

Johann Christian Schickhardt

DAVID LASOCKI

(continued from RMM December 1976)

HIS WORKS

Schickhardt is one of the many minor composers of the late Baroque. As we have seen, he constantly moved from one minor court or city to another, dedicating numerous compositions to one prince or duke after another to try to obtain employment, and he eventually settled in the Netherlands, an important music publishing centre, but not in the vanguard of musical composition or performance at that time. This all points to a journeyman composer and performer, not fortunate enough to gain a position at an important court or in an important city. Nevertheless, his compositions must have been well known and popular, otherwise he would have been unable to publish over thirty sets of them with celebrated publishers.

The key to this popularity is certainly in the instrumentation of his compositions. Schickhardt himself seems to have played the recorder, flute and oboe, and he composed almost exclusively for his own instruments. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the recorder, and a decade or two later the flute (as to a lesser extent the oboe), were the most popular instruments for the gentleman amateur musician – a large and increasingly avaricious audience, especially in England. The fortunes of Schickhardt's publishers, Roger in Amsterdam and Walsh in London, were founded on this amateur audience.

When we examine what woodwind music was being published by Roger and Walsh we find that few compositions by the great masters of the late Baroque are represented, certainly during Schickhardt's most productive publishing period, 1709-1724. Most of the woodwind music that forms the standard repertoire of today – J. S. Bach, Handel, Telemann, Vivaldi, etc. – was either published later, or has been edited only recently from manuscripts reserved at that time for the composer's employer or patron. The large amateur audience was therefore largely presented with the music of lesser masters. But if this audience demanded a great deal of music, they were not without discrimination. Schickhardt was indeed one of these lesser masters, but his music set a consistently high standard among the published woodwind music of that time.

The Brunswick court, where Schickhardt received his early musical training, was known for its sponsorship of music in both the French and Italian styles.²³ Not surprisingly, his music is influenced by both styles, although it leans much more to the Italian, especially to work of Corelli.²⁴ The American musicologist William S. Newman has included Schickhardt in the group of

North German composers of the first half of the eighteenth century (Telemann, Mattheson, Handel, the Graun brothers, and Frederick the Great), noting that 'all except Schickhard[t] are of more than passing significance'.²⁵ He characterizes Schickhardt's movements as 'short, graceful, and very light in content'.²⁶

To dismiss Schickhardt so is to do him an injustice. Surely his music is not of less significance than the woodwind music of Mattheson or Frederick the Great? Certainly Schickhardt's woodwind pieces do not have, say, the profundity of J. S. Bach's or the ebullience of Vivaldi's. But Schickhardt created many a movement of original instrumentation, orchestration or structure; many an unusual variation of a well-worn melodic formula; and, above all, many a striking harmonic touch. In sum, Schickhardt wrote well for his instruments, and his music was justly popular among the amateurs of his day.

SHICKHARDT AS TEACHER

Schickhardt's compositions consist of solo sonatas, trio sonatas, concertos, chamber pieces, and collections of 'airs' or other pieces. Some of these compositions appear to be what we would nowadays call teaching pieces: the concertos, Opus 19, for four treble recorders and basso continuo, for example, in which one or two of the four melody parts are often more soloistic than the rest; or the two collections of 'airs' that constitute Opus 18.

Of special significance from a pedagogical point of view is Schickhardt's recorder method, Opus 12, published ca. 1710-12. (An oboe method, Opus 15, published at about the same time is unfortunately not extant.) Since the method consists of one page of elementary instructions, a fingering chart and two trill charts, followed by forty-two airs for two treble recorders, the main point was surely to sell the collection of airs. Indeed, the wording of the title page (*Principes de la flûte contenant la maniere d'en jouer & la connoissance de musique necessaire pour cela avec quarante deux airs à 2 flutes composez par Jean Chrestien Schickhardt . . .*) is ambiguous about whether Schickhardt wrote the instructions or only the forty-two airs.

