Editorial

THE YEAR 2014 marks the 250th anniversary of the death of Pietro Antonio Locatelli. This Italian composer and virtuoso violinist was born in Bergamo in 1694. He began his career in his home town among the violinists of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. In 1711 he moved to Rome, probably in the hope of studying with Arcangelo Corelli, the highest musical authority of the time. The severe illness leading to the death of this great master, which occurred in 1713, perhaps frustrated the young violinist's plans. Locatelli may have had to fall back on Giuseppe Valentini, a virtuoso violinist who had grown up in Corelli's school. In the meantime, he worked in many locations and institutions. His first employment was in the service of Michelangelo Caetani, prince of Cisterna and Sermoneta; he moved next to the cappella musicale of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, and during the last part of his sojourn in Rome he worked as a kind of factotum for the cappella musicale of Cardinal Camillo Cybo, the dedicate of Locatelli's 12 Concerti grossi, Op. 1. From 1716 to 1722 Locatelli held membership of the Congregatione generale dei musici di Santa Cecilia, the main musical institution of the city. He remained in Rome up to the spring of 1723; at this point, he initiated a concert tour, which took him to the major European musical centres.

In 1723 Locatelli was in Venice, where he made the acquaintance of the patrician Girolamo Michiel Lini, to whom he dedicated his masterpiece *L'Arte del violino: 12 Concerti per violino solo con 24 Capricci ad libitum*, Op. 3. In 1725 he visited Mantua, where he received the title of «virtuoso di camera» from the city's governor, Philipp von Hessen-Darmstadt. In 1727 he left Italy, never to return.

Having crossed the Alps, preceded by his reputation as a virtuoso, Locatelli performed successively in Munich (1727), Berlin, Frankfurt and Kassel (1728). In 1729 he arrived in Amsterdam, where he remained until his death in 1765. Well integrated into the socio-cultural context of the city, he became a successful entrepreneur: he gave weekly private concerts, taught violin to a few wealthy amateurs, and traded in prints, books and musical items. But, especially, he also edited and published the music he had composed during his 'years of pilgrimage'. His nine opus numbers comprise exclusively instrumental music in the genres of concerto grosso, violin concerto, violin sonata and trio sonata. Le Cène, Van der Hoeven and Covens were the publishers of the more expensive orchestral

works (Opp. 1, 3, 4, 7, 9); in contrast, the chamber works (Opp. 2, 5, 6, 8) were published at the composer's own expense.

The fortunes of Locatelli are especially connected with his Arte del violino, Op. 3 (1734). The outer movements of its 12 violin concertos, structured on the Vivaldian model (alternating orchestral and solo episodes, i.e. Tutti-Solo), all conclude with a capriccio for solo violin to be performed ad libitum before the cadenza and final tutti. The 24 Capriccios constitute a genuine novelty in musical history, leading to an emancipation of violin technique that is quite extraordinary when considered in the light of eighteenth-century practice. Previously unused and very high positions, polyphonic chords involving lefthand finger crossings, extensions and contractions as well as a sophisticated bowing technique (détaché, staccato, spiccato, legato-staccato etc.), often in combination with sustained velocity, all demand acrobatic virtuosity on the part of the performer. In this respect, Opus 3 may be considered a Kunstbuch: i.e. a work aimed at exploring the technical and expressive potentialities of an instrument, even in the absence of the systematic approach and completeness of a teaching manual. Moreover, L'arte del violino effects a synthesis of Locatelli's musical personality, in which the talent of the virtuoso performer is perfectly conjoined to that of the composer.

The reception of Locatelli's output is intimately bound up with the fortunes of violin virtuosity as a general phenomenon: during certain periods enthusiastically accepted, but at other times contemptuously rejected.

Soon after the publication of the Dutch prints Locatelli's music spread throughout Europe. France — a centre for the diffusion of violin virtuosity ever since the foundation of the *Concert spirituel* in 1725 — held a leading position in this regard. Locatelli influenced many exponents of the *École française du violon*; in particular, Locatelli's 24 Capriccios, considered a milestone in violinistic literature, were included in whole or part in the anthologies and 'methods' published by Jean-Baptiste Cartier, Alexandre-Étienne Choron, Michel Woldemar and Giovanni Battista Viotti.

