

Gambenkonzert von Abel, der nach Gerbers Worten⁵ „*allgemein für den größten Solospieler auf der Viola da Gamba, itziger Zeit, gehalten*“ wurde, musizieren.⁶

Thomas Fritzsch
Freyburg an der Unstrut, Januar 2018

Unsere Ausgabe

Unsere Ausgabe des Gambenkonzertes A-Dur A9:1A⁷, das Carl Friedrich Abel zugeschrieben wird, beruht auf einem Manuskript in der Ledenburg-Sammlung mit Siegel und Signatur **D-OSa⁸ Dep 115b Akz. 2000/002 Nr. 733** trägt. Es besteht aus einem Deckblatt mit dem Titel *Viola de Gamba* und sechs Notenseiten, die die Stimme der Sologambe eines Konzerts in A-Dur enthalten. Die Titelzeile auf der ersten Seite lautet *CONCERTO Viola de Gambo*. Diese mit Sorgfalt und geübter Hand geschriebene Stimme enthält in den Tuttistellen auch den (unbezifferten) Bass. Ein Komponist ist nicht angegeben. Auch der Schreiber ist nicht bekannt.

Die fehlenden Orchesterstimmen - Violino Primo, Violino Secundo und Viola sowie der Basso in den Solopassagen - wurden für diese Edition aufgrund des Kontextes durch Wolfgang Kostujak rekonstruiert.

Ansonsten folgen wir der Quelle so genau wie möglich. Unsere wenigen Änderungen sind durch den musikalischen Kontext gerechtfertigt. Sie werden durch eckige Klammern (dynamische Bezeichnungen) und Strichelung (Bögen) gekennzeichnet. Vorzeichen, die wir abweichend von der Vorlage vorschlagen, stehen in Klammern. Alle Änderungen, die so nicht erfasst werden konnten, sind im Kritischen Bericht aufgeführt. Die Bezifferung des Basses wurde im Rahmen der Rekonstruktion des Basses erarbeitet und von uns hinzugefügt.

Wir danken Christiane und Hans Christoph Homann von Gut Ledenburg und Isabelle Guerreau vom Niedersächsischen Landesarchiv für Ihre Unterstützung, und wir danken François-Pierre Goy, Peter Holman und Andrew Ashbee dafür, dass sie unsere Aufmerksamkeit auf die Ledenburg-Sammlung gelenkt haben. Wolfgang Kostujak danken wir für die Rekonstruktion.

Günter von Zadow
Heidelberg, Januar 2018

Introduction

After the death of Carl Friedrich Abel in London on 20 June 1787, his effects were sold on 12 December of the same year in the auction hall of John Greenwood on Leicester Square. On this day, *Mr. Abel's last solos and concertos, for the viola de gambo*, went under the hammer as Lot 34 under the rubric *Manuscript Music*. We do not know who won the bidding for Abel's viola da gamba concertos. The unknown buyer most likely acquired the performance material from which Abel and his colleagues had played earlier at the concerts, which had been announced in the *Public Advertiser*, in the King's Theatre on Haymarket. Abel appeared as soloist in orchestra-accompanied gamba concertos of his own composition in the entr'actes of Jomelli's oratorio *La Betulia liberata* (25 February 1768) and Handel's masque *Acis and Galatea* (15 March 1775), as well as in a concert in London's Pantheon (16 March 1780) and in a private concert for the Duke of Queensberry (January

1785). This certainly rather random selection of documented performances of Abel's viola da gamba concertos makes it clear that Abel's appearance as gamba soloist with an orchestra was not a rare event and could have been a main attraction of a concert as well as an entertaining intermezzo in a musico-dramatic work. His gamba concertos also circulated outside the composer's immediate circle, as illustrated by Friedrich Wilhelm Marburg's anecdote about a tavern virtuoso.¹ The loss of these viola da gamba concertos by Abel, which is symptomatic for the sketchy transmission within the genre, is all the more unfortunate. Thus, for example, we lack the gamba concertos of Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel (1690–1749) and Daniel Stolze (?–1777), which are listed in the 1761 and 1762 catalogues of publisher Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf, and several by Carl Wilhelm Ferdinand Guhr (1787–1848).

That until now the repertoire of this genre has consisted of little more than a dozen works by Georg Philipp

⁵ Ernst Ludwig Gerber, *Historisch-Biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler*, Erster Theil, Leipzig, 1790, Sp. 4.

⁶ Die Weltersteinspielung dieses Konzertes, bei der die vorliegende Edition benutzt wurde, erschien 2017 auf der CD *Gamba Concertos* bei Coviello Classics (COV 91710).

⁷ Peter Holman und Günter von Zadow, „Charles Frederick Abel's Viola da Gamba Music: A New Catalogue, Second Revised Version“, *The Viola da Gamba Journal* Vol. 11 (2017), S. 73–136 [vdgs.org.uk/journal] oder [guentersberg.de/papers].

⁸ Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv – Standort Osnabrück.

¹ Friedrich Wilhelm Marburg, *Legende einiger Musikehiligen* (Cologne: Hammer, 1786), p. 19.

