

NEWSLETTER

of

The American Handel Society

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Spring 2006

Charles Handell, Esq. (? – 1776)

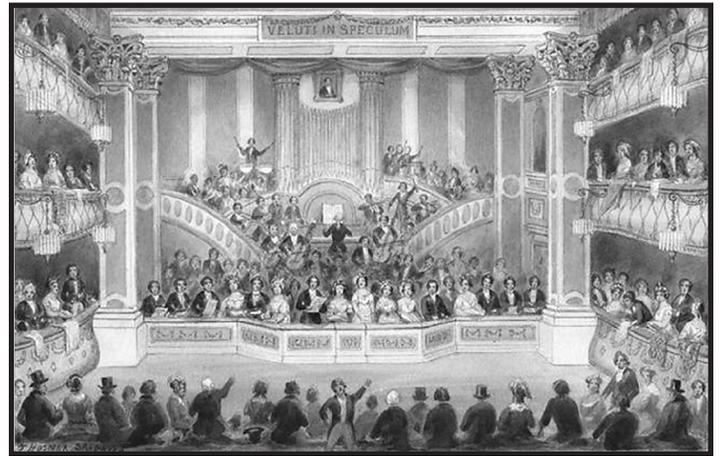
Information about Handel's personal circumstances comes in low and erratic supply. Royal protection, loyal friendships, and, above all, a conservative lifestyle secured the privacy of Britain's most celebrated composer from gossipmongers and posterity alike. It makes double the pleasure, then, for us to come across documentary wild cards, such as this:

A few Days since ["Sunday last"] died at Brenchley in Kent, Charles Handell, Esq; a Relation of the great Musician Handell.
(*The Public Advertiser*, Tuesday 5 March 1776, [3].)

At least four other London newspapers printed identical reports (with minor adjustments) between March 5 and 7, 1776 (*The St. James's Chronicle*, *The Middlesex Journal*, *The Morning Post*, and *The London Evening-Post*). Their accuracy is tentative, of course, as fact checking was hard to expect in those frontier days of journalism. Until archival research is able to throw light on the deceased, we can entertain some guesses about his identity.

Charles Handell could have been (1) a German relative of the composer who had moved to England before or after 1759. Although his name does not appear in Burrows' genealogical tree of the composer,ⁱ he might have been a distant relative of George Frideric (perhaps a descendant of "Cousin Christian Gottlieb Handel, of Copenhagen," a grandchild of Handel's half-brother Karl.ⁱⁱ The Hanoverian Succession created new opportunities for Germans in England; and Handel's legendary career in London inspired not a few musicians to cross the Channel in search of fortune and glory (the Mozart family). On top of that, the cash bequests of Handel to relatives in Germany in 1759 could easily have motivated one among them to seek financial and social advancement on English soil. Another possibility is that Charles was (2) an English relation of Handel, perhaps a natural or adopted son. We know that at least one foundling at the celebrated London hospital was named after the composer (Maria Augusta Handel, born in 1758).ⁱⁱⁱ As a London celebrity, a theatrical legend, and (in his last decade) a rich man, Handel must not have lacked opportunities for sexual relief. On the other hand, London was never short of illegitimate children in need of adopted names or generous patrons. A final possibility is that Charles was (3) a stranger who exploited his uncommon name or the period's spelling inconsistencies to partake of Handelian glory. (In the absence of further evidence, a skeptic might even consider the report a hoax and question the very existence of Mr. Charles.)

Whoever Charles Handell, Esq. might have been, his demise, as reported above, offers two useful clues for Handelians. The first concerns his geographical affiliation. Brenchley, Kent, is only six miles east from Tunbridge Wells, the renowned spa that Handel often visited during summer. The popular view that health reasons led him there may not be entirely accurate. A number of prominent Handelians had strong ties with Tunbridge Wells and its



Covent Garden before 1808, watercolor by Thomas Hosmer Shepherd.

HANDEL AT PRINCETON 2007

On behalf of the Princeton University Department of Music and the Board of the American Handel Society, I am delighted to invite you to the American Handel Festival and meeting of the American Handel Society at Princeton University, April 19-22, 2007.

A number of exciting events are planned for the Festival, which will include concerts, recitals, exhibits, and paper sessions devoted to the music of Handel and his contemporaries. On Thursday evening, April 19, 2007, the Richardson Baroque Players, under the direction of Nancy Wilson, will present "Britannia's Invitation" at 8 pm in Richardson Auditorium. Featuring Laura Heimes (soprano), Daniel Gundlach (countertenor), and Curtis Streetman (bass), "Britannia's Invitation" will present the life and musical times of Handel as seen through the eyes of his friend Mrs. Delaney and other commentators, featuring works that are mentioned in contemporary letters, newspaper accounts, and fiction. The program will include excerpts from *Rinaldo*, *Ottone*, *Messiah*, *Alcina*, *Ricardo Primo*, *Messiah*, *Sosarme* as well as *The Beggar's Opera* (Pepusch), and a performance of Handel's Organ Concerto in Bb (HWV 294).