The page of instructions shows, without any explanation, eight kinds of clefs, note values and rests from a maxima (eight semibreves) to a demisemiquaver, twenty-one different time signatures, repetition and other signs, the names of the notes from *f'* to *g'''*, two signs for the *tremblement* (trill: *t* and *x*), and a sign for *staccato* (a vertical stroke). Perhaps the most valuable information

A LIST OF SHICKHARDT'S COMPOSITIONS

Printed Works

- Opus 1 Seven sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo (1709/1710).
Modern editions: Of first six sonatas. Ed. F. J. Giesbert. Mainz: Schott, 1957 (Edition Schott 4092-93).
- Opus 2 Seven sonatas for oboe or violin and basso continuo (1709/1710).
- Opus 3 Seven sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo (1709/1710).
- Opus 4 (Six?) sonatas for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo (1710).
- Opus 5 Six sonatas for treble recorder, 2 oboes or violins, viola da gamba and basso continuo (1710).
Modern editions: Nos. 1, 3 & 6. Ed. Hildemarie Peter. Berlin-Lichterfelde: Lienau, 1962 (A. 1423 K). No. 2. Ed. Sheila Wiggs. London: Oxford University Press (in process of publication; *Musica da Camera*, No. 39).
- Opus 6 Six sonatas for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo (1710).
- Opus 7 Twelve sonatas for 2 oboes or violins and basso continuo (1710).
- Opus 8 Six sonatas for violin or oboe and basso continuo (1710).
- Opus 9 Six sonatas for 2 treble recorders (basso continuo *ad libitum*) (ca. 1710-12).
- Opus 10 Six sonatas for 2 oboes or violins or flutes (basso continuo *ad libitum*) (ca. 1710-12).
- Opus 11 A collection of minuets for a melody instrument and basso continuo (ca. 1710-12).
- Opus 12 Recorder method (ca. 1710-12).
- Opus 13 Six concertos for 2 violins, 2 oboes or violins and basso continuo (ca. 1710-12).
- Opus 14 Six sonatas for treble recorder, oboe or violin, viola da gamba and basso continuo (ca. 1710-12).
Modern edition: No. 6. Ed. Hildemarie Peter. Berlin-Lichterfelde: Lienau, 1962 (A. 1422 K).
- Opus 15 Oboe method (ca. 1710-12).
- Opus 16 Twelve sonatas for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo (ca. 1710-12).
Modern edition: No. 10. Ed. Hugo Ruf. Mainz: Schott, 1966 (Edition Schott 5594).
- Opus 17 Twelve sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo (ca. 1712-15).
Modern editions: Nos. 2, 3 & 7. Ed. Jørgen Glode. Celle: Moeck, 1966 (Edition Moeck 1081, 1082 & 1083). No. 3. Ed. Richard Platt. London: Oxford University Press, 1976 (*Musica da Camera*, No. 40). No. 11. Ed. David Lasocki. New York: American Recorder Society/Galaxy (in process of publication). No. 12. Ed. Hugo Ruf. Mainz: Schott, 1967 (Edition Schott 5595).
- Opus 18/1 A collection of airs for treble recorder (ca. 1712-15).
- Opus 18/2 A collection of 146 airs for treble recorder (ca. 1718-19).
- Opus 19 Six concertos for 4 treble recorders and basso continuo (ca. 1713-15).
Modern editions: Ed. Richard Valentin Knab. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1968-1971 (*Hortus Musicus* 192 & 193).
- Opus 20/1 Six sonatas for flute or oboe or violin and basso continuo (1715).
- Opus 20/2 Six sonatas for flute or oboe or violin and basso continuo (ca. 1723?).
- Opus 21 Airs spirituels des Luthériens for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo (1715).
- Opus 22 Six sonatas for 2 treble recorders, oboe and basso continuo (ca. 1717-18).
Modern editions: Ed. David Lasocki. London: *Musica Rara*, 1975 (MR 1835-40).
- Opus 23 Twelve sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo (ca. 1719-20).
Modern edition: No. 2. Ed. Henri Bouillard. Mainz: Schott, n.d. (Edition Schott 1609).
- Opus 24 Six sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo (ca. 1723-24).
- Opus 25 Six sonatas for violin and basso continuo (ca. 1723-24).
- Opus 26 Six sonatas for 2 treble recorders (1727).
- Opus 30 Twenty-four sonatas for flute or violin or treble recorder and basso continuo (ca. 1735).
Modern editions: Ed. Frans Brügger & Walter Bergmann. Tokyo: Zen-On (in process of publication).
- Airs for 2 treble recorders by Gasparo Visconti, 2nd edition 'augmented by several pieces' by Schickhardt (1710).
- Twelve sonatas for 2 violins and basso continuo, Opus 1, by Giovanni Battista Tibaldi, arranged by Schickhardt for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo (ca. 1719-20).
- Six concertos for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo, arranged by Schickhardt from the *Concerti Grossi*, Opus 6, by Arcangelo Corelli (ca. 1718-19).
Modern edition: No. 2. Celle: Moeck (Edition Moeck 1038).