Telemann, Johann Pfeiffer, Johann Gottlieb Graun, and Giuseppe Tartini, has led to the historically skewed perception that gamba concerts and lunar eclipses appear equally seldom. The discovery of the private music library of Eleonore von Münster (née Grothaus, 1734–1794) in Schloss Ledenburg was therefore pure serendipity! In its current form, this music collection (that I have dubbed the Ledenburg Collection), predominantly made up of copyists' manuscripts, consists nearly exclusively of literature for the viola da gamba. For three of the above-mentioned gamba concertos, the authorship is unequivocally substantiated by the title pages of the respective manuscripts: Anton Milling (second half of the 18th century), Anton Raetzel (~ 1724 – after 1760), and Johann Carl (I) Graf zu Hardeck (1703–1752).²

That a fourth manuscript, with the title *CONCERTO Violo de Gambo*, transmitted a gamba concerto by Abel initially remained unrecognized. The performance material of all four gamba concertos display losses of parts, and the original binding, presumably with the name of the composer of the *CONCERTO Violo de Gambo*, is likewise lost. The manuscript produced by an unknown copyist contains only the solo part and the bass part for all the tutti sections. Only through a stylistic comparison and the verification of concordances for musical figures, which due to their specific characteristics do not belong to the general musical language, could Carl Friedrich Abel be determined as the composer. This attribution gains plausibility within the context of further works by Abel preserved in the Ledenburg Collection.³ Also the idiosyncratic spelling *Violo de Gambò* (occasionally also *Viol di Gambò*), found only in English manuscripts or manuscripts of English origin, is evidence of English provenance and, with the gamba concerto, of all things, by Anton Raetzel, a composition by the brother-in-law of Carl Friedrich Abel's brother⁴ is found in the Ledenburg Collection.

In spite of the loss of parts, the harmonic progression of the *CONCERTO Violo de Gambo* is comprehensible throughout. The preserved bass part for the tutti sections in connection with the motifs of the solo part also allow the reconstruction of missing parts of the orchestral writing. Consequently, for the first time we can perform a gamba concerto by Abel,⁵ who in Gerber's words was

“generally considered today's greatest solo player on the viola da gamba.”⁶

Thomas Fritzsch
Freyburg an der Unstrut, January 2018

Our Edition

Our edition of the Viola da Gamba Concerto in A major A9:1A,⁷ is based on a manuscript source in the Ledenburg Collection with the sigla and shelf number **D-OSa⁸ Dep 115b Akz. 2000/002 Nr. 733**. It consists of a title page bearing the designation *Viola de Gamba* and six pages of music that contain the solo viola da gamba part of a concerto in A major. The heading on the first page reads *CONCERTO Violo de Gambo*. This part, carefully written by an experienced hand, also contains an unfigured bass part in the tutti passages. The composer is not indicated. The scribe is not known.

The missing orchestral parts – Violino Primo, Violino Secundo, and Viola as well as the Basso in the solo passages – have been reconstructed by Wolfgang Kostujak based on the context.

We have otherwise followed the source as closely as possible. Editorial additions and changes are derived from the musical context and indicated by square brackets (dynamic markings) and dashed lines (slurs/ties). Editorial accidentals are in parentheses. All changes that could not be subsumed in this manner are listed in the Critical Report. The figuring of the bass was developed and added during the reconstruction of the Basso part.

We would like to thank Christiane and Hans Christoph Homann from Ledenburg Manor and Isabelle Guerreau from the Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv for their support, and François-Pierre Goy, Peter Holman, and Andrew Ashbee for calling our attention to the Ledenburg Collection. We also would like to thank Wolfgang Kostujak for his reconstruction.

Günter von Zadow
Heidelberg, January 2018
Translation: Howard Weiner

² Anton Milling, *Concerto D-Moll für Viola da Gamba, zwei Violinen, Viola und Basso*, ed. T. Fritzsch and G. v. Zadow (Heidelberg: Güntersberg, 2017), G297. Anton Raetzel, *Concerto A-Dur für Viola da Gamba, zwei Violinen, Viola und Basso*, ed. T. Fritzsch and G. v. Zadow (Heidelberg: Güntersberg, 2017), G298. Johann Carl Graf zu Hardeck, *Concerto a Viola di Gamba, Violino Primo, Violino Secundo et Basso*, ed. T. Fritzsch and G. v. Zadow (Heidelberg: Güntersberg, 2018), G329. The introductions of these editions provide detailed reports about the genesis, contents, and discovery of the Ledenburg Collection.

³ Günter von Zadow, “The Works for Viola da Gamba in the Ledenburg Collection,” *Viola da Gamba Journal* 10 (2016), pp. 42–80 [vdgs.org.uk/journal] and [guntersberg.de/papers].

⁴ Leopold August Abel, the brother of Carl Friedrich Abel, married Benigna Charlotte Retzel (Raetzel), Anton Raetzel's sister, in Braunschweig on 17 Februar 1746.

⁵ The world premiere recording of this concerto, for which the present edition was employed, was released in 2017 on the CD *Gamba Concertos* by Coviello Classics (COV 91710).

⁶ Ernst Ludwig Gerber, *Historisch-Biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler*, Erster Theil (Leipzig, 1790), col. 4.

⁷ Peter Holman and Günter von Zadow, “Charles Frederick Abel's Viola da Gamba Music: A New Catalogue, Second Revised Version,” *Viola da Gamba Journal* 11 (2017), pp. 73–136 [vdgs.org.uk/journal] and [guntersberg.de/papers].

⁸ Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv, Osnabrück.