The Princeton University Library will also present a special exhibit of the James S. Hall Collection of George Friedrich Handel, held in the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. The exhibit will also celebrate a project begun this year by the Arthur Mendel Music Library at Princeton University to digitize major manuscripts and printed materials from the Hall Collection.

On Saturday night, April 21, 2007 we will present a semi-staged performance of Handel's *Hercules*, conducted by Richard Tang Yuk, and featuring the Princeton University Glee Club and professional singers and orchestra.

Princeton University is located in central New Jersey, with easy access to Newark Liberty International Airport.

For more information on the festival, please see <http://www.music.princeton.edu/Handelfestival>

Wendy Heller
Princeton University

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HANDEL CALENDAR

The American Handel Society welcomes news or information about events of interest to Handelians. If possible, please include address, telephone number and URL where readers may obtain details. Announcements concerning Handel events from around the world are available by logging onto <http://gfhandel.org/>

“A Genie and the Sun God”

Handel: Apollo e Dafne

Rameau: Orchestral Suite from *Zaïs*

Meredith Hall, soprano

William Berger, baritone

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

Nicholas McGegan, conductor

8 Sept. 2006 – San Francisco, California

9, 10 Sept. 2006 – Berkeley, California

12 Sept. 2006 – Contra Costa, California

15 Sept. 2006 – Palo Alto, California

<http://www.philharmonia.org>

Semele

New York City Opera

Semele: Elizabeth Futral

Juno/Ino: Vivica Genaux

Jupiter/Apollo: Robert Breault

Music Director: Antony Walker

Stage Director: Stephen Lawless

Set and Costume Designer: Anthony Baker

Lighting Designer: Pat Collins

Choreographer: Claire Glaskin

13 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm

15 Sept. 2006, 8pm

17 Sept. 2006, 1:30pm

23 Sept. 2006, 8pm

28 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm

30 Sept. 2006, 1:30pm

4 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm

New York State Theater at Lincoln Center, New York City, New York

<http://www.nycopera.com>

“Italian Spirit”

GABRIELI works tba

STRAVINSKY Monumentum pro Gesualdo

VIVALDI Stabat mater

LOCATELLI Introduzione teatrale

HANDEL Opera arias

STRAVINSKY Pulcinella Suite

David Daniels, countertenor

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

Nicholas McGegan, conductor

20, 21 Oct. 2006 - Powell Symphony Hall, 718 North Grand Boulevard,

St. Louis, Missouri

<http://www.slsso.org>

Messiah — arranged by WA Mozart (K. 572)

Ensemble vocale et instrumental de Lausanne

Director: Michel Corboz

21 August 2006, 9pm

Festival de la Vézère

Tulle Cathedral, Corrèze, France

<http://www.festival-vezere.com>

13 Sept. 2006, 8pm - Auditorium Stravinski, Montreux, Switzerland

<http://www.montreux.ch/saison/>

<http://www.evl.ch>

Messiah

Haydn Festival Eisenstadt

Soloists: Olesya Golovneva, Liliana Nichiteanu, Markus Schäfer,

Mathias Hausmann

Wiener Kammerchor

Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra

Conductor: Adam Fischer

13 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm - Haydnssaal, Schloss Esterhazy