Manuscript works

Concerto in G minor for treble recorder with 2 oboes, 2 violins, viola, violoncello, bass and basso continuo.
Modern edition: Ed. Johannes Brinckmann & Wilhelm Mohr. Heidelberg: Müller, 1963 (WM 1298 SM).

Suite in F major for violin, 2 oboes and 2 treble recorders with 2 violins, viola, violoncello, and basso continuo. Six trio sonatas for 2 treble recorders and basso continuo.

Modern editions: Ed. F. J. Giesbert. Nagel, 1935 (EN 508). No. 1 Ed. Erwin Schaller. Vienna: Doblinger, 1958 (Guitarre Kammermusik 15; D, 9754 d). No. 6. Ed. Erich Katz. New York: Hargail Music Press, 1945 (H 32).

Spurious works

Six sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo, attributed to Schickhardt in a manuscript in Rostock. Identical with the Opus 1 of Johann Ernst Galliard (1711) and stylistically quite unlike Schickhardt's writing.

Modern editions: Ed. F. J. Giesbert. Mainz: Schott, 1936 (Edition Schott 2432 a/b).

The Ocarina—the Poor Man's Gemshorn?

JAMES MIDDLETON

Ocarina — 'a more or less egg-shaped small instrument made of metal or earthenware — it is (like the harmonica and the tin whistle) sold in small shops all the world over, for boys and others who want to make a little music without much expense or trouble.' I first read that extract from the Oxford Companion to Music (Ninth Edition, 1965) as a music student, and took little notice of it at the time. Nine years later, having become interested in many unorthodox types of instrument, I set out to unearth a few more facts about the Ocarina — and the first discovery I made was that Dr. Scholes's second statement is no longer generally true; at least, the staffs of music shops I tried, small or otherwise, in Belfast and London had no idea what I was talking about, although they were as well stocked with harmonicas and tin whistles as the Oxford Companion had said. Just before leaving the country, however, I was referred to a north London warehouse where for a little under £4 I was reluctantly (only on the grounds that I was emigrating the next day) supplied with a red terra cotta bass ocarina (tenor recorder pitch) of German manufacture.

On my arrival in New Zealand, on the other hand, I found a Wellington music dealer who regularly stocks Japanese-made soprano ocarinas (the pitch of descant recorders, but a little cheaper) but seems unable to obtain other sizes, although the Japanese firm appears from its leaflets to produce an alto in F. My Japanese being non-existent, the exact composition of their instruments is a mystery, although they are certainly of earthenware; I have so far found no metal ocarinas.

All these ocarinas are 'more or less egg-shaped' if you can accept eggs pointed at the ends; they have projecting mouthpieces working on recorder/gemshorn principles, and ten finger-holes (except that the Japanese appear to have developed a technique of using double holes for two of the right hand fingers, by which they add a low B and A to their range). Like gemshorns, they have no 'hole at the other end' and therefore have the nature,

and something of the tone, of a stopped organ pipe. This is probably what led Dr. Scholes to assert that 'if one hole is open it does not much matter which, and so with more than one', which while very well in theory turns out to be an over-simplification, since the holes are of different sizes. It is true to the extent that all diatonic notes are flattened by the addition of the same finger. In any case, the fingering system is very simple; holding the instrument between both thumbs and the left-hand little-finger, the other fingers are lifted consecutively from right to left, followed by the left thumb, right thumb and (if you have not yet dropped your ocarina) the left-hand little-finger. My bass endeavours to simplify matters still further by having numbers imprinted on the glaze beside each hole, though I admit that I rarely have the time to stop and read them.

Throughout the resulting range of an octave and a fourth (sixth for double-jointed Japanese soprano ocarina-ists) ocarinas respond well to fairly high breath-pressures and forceful tongueing, which makes the low notes more accessible for beginners than those of the recorder. The main problem encountered at the start is the difficulty of feeling whether or not you are covering all the holes; if not, as with recorders, the result is poor tuning.

The instruments themselves are in tune, which is to say that the more musical pupils who have tried them have played in tune, except for the bass; a little measurement revealed a possible cause of this in that the interior volume was not eight times that of the soprano, as I had suspected from outward appearances, but six, which could hardly be calculated to give C as fundamental even if we assume the sopranos to be in A (their bottom note) rather than C (their basic key). After a half-hour spent filing at the holes the instrument can be played in tune (by me at any rate) as far as E', but I have yet to succeed in giving it a respectable F'.

In introducing the gemshorn in RMM some years ago, Horace Fitzpatrick hesitated to recommend it as a school