

NAXOS

The 18th Century Concerto

DDD

8.554339

Carl Stamitz

Clarinet Concertos Vol. 2

Kálmán Berkes, Clarinet
Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia



Carl Stamitz (1745–1801) Clarinet Concertos Vol. 2

Among the best known orchestral works of Carl Philipp Stamitz (1745–1801) are the clarinet concertos which rank not only among the earliest concertos for the instrument but also among the finest of any concertos by Mozart's contemporaries. Comparatively little is known about the origin of these works in spite of their obvious historical and musical importance. The latest research has narrowed the composition date of the eight authentic works to around the years 1771 to 1776 when Stamitz was living in Paris.

Stamitz would have been well acquainted with the clarinet prior to his move to Paris in 1770 as the Mannheim court orchestra, of which he had been a member for several years, was among the first to include clarinets among its forces. During the 1760s the instrument underwent a number of important modifications which improved its tonal flexibility and intonation. From this point on composers began to show a greater level of interest in writing for the instrument but it was the popularity of Carl Stamitz's concertos, coupled with the emergence of virtuoso exponents of the 'new' instrument, which seems to have turned the tide. During the period 1760 to 1771 not one single clarinet concerto was advertised for sale in the Breitkopf Catalogue, the largest and most important 18th century catalogue of printed and manuscript music. The first, a work by Starck, appeared in *Supplement VII* (1771) but then no further works appeared for nine years

until three of Stamitz's concertos were listed in *Supplement XIV* (1781). Between 1782 and 1784, however, seven concertos appeared in *Supplement XV* alone comprising works by various composers were advertised the following year.

Stamitz's early experience of the clarinet was consolidated further through his friendship with the great Bohemian clarinet virtuoso Johann Joseph Beer (1744–1812) whom he met in Paris. Their professional association, similar in many ways to that of Mozart and Stadler, resulted not only in a number of joint performances at the Concerts spirituels but also in a succession of concertos and chamber works which were composed for Beer's use. Beer's performance of one of Carl Stamitz's clarinet concertos on 24 December 1771 is the first documented performance of a clarinet concerto in Paris. While Beer's unrivalled technical command of the five-keyed clarinet undoubtedly influenced the way in which Stamitz wrote for it, certain idiomatic devices such as exaggerated intervallic leaps and broken chord passage work can be found in the works of pioneering figures such as Pokorný. Their overall musical quality, however, owes far less to the virtuosity of the solo writing than to Stamitz's elegant melodic style, structural subtlety and orchestral flair.

In 1938 Helmut Boese made a score of *Concerto No. 7 in E flat major* (in some numbering systems No. 8) based on a set of manuscript parts

– the sole-surviving copy of the work – preserved in the Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt. This material was destroyed in 1945 but its role in the work's preservation is recognised in the nickname *Darmstädter*. On the basis of the work's orchestral treatment Boese postulated that it may have been written in the 1760s while Stamitz was a member of the Mannheim court orchestra. A number of things argue strongly against this including Stamitz's employment of mature classical phraseology and, not least the presence of a *rondo* finale which did not come into vogue until the early 1770s. But overall, the work simply does not sound like a 'pre-Classical' concerto. Its broad symphonic writing is Classical in conception and construction; the wind instruments are deployed with great skill and subtlety; and the orchestra is entrusted with important thematic material during the solo sections. An example of Stamitz's structural flexibility can be heard in the preparation for the recapitulation when he reintroduces the solo instrument in what it is otherwise a retransitional *ritornello*. It is a lovely touch and one which reinforces the previous unexpected use of new thematic material in the second solo. The opening of the *Adagio* is also striking with the clarinet holding a long, sustained note while the strings play the principal theme; this process is repeated and then the clarinet gently unfolds and develops the material over a beautifully transparent accompaniment. A perky *Rondo* follows whose pervasive good humour is only momentarily darkened during the *minore* episode.

As in the case of the previous work a copy of

Concerto No. 8 in B flat major (No. 9) was also preserved in Darmstadt until the last year of the War, hence the nickname 2. *Darmstädter*. More importantly it was published in Paris by Sieber as the sixth of a group of six Stamitz clarinet concertos. Boese also believed that this concerto dated from the composer's Mannheim years but perhaps with a little more justification on this occasion. The symphonic writing in the opening movement is thoroughly modern but the orchestra is deployed in a rather less enterprising manner in the accompaniment of the solo instrument than in the E flat major *Concerto*. The second movement, too, has a rather old-fashioned cast to it both structurally and in terms of its musical syntax although the clarinet writing is expressive and idiomatic. While the choice of a *Rondo finale* is modern, the *Tempo di minuetto* marking is less so unless, of course, Stamitz was making a polite nod in the direction of his Parisian audiences. As one would expect, the episodes are more lightly scored than the *rondo* theme itself but in this instance the style of accompaniment is surprisingly thin, almost in the manner of the 'galant' concerto. This, along with a number of other structural elements in the first two movements, may be an indication that the work predates *Concerto No. 7*.