<http://www.haydnfestival.at>

Messiah

Soloists: Gerlinde Sämman, Delphine Haidan, Olivier Dumait, Henk Neven

Conductor: David Coleman

Choreographer: Mauricio Wainrot

22, 24, 26, 28, 29 Sept. 2006 - Opéra National de Bordeaux, France

<http://www.opera-bordeaux.com>

Messiah

Christine Schäfer, soprano

Bernarda Fink, alto

Werner Gura, tenor

Hanno Müller-Brachmann, bass

Concentus Musicus Wien

Arnold Schoenberg Chor

Director: Nikolaus Harnoncourt

4 Oct. 2006, 7pm – Großer Saal, Musikverein, Vienna, Austria

<http://www.musikverein.at>

Messiah

Soloists include: Toby Spence, Eamonn Dougan

Academy of Ancient Music

Choir of New College, Oxford

Conductor: Edward Higginbottom

6 Oct. 2006 – Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, UK

<http://www.aam.co.uk>

<http://www.newcollegechoir.com>

<http://www.sheldon.ox.ac.uk>

2006 Styriarte Festival

(23 June - 30 July) – Graz, Austria

<http://www.styriarte.com>

Händel in Rom

- Works by Handel, Domenico Scarlatti & Leonardo Pasquini

Johannes Hämmerle, organ

23 July 2006, 6pm – Pfarrkirche St. Veit am Vogau

L'allegro, il penseroso ed il moderato

Gerlinde Sämman, soprano

Johannes Chum, tenor

Markus Volpert, baritone

chor pro musica graz

Capella Leopoldina

Conductor: Jörg Zwicker

27 July 2006, 8pm – Helmut-List-Halle

Ariodante

Il Re di Scozia: Umberto Chiummo

Ginevra: Joan Rodgers

Ariodante: Ann Murray

Lurcanio: Paul Nilon

Polinesso: Christopher Robson

Dalinda: Olga Pasichnyk

Odoardo: Kenneth Roberson

Bayerische Staatsorchester

Chor der Bayerischen Staatsoper

Conductor: Ivor Bolton

Producer: David Alden

Sets: Costumes Ian MacNeil

Choreographer: Michael Keegan-Dolan

Lighting: Mimi Jordan Sherin

Chorus master: Eduard Asimont

24 July 2006 – Nationaltheater, Munich, Germany

<http://www.bayerische.staatsoper.de>

Riccardo Primo

Opéra de Baugé

Riccardo: Richard Scott

Costanza: Sophie Bevan

Pulcheria: Olivia Ray

Oronte: David Sheringham

Isacio: Stephen Kennedy

Berardo: Ste Jeffery

Orchestre de l'Opéra de Baugé

Musical Director: John Andrews

Producer Bernadette Grimmitt, Mavis Armitt

25, 27, 29 July 2006 – Baugé, France

<http://www.operadebaugé.org>

Serse (Xerxes)

Serse: Ann Murray

Arsamene: Christopher Robson

Amastre: Catherine Wyn-Rogers

Ariodate: Umberto Chiummo

surrounding area, in the form of countryseats (Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, Lord Guernsey ["Aylesford Collection"], and Sir George Amyand), ecclesiastical appointments (John Upton), or visits that may or may not have included meetings with Handel (Bernard Granville, John Upton, and John Baker). Remarkably, most of them were members of the James Harris circle, as relatives, friends, and correspondents. The fact alone that Amyand, who died in Tunbridge in 1766, had professional ties with Hamburg throws light on his role as co-executor of Handel's will. Is it unthinkable that a German relative of the composer would have settled in the area, given the strong presence of Handelians and the intense social life of this fashionable health resort?

The second pointer relates to Handel's image. The demise of Charles was newsworthy only because of his (assumed or actual) relation to a composer who had been dead for 17 years. At a time when Britain was facing its worst internal crisis since the Civil War, Handel's cultural presence was getting stronger. Chronologically, Charles' death is framed by significant events: the creation of the "Concert of Antient Music," a hothouse of Handelian cult;^{iv} the appearance of Charles Burney's first volume of *A General History of Music*; and the exciting debut of the Linley family in London oratorios with crowd pleasers like *Acis and Galatea* (February 23 and March 8) and *Alexander's Feast* (March 1 and 15). If Charles had derived any benefit from sporting a famous name during life, he certainly received posthumous attention thanks to George Frideric Handel, whose image was fermenting until the cultural explosion of the 1784 Commemoration Festival. The death notices from March 5-7, 1776 provide, then, a timely reminder that, in 1759, Handel had lost a life but secured another one.

An expanded and fully documented version of this report will appear shortly. I can only hope, meanwhile, that Handelian forces across the Atlantic will mobilize for the documentary apprehension of Charles Handell, who, after two and a half centuries, still remains at large.

Ilias Chrissochoidis
Stanford, California

ⁱ Donald Burrows, *Handel* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 4-5.

ⁱⁱ Otto Erich Deutsch, *Handel: A Documentary Biography* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1955), 691, 776, 788-89.

ⁱⁱⁱ F. G. E., *The Musical Times* 43 (1902): 310.

^{iv} William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual, and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 173-177, 205, 248.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (SPRING 2006)

Elsewhere in this issue you will find information on Handel at Princeton and also a formal Call for Papers to be presented at the concurrent AHS conference. I hope many of you will be able to join us next April for what promises to be an exceptionally stimulating event. Settling on the details took longer than anticipated, which means that this issue of the Newsletter is appearing later than planned. In changing the designations of the Newsletter numbers from April, August, and November to Spring, Summer, and Fall at its meeting last November, the Board of Directors anticipated this sort of flexibility. I can assure you that, as I write this in mid May, the weather in Southern California gives every indication that it is still spring.

