



Bisel Classics



Johann
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HUMMEL

CONCERTINO
Op. 73

Piano

www.bisel-classics.com

Preface

The original cover carries this imprint:

CONCERT / für das / PIANO = FORTE, / mit Begleitung
zweyer Violinen, Viola und Violoncello, / (nebst einigen
Blasinstrumentum ad libitum) / von J. N. HUMMEL / 73^{tes}
Werk. / Eigenthum der Verleger. / WIEN / bei S. A.
Steiner und Comp. [Plate no: 2500; Preis (not marked)]

The present source for this edition is held in the Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek (HAAB) in Weimar Germany, and was released as an online resource in 2007, three years after a devastating fire which destroyed tens of thousands of manuscripts and books. Out of the 95 works by Hummel, only five survived the fire including this one which was among the 52 works of Hummel captured on microfilm.

The piece made its first appearance in Vienna c1816 and the 'Concertino' (Opus 73) as it is colloquially known today was an arrangement of a much earlier piece, the 'Mandolin Concerto' in G (s28) from 1799; a good seventeen years before its reincarnation for the piano-forte. The title of Concertino "Little Concerto" (or Konzertchen) added later, should not lead one to think of this work as being in any way inferior since in our opinion, it compares favourably alongside the piano concertos of Mozart; hardly surprising since Hummel received free lessons from Mozart up to 1788 and even lived with the Mozart family during this time.

The score itself is noteworthy since the piano part is in fact a realisation of the orchestral score and so represents an arrangement within an arrangement This is excellent news

for the soloist since it provides a valuable conceptual basis from which to perform the concerto, but it makes excellent business sense too allowing for a full performance of the work even in the absence of an orchestra. A sales feature which is sure to have pleased Hummel who was noted for his business acumen as much as his prodigious musical talents. The Piano part distinguishes between the 'solo' and 'tutti' sections by reproducing the 'tutti' sections on the treble stave with notes fractionally smaller than full sized with all notes (apart from grace notes) on the bass stave remaining at full size. This utilitarian aspect of the arrangement, may account for the different formats used for the piano and all other parts though this is far from certain, and the same set of plates were used for all.

The print is in good condition and of a high standard for the time with very few abrasions, creases or tears to destroy mutilate or otherwise deform the musical text. The notation is also well handled and contains no discernable errors of pitch and very few missing or misattributed accidentals. The most frequent problems arise from the casual placement of slurs in which start and end points are somewhat less than clear, in most cases it has been possible to correct these by analogy. The other problem, which creates special difficulty with bowing and breathing for the strings and the wind players is the use of elision in extended phrases; the score shows frequent examples of a phrase ending on the beginning of a tie, or of the end of a tie being also the beginning of a phrase. In instances where players feel the chain of phrasing created by elision is more effective, all the original instances of this have been recorded in the textual notes.

At least one other hand has been involved with editing the work at some time in the past and this can be seen from the light markings they left on the score, including several

modifications of accents and phrases. This unknown hand is most likely responsible for making the slash marks in the chords contained in the principle violin and piano parts.

These are quite different from the tremolo slashes found elsewhere in the parts and though one or two appear to slash the stem of chords (**Allegro moderato:** Vn.I m.87) and this *may* indicate a shorthand notation for *divisi*, nearly all the other slashes are placed through notes and, when we examine the harmonic position of these slashed notes we discover they are commonly understood as “less important” to the orchestration; so, for example, the 5th of the triad is omitted quite frequently, the 3rd much less so and nearly always with a replacement for the missing pitch found elsewhere in the orchestration. There are at least two possible reasons why the unknown editor might have done this: to 'lighten' the texture of the orchestration or to simplify the chords in the piano (the main location for most of these edits). Another reason may be that they are original publishers marks made after the plates had been etched recording late corrections but given the other evidence here, this seems highly unlikely. Either way, we have not felt it necessary to include these edits in the modern score but they are recorded in the textual notes.

In rare instances where conflicting articulations are given and in all other places where the original engraver has omitted some mark, accent, dynamic or articulation, we have included these without further remark in parentheses. Where any possible alternative reading exists, it has been included in the textual notes as well.

Stephen Begley, January 2010.