Concerto No. 11 in E flat major was not issued by Sieber and only one manuscript copy, preserved in the Thurn und Taxis Hofbibliothek in Regensburg, has come down to us. Like the earlier concertos on this recording the work opens with a broad, leisurely orchestral *ritornello* written in

the best traditions of his Mannheim colleagues. Once again Stamitz reserves the later stages of the movement for structural experimentation. He introduces the second solo, analogous to the development section in a sonata movement, with new thematic material, clearly a favourite device as he does so in a number of his concertos. This material is deflected quietly into the minor and then allowed to unfold. Although the music modulates back to the tonic and thereafter behaves in a tonally orthodox fashion, Stamitz does not reintroduce the opening theme. This technique is quite common in the symphony but less so in the concerto of the period. The second movement is aptly titled *Aria* and indeed it is not only reminiscent of opera in its ravishing *cantilena* for the clarinet but also in its strophic-like structure. The accompaniment is sensitive and varied throughout and the inclusion of a pair of horns, used sparingly by Stamitz, adds a richness and intensity to the orchestral palette. The German musicologist Engels styled the finale *Rondo alla Scherzo* – a title also adopted by Newhill – although its original designation was *Rondo alla Schas* (i.e. *Chasse*). This jaunty hunting movement, which at times reminds one of Dittersdorf's *Actaeon Symphony* (Naxos 8.553368), includes a quotation of the old Prussian hunting call known as the *Grosse Halali*. Haydn uses fragments of the same call in the chorus *Hört das laute Getön* in his oratorio *The Seasons*.

Concerto No. 10 was advertised in the Breitkopf Catalogue in 1781 which probably indicates a

composition date from the mid- to late-1770s. The work was not published in Stamitz's lifetime and only two manuscript copies of the work, preserved in Vienna and Prague, are known. Much of what has been written about the earlier concertos on this recording applies here. Stamitz's great lyric gifts are much in evidence, particularly in the fine second-movement *Andante sostenuto*, and there are exquisite details in the solo and orchestral writing, often undramatic and not immediately apparent, which betray the care and affection with which the work was written.

Allan Badley

Kálmán Berkes

The distinguished Hungarian clarinetist Kálmán Berkes took his degree at the Budapest Liszt Musical Academy in 1972, winning second prize at the Geneva International Competition on two occasions, the second with his Opera Wind Quintet. He has been principal clarinetist in a number of leading Hungarian orchestras, including the Hungarian State Opera, Budapest Philharmonic and Budapest Festival Orchestras and for ten years was a member of the Budapest Chamber Ensemble. In 1982 he founded his own group, the Budapest Wind Ensemble. Regular concert tours have taken Kálmán Berkes to leading European and international festivals, to Japan and to the US, where he has appeared with follow musicians of distinction,

including James Galway, Maurice André, Zoltán Kocsis, András Schiff and others. He has given masterclasses in Europe and America and holds a visiting professorship at the Musashino Music Academy in Tokyo.

Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia

The Hungarian Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia was formed in 1992 from members of the Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra by Ibolya Tóth, of the Hungarian Phoenix Studio. The Sinfonia has among its musicians the principal wind players of the Symphony Orchestra, many of whom have already recorded concertos for Naxos. The conductor of the Sinfonia is the flautist, Béla Drahos.