Many of you will have seen Alex Ross's article in *The New Yorker* of May 8, 2006 entitled "Handel Time," in which he reviews several performance in New York, makes note of significant recent recordings, and ponders why Handel's music seems so appealing in our time. These are, indeed, exciting times for Handelians, with performances of both famous and little-known works turning up in what might seem to be unlikely places. Who can honestly say that as recently as ten years ago they could have anticipated seeing *Rodelinda* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York? For my part, I am looking forward to seeing *Imeneo* staged in Warsaw at the end of July. Let us continue to do all we can to support this revival. Remember that jumping on the bandwagon is not always a bad thing to do – especially when the music being played on that bandwagon is by Handel.

Graydon Beeks

FURTHER DOWN THE TRAIL

A couple of further additions to my article about the word-books for Samson in the AHS Newsletter for December 2005. There is a further copy of the Tonson word-book dated 1758 (see footnote 10 of the article) at Birmingham Central Library: Birmingham Central Libraries 821.4725 Milton Collection. It is identical to the two other copies with this date. It has also come to my attention that the text of the watermark in the early copies of the 1743 wordbook reads "STAMP OFFICE [sic]." In addition to the credits listed in the article, I am grateful to Kathryn James for confirming that the undated copy at the Beinecke Rare Book and Music Library, Yale University, is an example of one of the late editions by Tonson (footnote 2).

Donald Burrows

HANDEL-L

HANDEL-L is a discussion list open to everybody wishing to discuss the music, life and times of George Frideric Handel and his contemporaries. Subscribers are welcome to initiate or respond to a wide variety of topics. "Lurkers" are welcome to monitor proceedings anonymously.

All Handel enthusiasts, at any level of specialisation, are encouraged to provide reviews and feedback concerning recordings, opera productions, concerts, and literature. HANDEL-L combines this appreciation of Handel's music with comments, short reports, and discussion from scholars, performers, and journalists who maintain a serious interest in the composer and his world: the discussion list is a valuable source for breaking the latest Handel news around the world.

To join HANDEL-L visit

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/handel-l/>

CALL FOR PAPERS – HANDELFEST 2007

The American Handel Society invites submissions of abstracts for papers to be given at the American Handel Festival, to take place at Princeton University, April 19 - 21, 2007. Festival concerts will include a semi-staged performance Handel's *Hercules* and a chamber concert organized around the theme of "Handel's London". We invite papers on any topic connected with Handel's life and music, but especially encourage submissions related to the music being performed, such as Handel's treatments of myth, masculinity and heroism; the secular oratorios; Handel's chamber works and arrangements for London; or his London circle of friends and colleagues.

Abstracts of no more than 500 words may be sent by December 15, 2006 to Robert Ketterer, AHS Program Chair. Electronic submissions are preferred, and may be sent to robert-ketterer@uiowa.edu. Surface mail may be sent to Prof. Robert Ketterer, Department of Classics, 210 JB, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52245.

Romilda: Susan Gritton
Atalanta: Margarita De Arellano
Elviro: Christian Rieger
 Bayerische Staatsorchester
 Chor der Bayerischen Staatsoper
 Music Direction: Harry Bicket
 Stage Director: Martin Duncan
 Scenery & Costumes: Ultz
 Choreography: Jonathan Lunn
 Lighting: Alan Burrett
 26 July 2006 – Bayerischen Staatsoper, Munich, Germany
<http://www.bayerische.staatsoper.de>

Amadigi di Gaula

Amadigi: Maria Riccarda Wesseling
Oriana: Elena de la Merced
Melissa Orgando: Sharon Rostorf Zamir
Dardano: Jordi Domènech
 Al Ayre Español Orquesta
 Eduardo López Banzo: direction
 28 July 2006
[2006 Festival de Radio France et Montpellier Languedoc Roussillon, France](http://www.alayreespanol.com)
<http://www.alayreespanol.com>

Tamerlano

Athens Festival
 Music Director: George Petrou
 Stage Director: Thomas Moschopoulos
 30, 31 July 2006 – Athens, Greece
<http://www.hellenicfestival.gr>

Alexander's Feast (arranged by W.A. Mozart) BBC Prom 24

Sally Matthews, soprano
 Paul Agnew, tenor
 Roderick Williams, baritone
 The English Concert
 Andrew Manze, director
 1 Aug. 2006, 7pm – Royal Albert Hall, London, UK
<http://www.englishconcert.co.uk>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/>

Giulio Cesare

2006 Glyndebourne Festival
Giulio Cesare: David Daniels, countertenor
Cornelia: Sara Mingardo, contralto
Sesto: Katarina Karnéus, mezzo-soprano
Cleopatra: Danielle de Niese, soprano
Nireno: Rachid Ben Abdeslam, countertenor
Tolomeo: Lawrence Zazzo, countertenor
Achilla: Nathan Berg, bass
 Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
 Staging: David McVicar
 Conductor: Emmanuelle Haïm
 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26 Aug. 2006 - Glyndebourne, London, UK
<http://www.oae.co.uk>
<http://www.glyndebourne.com>