However, the most mature 'fruit' of the Locatellian legacy was Italian. About a hundred years after the publication of *L'Arte del violino* Nicolò Paganini published his 24 Caprices, Op. 1 (c1810). With this collection, all the potentialities of the violin were exhausted: to those already demonstrated by Locatelli were added left-hand pizzicato, glissando, such special effects as 'sul ponticello' and a comprehensive assortment of acrobatics for the bow. However, Paganini, unlike Locatelli, added nothing to the technical achievements of the generations of virtuosos who had preceded him: his great merit was to merge them into a brilliant synthesis.

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At the end of the nineteenth century, when public enthusiasm for virtuosos and virtuosity slowly receded, Locatelli's star faded, too...

The interest of musicologists in the figure and art of Pietro Antonio Locatelli dates from the middle of the last century, when a Dutch musicologist, Arend Koole, wrote the first monograph on the composer: *Leven en Werken van Pietro Antonio Locatelli da Bergamo 1694-1794 [sic]: Italiaans musycqmeester tot Amsterdam*¹. The event marked the beginning of the 'Locatelli Renaissance'. This book, although now of only historical relevance, already contains the most important documents for a reconstruction of Locatelli's life and career.

In 1969 John Endrik Calmeyer produced a Ph.D. dissertation entitled *The Life, Times and Works of Pietro Antonio Locatelli*². This work, which is articulated in three parts that deal, respectively, with musical life in the Netherlands in the eighteenth century, the composer's biography and the structural and stylistic characteristics of his works, is enriched with appendices devoted to *opera dubia*, iconography, discography, a thematic index, documents and bibliography. Although dated, this study offers the sole currently available comprehensive overview of Locatelli's life and work in English.

In 1981 another Dutch musicologist, Albert Dunning, updated Koole's and Calmeyer's monographs with the publication of his *Pietro Antonio Locatelli*. *Der Virtuose und seine Welt*³. This new and substantial monograph, speedily translated into Italian by Oddo Piero Bertini as *Pietro Antonio Locatelli*. *Il virtuoso, il compositore e il suo tempo*⁴, has been considered the standard work on the topic for about thirty years.

Dunning was the most active protagonist of Locatelli's rediscovery. In 1991 he founded the Pietro Antonio Locatelli Foundation (Amsterdam-Cremona), whose main statutory purpose was the publication of critical and practical editions of the complete works of the composer from Bergamo. Preceded by the very substantial anthology *Intorno a Locatelli: Studi in occasione del tricentenario della nascita di Pietro Antonio Locatelli: 1695-1764* (Lucca, Lim, 1994), the ten volumes of the critical edition were published by Schott within a decade (1994-2002); the practical edition, its scores derived from the ones of the critical edition, has at the time of writing almost achieved completion, being issued by the same publishing house in collaboration with the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini (Lucca), which took over the work of editing the music

¹. Amsterdam, Jasonpers, Universiteitspers, 1949.

². Ann Arbor (MI), The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1969, UMI [AAT 7003210].

^{3.} Buren, Frits Knuf, 1981.

^{4.} Turin, Fògola, 1983.

after Dunning's death (2005) and the subsequent dissolution of the Locatelli Foundation. In 1999 the Italian Ministry of Culture recognized the Locatelli Complete Edition as an official Italian National Edition.

All the researches carried out by these numerous scholars in publishing the above-mentioned works have enabled the present writer to prepare the latest, up-to-date monograph on the composer: *Pietro Antonio Locatelli*⁵.

So far as discography is concerned, interest in Locatelli has registered a stunning increase, especially during recent years. The Critical Edition has enabled musicians to play from a philologically correct text, which hitherto was lacking. The twenty-four Capriccios, Op. 3, for instance, were previously usually known and played from one of the three main editions (by Franzoni⁶, Catherine⁷ and Nadaud⁸, respectively) that came out during the 1920s. In these editions the Capriccios suffered cuts that sometimes resulted in the loss of several bars: among the contributory causes were their considerable length, their rhapsodic and extemporaneous nature that invited abbreviation, and perhaps also their extremely virtuosic writing. Precisely in order to overcome this last problem, the new practical edition of Op. 3 contains a number of preparatory exercises with alternative fingerings by Enzo Porta. This addition has facilitated the performance of those passages of transcendental difficulty that have in the past proved almost unplayable for the majority of violinists, a fact that had previously led to Locatelli's absence from the teaching syllabus: one therefore looks forward to a growing appreciation of these pieces.

