of course the evidence of the G Minor Sonata as a legitimate arrangement for the viol –also published by Güntersberg and Schott-, and perhaps this allows us to arrange others in the same way) So, this new edition does not mean to replace the old and trusted edition we all know (Hortus Musicus), but should be more seen as an addition to it, being based on good research into the different sources. There are eleven manuscripts of this work in various archives, ranging from Switzerland via Leipzig, Berlin, Dresden and Hamburg to as far as Sweden. The Swedish source seems to have inspired Güntersberg most in producing this edition. Sadly only the keyboard part survives in the University Library of Lund, but there are figures in the left hand of the keyboard part (2nd movement), many ornaments and it carries the fancy title that is used for this edition: “Concerto..” The Swedish manuscript as well as another Hamburg version (which has the viol part) contain an unusual ornament: Something looking like a quotation mark “. Güntersberg say in the Preface that this in their opinion is a sign for a downward mordent. They chose to print it in this edition as an ornament before the note: If the main note is a c, the ornament goes d c b before the main note. I would love to see further evidence of this, and perhaps reference to other German sources which use this ornament. I have not seen this before and it seems a strange ornament to use on a downbeat, and indeed on the first note of the first movement, for example.

However, it is, as usual, a clean and clear edition which includes interesting ornamentation in the first movement, and also shows a part of the original keyboard part of the Swedish manuscript. Graham Pont, who found the recent evidence that this piece is by Handel after all, played a part in producing this edition.

Susanne Heinrich