Arias pour le grand Farinelli (Arias for the Great Farinelli)

- **Cantatas by Handel and Vivaldi**
 Derek Lee Ragin, countertenor
 Ensemble Florilegium
 3 September 2006, 4pm
Festival Sinfonia en Périgord
 Abbaye de Brantome, Périgieux, France
 14 Sept. 2006 - Logrono, Spain
 15 Sept. 2006 - Vitoria, Spain
 16 Sept. 2006 - Estella, Spain
<http://www.florilegium.org.uk>

HÄNDEL-GALA — Giovanni Carestini (castrato) — die Kunst des Gesangs

— Arias from *Arianna in Creta*, *Ariodante*, *Alcina*, etc.

Musikfest Bremen

Vesselina Kasarova, mezzo-soprano
 Les Musiciens du Louvre
 Director: Marc Minkowski
 13 Sept. 2006, 8p - Grosse Saal, Die Glocke, Bremen, Germany

<http://www.glocke.de>
<http://www.musikfest-bremen.de>

Haydn Festival 2006: "Haydn & Handel"

7-17 Sept.
<http://www.haydnfestival.at>
 (Eisenstadt, Austria)

J.Haydn: symphony No.6 D major Hob.I:6 "Le matin"

Handel: concerto grosso op.6 no.9 F major

Handel: „Water Music“ suite no.3 G major

J.Haydn: symphony no.8 G major, Hob.I:8 „Le soir“

Handel & Haydn Society Boston

Conductor: Harry Christophers

9 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm - Haydnsaal, Schloss Esterhazy

Messiah

Soloists: Olesya Golovneva, Liliana Nichiteanu, Markus Schäfer,
 Mathias Hausmann

Wiener Kammerchor

Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra

Conductor: Adam Fischer

13 Sept. 2006, 7:30p - Haydnsaal, Schloss Esterhazy

Handel: concerto grosso op.6 no.1 G major

M.Haydn: concert for organ, viola and strings C major

Handel: concert for organ op.4 no.1, G minor

J.Haydn: symphony no.83 G minor, Hob.I:83 "La poule"

Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra

Conductor and organ: Ton Koopman

14 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm - Haydnsaal, Schloss Esterhazy

J.Haydn: sinfonia from *Acide*

Handel: arias, duets and trios from *Aci Galatea e polifemo*

J.Haydn: arias duets and trios from "Acide" Hob.XXVIII:1

J.Haydn: symphony no.98 Hob.I:98

Martina Rüping

Britta Schwarz

Wolf Matthias Friedrich

La Stagione Frankfurt

Director: Michael Schneider

15 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm - Haydnsaal, Schloss Esterhazy

Handel: "Zadok the priest" from "Samson" & aria for tenor "Total eclipse"

J.Haydn: symphony Nr.92 "Oxford"

Handel: aria for soprano "Let the bright seraphim" & chorus & aria from "L' allegro"

J.Haydn: "Theresien Mass"

The Haydn academy

conductor: Trevor Pinnock

Chorus sine nomine

Lisa Larsson, Ursula Eittinger, Neil Mackie

16 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm - Haydnsaal, Schloss Esterhazy

Giove in Argo (pasticcio)

2006 Bayreuther Barock

Franziska Gottwald · mezzo-soprano

Benoît Haller · tenor

Harry van der Kamp · bass

Teresa Nelles · soprano

Concert Royal Köln

Kammerchor "Collegium Cantorum Köln

Music Direction: Thomas Gebhardt

Production: Igor Folwill

Set Design: Igor Folwill - Angela Schuett

15, 16 Sept. 2006, 6:30pm - Margravia Opera House

<http://www.bayreuther-barock.bayreuth.de>

<http://www.concert-royal.de>

2006 Handel in Oxford

<http://www.the-sixteen.org.uk>

Overture from Jephtha

Water Music

Fireworks Music

15 Sept. 2006, 8pm - Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, UK

Alexander's Feast

16 Sept. 2006, 7:30pm - Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, UK

Handel Cantatas

17 Sept. 2006, 11am - Grove Auditorium, Magdalen College
The Sixteen
The Symphony of Harmony and Invention
Director: Harry Christophers
<http://www.sheldon.ox.ac.uk>
http://www.magd.ox.ac.uk/looking_around/auditorium.shtml

Vivaldi:

