

Antonio Casimir Cartellieri (1772-1807)

Symphony No. 1 in C minor

1. *Allegro*
2. *Andante espressivo*
3. *Menuetto. Moderato*
4. *Finale. Allegro*

Symphony No. 2 in E flat major

1. *Allegro*
2. *Andante con variazioni*
3. *Allegro*

Symphony No. 3 in C major

1. *Adagio maestoso – Allegro presto*
2. *Andante poco Adagio*
3. *Menuetto. Allegro*
4. *Finale. Allegro*

Symphony No. 4 in E flat major

1. *Adagio*
2. *Andante poco adagio*
3. *Menuetto. Allegro*
4. *Finale. Allegro*

Cartellieri: Four Symphonies

It was during 1996–97 that I made my first contact with music by Cartellieri. At the time we (the Consortium Classicum) were playing his three wind octets (CD likewise released on cpo). They immediately enthused us and made us so curious that we occupied ourselves more intensively with this composer.

During subsequent years we (primarily my friend, the CC's director and "excavator", the clarinetist Dieter Klöcker) unearthed numerous solo concertos, chamber compositions, oratorios, and two symphonies by Cartellieri in various libraries. They included the oratorio or *opera sacra* entitled *Gioas, Rè di Giuda*, which I then recorded on MDG.

The two symphonies known to us – on this recording No. 1 in C minor and No. 2 in E flat major – are shorter works deriving their appeal above all from their playful delight, youthful élan, and formal unity, and I definitely wanted to make them accessible to a broader public.

But then Dieter Klöcker found a catalogue of Cartellieri's works in which four symphonies are mentioned.

Further research in Vienna and its surroundings, in Hungary and Bohemia, and in Southern Germany and Northern Italy remained without positive results – but of course we could always only take into consideration the most important libraries.

Where were the other two symphonies? In this or that little castle or monastery library, in the attic of a Cartellieri descendant, awaiting their chance discovery? Catalogued under “Anonymous” in one of the well-known libraries? Had we perhaps already held them in our hands?

It was pointless to speculate; we had to proceed methodically and attempt to answer, among other questions, the ones indicated here:

Who were Cartellieri’s friends? What journeys did he undertake on his own? Who was a guest at Prince Lobkowitz’s residence, heard the music, and received it as a gift? Or what other musicians concertized there at the time, received the symphonies on loan in order to study them, and forgot to return them? Or what member of the Lobkowitz family moved elsewhere on marrying and took them along as a dower to his new place of residence? Today, of course, we can answer these questions only in small part.

During more intensive occupation with these questions, however, one fact that called attention to itself was the unusually large number of clarinet compositions among Cartellieri’s works: four concertos, a double concerto, clarinet quartets, etc. And there indeed was a connection via the clarinet or clarinetists to a country bordering on Austria – a country that is not exactly known for its grand symphonic feats. It thus would have to be easier to find the symphonies there.

And so it was: after a search lasting almost ten years, in a library named after a well-known opera composer, we were able to hold in our hands the manuscripts of the two symphonies we had believed were lost. But only for a short time. Since many librarians are very jealous individuals and remarkably jealous of musicians who would like to perform in public the treasures entrusted to them, they are highly imaginative when it comes to inventing reasons that might prevent the copying of the works concerned. Sometimes the order form is lost; sometimes a renovation of the archive is planned; sometimes the compositions themselves have been transferred elsewhere for some reason or other and at the moment cannot be tracked down even by the librarians themselves. And this was what happened this time in this particular case. It was first through the intervention of an uncle of one of our students, who fortunately occupied a distinguished post in the ministry of culture responsible for the administration of the state-owned libraries, that the symphonies once again turned up after a year’s “search”.

Your question may be: Why these so very imprecise indications of place? I can only answer with a question of my own: Would you please direct me to the nearest goldmine?