Carl Stamitz (1745–1801) Klarinettenkonzerte Folge 2

Die Mannheimer Schule, zu der Carl Stamitz gerechnet wird, verkörperte in ihrer Zeit die avantgardistischen Tendenzen in der Musik. Ihr Aufstieg, Höhepunkt und Ende verlief nahezu parallel zur Amtszeit des Kurfürsten Karl Theodor, der 1743 durch Erbverträge Regent der Pfalz in Mannheim geworden war, jedoch 1778 den Hof nach München verlegte. Der aufgeklärte und äußerst kunstsinnige Kurfürst versammelte an seinem Hof die besten Musiker seiner Zeit und verfügte über das größte und renommierteste Orchester in ganz Europa. Bereits 1741/42 war der aus Böhmen stammende Johann Stamitz (1717–1757) an den Hof nach Mannheim gekommen und hatte als Konzertmeister jene musikalische Bewegung begründet, die der bedeutende Musikforscher Hugo

Riemann als Mannheimer Schule zusammenfasste. Die erste Generation der Mannheimer Schule, zu der neben Johann Stamitz auch Franz Xaver Richter (1709–1789) und Ignaz Holzbauer (1711–1783) gehörten, vollzog den Übergang von der Barockmusik zur musikalischen Vorklassik und bereitete den Weg für die Wiener Klassik mit Mozart, Haydn und Beethoven vor.

Mit der Mannheimer Hofkapelle wurde erstmals ein Sinfonieorchester im modernen Sinne geschaffen. Während in der Barockzeit die Ensemble und somit die Besetzungen der Kompositionen nach den jeweils vorgefundenen Bedingungen zusammengestellt wurden (z. B. verwendet jedes der sechs *Brandenburgischen Konzerte* Bachs eine andere Besetzung), wurde in den Kompositionen

der Mannheimer Schule die Orchesterbesetzung konstitutiv und nicht mehr austauschbar. Das Mannheimer Orchester bestand um 1756 aus nicht weniger als dreißig Streichern und sechszwanzig Bläsern. Der englische Musikschriftsteller Charles Burney äußerte sich über das Orchester begeistert: „... Es sind wirklich mehr Solospieler und gute Komponisten in diesem, als vielleicht in irgendeinem Orchester in Europa. Es ist eine Armee von Generälen, gleich geschickt einen Plan zu einer Schlacht zu entwerfen, als darin zu fechten.“ Der klangliche Aspekt der Musik gewann gegenüber der Musik des Barock entscheidend an Bedeutung. Eine flexible Klanggestaltung war das hervorsteckende Markenkennzeichen der Mannheimer Schule: Extreme dynamische Abstufungen und Kontraste, *Crescendi* und *Diminuendi* des ganzen Orchester, *Tremolo*-Effekte und Vorhalte waren die neuen Mittel klanglich-musikalischer Gestaltung. Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart schrieb: „Kein Orchester der Welt hat es je in der Ausführung dem Mannheimer zuvorgetan. Sein *Forté* ist ein Donner, sein *Crescendo* ein Catarakt, sein *Diminuendo* – ein in die ferne hin plätschernder Krystallfluß, sein Piano ein Frühlingshauch.“ Auf der kompositorischen Seite entwickelte die Mannheimer Schule die sinfonische Form mit vier Sätzen (durch Hinzufügen des Menuetts als dritten Satz) und zwei kontrastierenden Themen in den Ecksätzen. Darüber hinaus verwendeten die Mannheimer Komponisten einige typische Figuren, die eine solche Popularität erlangen, dass Leopold Mozart meinte, seinen

Sohn vor dem „vermanirirten Mannheimer göüt“ warnen zu müssen. Dazu gehören vor allem die „Mannheimer Rakete“, eine in gebrochenen Intervallen aufschließende Dreiklangsfigur, (die noch in Beethovens die „Mannheimer Walze“, bei der ein Motiv bei gleichbleibender Harmonik immer höher rückt sowie das für die Musik der Empfindsamkeit so bezeichnende „Seufzer-Motiv“, der ausdrucksvoll fallende Sekund-Schritt.

Zwar hatte bereits die erste Generation der Mannheimer Schule die neuentwickelte Klarinette in das Orchester eingeführt, aber erst die Stamitz-Söhne Carl (1745–1801) und Anton (1750–1796) etablierten sie als festen Bestandteil des Orchesters und machten sie sozusagen salonfähig. Die Klarinette war zu Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts aus dem Chalumeau entwickelt worden und sollte als Ersatz für die schwer zu blasende Naturtrompete dienen. Zunächst noch hart im Klang wurde sie immer mehr verfeinert und erhielt einen in der Tiefe üppigen und in den Höhen biegsamen weichen Klang, der zwischen der rokokohaft-eleganten Flöte und der bukolisch näseldnen Oboe angesiedelt war und sich hervorragend mit dem Streichern verband.