Sinfonia F-dur RV 141
Sinfonia h-moll RV 168
"Frema pur" (Ottone in Villa)
"Mentre dormi" (L'Olimpiade)
Concerto D-dur für 2 Violinen RV 513
"Vedro con mio diletto" (Il Giustino)
"Se in ogni guardo" (Orlando finto pazzo)

Handel:

"Dover giustizia" (Ariodante)
"Penna tiranna" (Amadigi di Gaula)
"Venti turbini" (Rinaldo)
Philippe Jaroussky, countertenor
Ensemble Matheus
Director: Jean-Christophe Spinosi
27 Sept. 2006, 8pm - Laeiszhalle, Großer Saal, Hamburg, Germany
(Live broadcast on NDR Kultur on Friday, 6 Oct. 2006)
http://www.ndrshop.de/ndrshop/ticketshop/ticketshop_dasaltewerk.html

Concerto in D major (HWV 335a)

Water Music

Music for the Royal Fireworks

Wiener Akademie
Director: Martin Haselböck
3 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm - Großer Saal, Musikverein, Vienna, Austria
<http://www.musikverein.at>

Tolomeo

(The dates below include Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Cavalli's *Erismena*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and Carissimi's *Jephtha*.)
English Touring Opera — Baroque Festival Tour
7-15 Oct. 2006 (some dates) - Hackney Empire London
17-21 Oct. 2006 - Cambridge Arts Theatre
24-28 Oct. 2006 - Northcott Theatre, Exeter
30 Oct.-1 Nov. 2006 - Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
3-4 Nov. 2006 - Lincoln Theatre Royal
9-11 Nov. 2006 - Snape Maltings Concert Hall
13-14 Nov. 2006 - Buxton Opera House
16-18 Nov. 2006 - Coronation Hall, Ulverston
21-25 Nov. 2006 - Festival Theatre, Malvern
28 Nov.-2 Dec. 2006 - Bath Theatre Royal
<http://www.englishtouringopera.org.uk>

Messiah - Overture

Messiah - Comfort ye, Ev'ry Valley

Concerto grosso in D, Op.6 No.5

Semele - Where 'er you walk

Jephtha - Waft her angels

Alexander's Feast - Concerto grosso in C, No.7

Ariodante - Overture

Ariodante - Scherza infida

Ariodante - Sinfonia

Ariodante - Doppo notte

Ian Bostridge, tenor

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Harry Bicket conductor

12 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm

Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, London, UK

<http://www.oae.co.uk>

<http://www.rfh.org.uk>

Theodora

Theodora: Geraldine McGreevy

Irene: Anne Sofie von Otter

Valens: Matthew Rose

Didymus: Stephen Wallace

Septimus: Paul Agnew

Le Concert d'Astrée

Emmanuelle Haïm, music director

13 Oct. 2006, 8pm - Théâtre de Caen, France

<http://www.theatre.caen.fr>

15 Oct. 2006, 4pm - Lille, France

<http://www.opera-lille.fr>

17 Oct. 2006, 7pm - Barbican Hall, London, UK

<http://www.barbican.org.uk>

19 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, France

<http://www.theatrechampselysees.fr>

Organ Concerto in G minor, op. 4/1 (HWV 289)

"Il delirio amoroso" (HWV 99)

"Apollo e Dafne" (HWV 122)

Robin Johannsen, soprano

Florian Boesch, baritone

N.N., Organ

Bach Consort Wien

Rubén Dubrovsky, Director and Violoncello

16 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm - Brahms Saal, Musikverein, Vienna, Austria

<http://www.musikverein.at>

17 Oct. 2006 - Palau de la Música Catalana, Barcelona, Spain

<http://www.palaumusica.org>

<http://www.bachconsort.com>

Giulio Cesare in Egitto

- Production Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Giulio Cesare: Andreas Scholl

Sesto: Alice Coote

Cleopatra: Rosemary Joshua

Tolomeo: Franco Fagioli

Cornelia: Sonia Prina

Achilla: Mario Cassi

Les Talens Lyriques

Christophe Rousset, music director

Irina Brook, stage director

16, 18, 20, 24 October 2006, 7:30pm

22 Oct. 2006, 5pm - Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, France

<http://www.theatrechampselysees.fr>

26 Oct. 2006, 8pm - Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia (Sala Santa

Cecilia), Rome, Italy

<http://www.santacecilia.it>

<http://www2.lestalenslyriques.com>

Handel: Organ Concertos from Opus 4

Telemann: Concerto à 7 in F major

Telemann: Concerto à 7 A minor

JS Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.5 BWV1050

Academy of Ancient Music

Director and Keyboard: Richard Egarr

21 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm - Snape Maltings, nr Aldeburgh, UK

<http://www.aldeburgh.co.uk>

22 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm - Chelmsford Civic Theatres, Chelmsford, UK