Over the years, first the Locatelli Foundation and later the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini have evolved by these stages into an important reality providing a global benchmark for musicologists and musicians, or merely for scholars eager to deepen their knowledge of the works of the violinist-composer from Bergamo.

It is therefore the intention of the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini to mark this anniversary by organizing, in collaboration with Fondazione MIA (Bergamo), Palazzetto Bru Zane-Centre de musique romantique française (Venice) and the Italian National Edition of Pietro Antonio Locatelli's Complete Works, the international conference *P. A. Locatelli and*

⁵. Palermo, L'Epos, 2005 (Costellatio musica, 17).

⁶. LOCATELLI, Pietro Antonio. L'Arte del Violino. 25 Capricci tolti dai 12 Concerti, Op. 3, per violino solo, edited, revised and fingered by Romeo Franzoni, Milan, Ricordi, [1920].

⁷. ID. *Vingt-six caprices*, edited by Georges Catherine, Paris, Leduc, 1919 (Einsegnement complet du violon; études et exercises).

^{8.} ID. L'Art du violon. 25 Caprices pour violon seul, edited by Édouard Nadaud, Paris, Costallat & Cie, s.d. [c1920].

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J.-M. Leclair: Legacy in the 19th Century, to be held in Bergamo on 17-19 October 2014. Jean-Marie Leclair, who died in 1764 (2014 is the 250th anniversary of his death, too), is closely linked to Locatelli. This French violinist, considered the founder of the French violin school, played together with Locatelli at the court of Kassel c1730: Jakob Wilhelm Lustig recounted how Leclair played «like an angel», employing extreme rhythmic freedom and moving his listeners by the beauty of his sound, while Locatelli performed «like a devil», astonishing the audience with a deliberately scratchy tone and left-hand pyrotechnics. Later, the two men probably met in Holland, where Leclair, from 1738 to 1743, spent three months each year at the court of princess Anne of Orange. The author of Leclair's obituary explains that:

[...] il [Leclair; F.M.] fit un voyage en Hollande, où il s'occupa moins de ses succès & de l'accueil honorable que lui fit la Princesse d'Orange, que du plaisir d'entendre le célèbre Locatelli; il profita avidement des lumières qu'il daigna lui communiquer sur les profondeurs de l'harmonie; on s'en aperçut bientôt à son retour en France; & ce fut avec admiration que l'on reconnut la grande manière du maître dans les chefs d'œuvre de l'écolier. C'est sur-tout dans le troisième livre de ses Sonates [Op. 5; F.M.], où ce progress paroit sensible: le premier n'a que le mérite d'une mélodie simple et facile; il avait déjà déployé dans le second toutes les richesses dont il était redevable à la pratique de la double corde [...]⁹.

A selection of papers presented at the conference, as well as other contributions, will be collected in a book, edited by the present writer, entitled *Locatelli and Beyond: Development and Maturity of Violin Virtuosity*, which will be published by Brepols Publishers in the course of next year (as part of the series Speculum Musicae).

These musicological initiatives will stimulate further research on Locatelli, bringing a clearer focus to the composer's legacy and his significant role in the history of music.

Fulvia Morabito Lucca

^{9.} Bernis, François-Joachim de Pierre de. Nécrologues des hommes célèbres de France, Paris, s.n., 1767, p. 199 cit. in: Fontenay, Louis Abel de Bonafons, abbé de. Dictionnaire des artistes ou notice historique et raisonnée des architectes, peintres, graveurs, sculpteurs, musiciens, acteurs et danseurs; imprimeurs, horlogers et méchaniciens, 2 vols., Paris, Vincent, 1776, vol. 1, pp. 376-379.