Mit seinen elf *Klarinetten-Konzerten* (neun gesicherte und zwei zweifelhafter Zuordnung) schuf Carl Stamitz die ersten Beiträge einer Gattung, die ihre Blüte im 19. Jahrhundert erleben sollte. Carl Stamitz, selbst Virtuose auf der Violine, der Viola und der Viola d’amore, hatte die neun Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten der Klarinette bereits in der Mannheimer Hofkapelle kennengelernt, der er

von 1762 bis 1770 angehörte. Aber erst während seines Aufenthalts in Paris zu Anfang der 1770er Jahre gab die enge Zusammenarbeit mit dem Klarinettenisten Johann Joseph Beer (1774–1812) die entscheidenden Anregungen zur Komposition der Klarinettenkonzerte. Über die genaue Datierung der Konzerte lässt sich dennoch wenig mehr sicher sagen, als dass sie in den Jahren zwischen 1770 und 1790 entstanden sein müssen. Die meisten der damaligen Kompositionen waren für die Aufführung in der Pariser *Concerts spirituels* gedacht, in denen Stamitz auch zusammen mit Beer als Solist auftrat.

Stamitz' Klarinettenkonzerte zeigen die typischen Stilmerkmale der zweiten Mannheimer Generation: Die Homophonie hat sich vollständig gegen die Polyphonie durchgesetzt und ein oberstimmenorientierter Orchestersatz bestimmt die musikalische Struktur. Die dreisätzigen Konzerte, die meist in den klarinetten-spezifischen Tonarten B-Dur und Es-Dur stehen, vermitteln zwischen zurückhaltender eingesetzter Virtuosität und lyrischer Tongebung. Die ersten Sätze greifen

zumeist auf die Sonatenhauptsatzform mit zwei Themen zurück. Die Durchführungsteile weisen jedoch noch kaum eine entwickelnde Verarbeitung des thematischen Materials auf, sondern setzen lediglich mit additiven Kompositionsverfahren harmonische Kontraste. Die langsamen Mittelsätze heben vorwiegend den melodischen Charakter des Soloinstruments hervor. Sie werden im Wesentlichen nur das Klarinetten-Register, da die tiefen Register auf den Instrumenten der Stamitz-Zeit noch recht unsauber klangen und nur zur virtuellen Steigerung in den Ecksätzen herangezogen wurden.

Die Schlußsätze verwenden häufig die Rondoform (wie auch in den auf dieser CD eingespielten Konzerten Nr. 7, Nr. 8, Nr. 10 und Nr. 11) mit einem wiederkehrenden *Ritornell* und mehreren *Couplets*. Das Finale des Konzertes Nr. 11 weist eindeutig ein Jagd-Charakter auf, indem es fast notengetreu das „Große Halali“ in seiner sogenannten altpreußischen Fassung zitiert.

Peter Noelke

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Concerto No. 7 (No. 8) in E flat major (1. Darmstädter)	18:37
1 I. Allegro molto	8:38
2 II. Adagio	5:12
3 III. Rondo	4:48
 Concerto No. 8 (No. 9) in B flat major (2. Darmstädter)	16:08
4 I. Allegro	7:19
5 II. Andante moderato	4:17
6 III. Rondo – Tempo di minuetto	4:32
 Concerto No. 11 in E flat major	16:59
7 I. Allegro	8:51
8 II. Aria – Andante moderato	3:07
9 III. Rondo alla Schas – Allegro moderato	5:00
 Concerto No. 10 in B flat major	16:23
10 I. Allegro	7:46
11 II. Andante sostenuto	4:25
12 III. Rondo – Poco allegro	4:12



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Carl Stamitz Trained as a violinist, Carl Stamitz wrote a considerable number of concertos for his own instrument. Much of his life was spent touring Europe as a soloist and conductor, amassing debts with his grandiose ideas. On his death his music was put up for sale to repay his creditors.

Clarinet Concertos The delectable and attractive *Clarinet Concertos* are considered as Carl Stamitz's major contribution to musical posterity. Among the first to be written for an instrument whose capabilities were newly expanded, they exude a charm which suggests the influence of 1770s Paris where they are thought to have been written.

CARL
STAMITZ
(1745–1801)

1-3	Concerto No. 7 (No. 8) in E flat major (1. Darmstädter)	18:37	7-9	Concerto No. 11 in E flat major	16:59
4-6	Concerto No. 8 (No. 9) in B flat major (2. Darmstädter)	16:08	10-12	Concerto No. 10 in B flat major	16:23

KALMAN BERKES, Clarinet
NICOLAUS ESTERHÁZY SINFONIA

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(Bridgeman Art Library, London)