<http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk>

<http://aam.co.uk>

Handel: Concerto for Organ in G minor Op.4 No.1 HWV289

Telemann: Concerto à 7 in F major

Handel: Concerto for Organ in B flat major Op.4 No.6 HWV294

Handel: Concerto for Organ in F major Op.4 No.4 HWV292

Telemann: Concerto à 7 A minor

JS Bach: Brandenburg Concerto in G major No.4 BWV1049 Academy of Ancient Music

Director and Keyboard: Richard Egarr

30 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm

West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge, UK

- Free pre-concert talk at 6:30pm given by Richard Egarr

31 Oct. 2006, 7:30pm - Wigmore Hall, London, UK

- Free pre-concert talk at 6:30pm given by Richard Egarr

<http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk>

<http://aam.co.uk>

Tamerlano

Scottish Opera

Tamerlano: Max Cencic, countertenor

Bajazet: Tom Randle, tenor

Asteria: Gail Pearson, soprano

Andronico: William Purefoy, countertenor

Irene: Jennifer Johnston

Leone: Jonathan Best

Music Director: Christian Curnyn

Stage Director: John La Bouchardière

7, 9, 11, 16, 18 Nov. 2006 - Theatre Royal Glasgow, Scotland

24, 30 Nov. 2006 - 2 Dec. 200 - Edinburgh Festival Theatre, Scotland

<http://www.scottishopera.org.uk>

A NEW REFERENCE TO THE FIREWORKS MUSIC

The past several years have seen a renewed interest in *The Music for the Royal Fireworks*, HWV 351. In 2004 Bärenreiter published a splendid facsimile of British Library Manuscript R.M. 20.g.7, which consists of the autograph scores of the Fireworks Music and the Concerti a due cori HWV 335a and 335b. The volume contains notes by Christopher Hogwood (who is preparing a revised edition of the Fireworks Music for the HHA) as well as reproductions of four engravings of the fireworks and of the official *Description of the Fireworks* published “by Order of his Majesty’s Board of Ordnance.” This facsimile edition was reviewed by Anthony Hicks in the Spring 2005 issue of *The Handel Institute Newsletter*.

Cambridge University Press followed in 2005 with the latest in its series of Cambridge Music Handbooks, this one covering both Handel’s *Water Music* and *Music for the Royal Fireworks*, again with a text by Christopher Hogwood. In addition to discussing the political background and the music itself, Hogwood quotes in their entirety three descriptions of the latter event found in letters by John Byrom, Lady Jemima Grey, and Horace Walpole, none of which mentions Handel’s music specifically.

A fourth such description has come to light, which is published here for the first time. It occurs in a letter from Susan Archer to Lydia, Dowager Duchess of Chandos dated Hanover Square, April 15, 1749 (Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies D63/8/7/1), and is quoted here by permission of the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies.

...His Majesty I hear is excessively out of Humour about the Fire Works, by Wch I imagine it was not altogether by his orders, tho without doubt with his consent as they are to be in his own Park; ‘tis not a sort of Amusement yt he likes for wn they were at the Opera House two or three years agoe, I think he allways forbad there being play’d of wn he went to ye Opera. I believe a good many people will lose their hearing if excessive noise will make ym do so, for I’m told by people that should know (tho I own I can’t credit it) that there will be 26 Cannon and 3 Barrils of Gunpowder go off[f] at once, & what is more extraordinary is yt Handell proposes his Musick shall be heard at the same time; the Germans are pretty noisie in their Compositions of yt sort, but I can’t think yt any Sound can possibly be heard at yt instant; I fear there will be a great deal of mischief done by ye prodigious concourse of people yt will be there, for curiosity ‘tho laid to the Charge of Females, works full as strongly in the Braines of the Males tho they wont own it ...

Susan Archer seems to have been Susanna, the widowed second wife of William Archer (1677-1739), MP for Berkshire from 1734-1739.¹ She was the daughter of Sir John Newton, 3rd Baronet of Barr’s Court, Gloucestershire and Culverthorpe, Lincolnshire. She was also the sister and heir of Sir Michael Newton, 4th Baronet. Her daughter, another Susanna, married Edward Harley, 4th Earl of Oxford in 1751, bringing with her a dowry of £50,000. The Dowager Duchess of Chandos, widow of James Brydges, First Duke of Chandos and wealthy in her own right, preferred to live in the country at Shaw Hall near Newbury in Berkshire. She appears to have maintained a correspondence with Mrs. Archer in part to keep apprised of the news from London, but also to keep track of the behavior of her own step-children and step-grandchildren.

Susan Archer’s letter was written well in advance of the event, and there is nothing to suggest that she subsequently attended the rehearsal at Handel’s house in Brook Street on April 17, the public rehearsal at Vauxhall on April 21, or the performance in Green Park on April 27. She was apparently passing along gossip, but that gossip is not without interest and may, in part, be accurate. For example, her comment that George II was annoyed about the fireworks which she imagines were “not altogether by his orders” probably relates to the fact that, as Hogwood points out, the original plans to celebrate the Peace of Aix-la-Chappelle called for a fireworks

display in October 1748 to take place before the Duke of Newcastle’s house in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. The King’s involvement seems to have been a later development and was almost certainly related to the postponement of the celebration until April 1749.

Likewise, although it seems clear that Handel’s music was actually performed before the fireworks display commenced, there were rumors of simultaneous performance dating from as early as October 6, 1748. On that date Horace Walpole reported that “it is to open with a concert of fifteen hundred hands, and conclude with so many hundred thousand crackers all set to music...” Still other sources indicated that cannon would be fired during the music, and there is some evidence that this did, in fact, occur at the Vauxhall rehearsal.

The most interesting bit of gossip related by Mrs. Archer concerns George II’s aversion to fireworks and his barring their performance at the Opera House when he attended “two or three years ago.” This cannot refer to 1736, when Handel’s *Atalanta* concluded with fireworks to celebrate the marriage of the Prince of Wales. It must refer, instead, to the season of 1746-47 when the reconstituted Middlesex company produced the operas *Rossane* (a pasticcio based on Handel’s *Alessandro*), *Bellerephon* and *Mitridate*, each advertised as concluding with “a Representation of Fireworks.”

There was no evidence known to the editors of *The London Stage* to indicate that the King attended any of these opera performances. Only the first opera of the season, *Annibale in Capua* premiered on November 4, 1746, bore the indication “By His Majesty’s Command.” However, the annotations in the Covent Garden Account Books (British Library Egerton 2268) show that George II regularly attended straight plays during that season, beginning with *Othello* on November 28, 1746, which was given “By Command.” On this occasion the King, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their young children the Princes George, Edward and William and the Lady Augusta were present. On December 9 the King attended *Henry IV Part I* with Princess Amelia. The two of them also attended *Measure for Measure* on December 17 and were joined by the Duke of Cumberland for *The Rehearsal* on January 13, 1747, *Don Sebastian* and *The Royal Chace* on January 14, and *The Provok’d Wife* and *Miss in her Teens* on January 27. The last Covent Garden performance for which the attendance of the King is specifically mentioned was that of the *Suspicious Husband* – the text of which was dedicated to George II by its author, Dr. Benjamin Hoadly – on February 17, 1747.

Even though Covent Garden Theatre enjoyed the services of James Quinn, David Garrick, and Susanna Cibber for the 1746-47 season – a company that contemporaries considered the greatest in living memory – it seems unlikely that the King chose to attend productions at only that one theatre. This was, after all, the season following the successful suppression of the Jacobite Rising by forces under the command of the Duke of Cumberland, and it appears that the Royal Family had been advised to show themselves in public. Other performances at Covent Garden were graced by the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales, together with younger members of the Royal Family. There is no direct evidence that the King attended performances at Drury Lane during this season, but both *The Refusal* on December 3, 1746 and *The Careless Husband* on February 11, 1747 were given “By His Majesty’s Command.” In the next season he certainly attended *The Suspicious Husband* on December 9, 1747, *Jane Shore* on January 8, 1748, and *The Provoked Wife* on January 14.

The only direct evidence I have seen to support Mrs. Archer’s assertion that the King also attended opera performances during this period is found in connection with a performance of the Handel pasticcio *Lucio Vero* on December 26, 1747. According to *The London Stage*, the *General Advertiser* reported that “we hear the King will be at the Opera.” Were the proprietors of the *General Advertiser* also retailing gossip? Or were they, perhaps, relaying the hopes of the opera organizers? In either case, if George II did attend the performance of *Lucio Vero*, there were no fireworks for him to ban.

Graydon Beeks

¹ I am grateful to David Hunter for confirming this identification.

SPECIAL OFFERS FROM THE AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY

The American Handel Society is offering sets of back issues of the *Newsletter* for the price of \$10 per year (three issues each), going back to the first year, 1986. All volumes are available, but some numbers are in short supply. We reserve the right to supply photocopies of individual numbers where necessary. In addition, the AHS has a limited number of copies of *Handel and the Harris Circle* at the price of \$7. This attractive and important booklet, written by Rosemary Dunhill, provides a useful introduction to the rich Harris family archive, recently deposited at the Hampshire Record Office in Winchester and discussed by Donald Burrows in the December 1996 issue of the *Newsletter*. For further details, contact the *Newsletter* Editor.

NEWSLETTER of The American Handel Society

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