Gernot Schmalfluss

Casimir Antonio Cartellieri

So far not much about the circumstances of Casimir Antonio Cartellieri’s life has come to light. He was the son of one of the Italian musicians who then were seeking their fame and fortune in many European countries, building on the trust placed in the musical renown of their fatherland. Casimir Antonio was born to Gaetano and Elisabeth Cartellieri, both of whom were singers, in Danzig (today’s Gdansk) on 27 September 1772. His father was from Milan, and his mother Elisabeth, née Böhm, was from Riga and thus apparently from a German family residing in the Baltic region. He received his first instruction from them. When his parents’ marriage broke up, he remained with his mother, who appeared under her maiden name at the Royal Opera in Berlin, while his father resided in Königsberg.

He received instruction in composition in Berlin, and it was evidently very good because in 1791 he was hired as a composer and music director by the Polish Count Oborsky. Two works by him were produced for the stage in Berlin even in 1792 and 1793. We then find him in Vienna, where he received instruction from Salieri and Albrechtberger. On 29 and 30 March 1795 both parts of his oratorio *Gioas, Rè di Giuda* were performed by the Tonkünstler-Sozietät in Vienna. On the first of these days Beethoven made his first public appearance, performing his first piano concerto, and on the second day Cartellieri himself presented a bassoon concerto. The same society performed a concerto for two clarinets by Cartellieri in another concert of this kind on 10 April 1796. Prince Joseph Franz Maximilian von Lobkowitz, a music and theater enthusiast and a major patron of Beethoven, also heard Cartellieri conducting his Symphony in C minor (presumably the one heard on this recording) in Vienna, wooed him away from the reluctant Count Oborsky, and made him his music director in 1796. Cartellieri worked in this capacity together with Anton Wranitzky (Antonín Vranický) at the Prince's properties in Vienna, Raudnitz, and Eisenberg until his death. He was married to Franziska, the daughter of the esteemed cellist Anton Kraft, who had joined Lobkowitz's ensemble during the same year. Three sons were born to the couple: Joseph, who likewise was active as a musician, Paul, and Anton Joseph. Cartellieri's compositional oeuvre, which in addition comprises operas, cantatas, and concertos (above all for wind instruments), is practically entirely unknown and would surely merit closer investigation.

We have Dieter Klöcker and Gernot Schmalfuss, the conductor of the present recording, to thank for the discovery of Cartellieri's symphonies. After a manuscript catalogue listing Cartellieri's works had revealed that he had composed four symphonies but only two could initially be found, the two friends were able to locate the missing works in a place that hardly had been suspected or would be suspected and did so with just as much sleuthing instinct as exact tracking down of clues. As a result, Cartellieri's complete symphonic oeuvre could be made available to a broad public in a further volume.

During the course of the eighteenth century the symphony became one of the forms occupying the center of the attention and ambition of composers. Such phenomena with which musicians intending to establish themselves had to prove themselves have been repeated occurrences in music history, dictating the standards for an entire epoch. If during the sixteenth century it was the madrigal as a secular form and the motet as a sacred form, then during the entire baroque era it was the aria in vocal music and the concerto in instrumental music. When the characteristic of monumentalization also gradually spread to music as well, a trait reaching its zenith in the high nineteenth century above all with Richard Wagner, the opera and the symphony gained predominance. Writing a symphony (or a *sinfonia*) now no longer meant merely filling an order from a noble gentlemen or a publisher or satisfying a convention; it was especially with Beethoven that the ambition arose to which Gustav Mahler lent expression with his statement equating the creation of a symphony with the construction of a cosmos.

The increasing interest of composers and the public in the symphony during the eighteenth century led on the one hand to an expanded production and on the other hand, building on this, to grand achievements of the highest order. Cartellieri's four works belonging to this genre were situated in the midst of a fermentation process then underway. During this process the form of the later symphony regarded as "classical" took shape from its forerunner forms, above all from the Italian opera *sinfonia*. He very much pursued his own path here and knew how to avail himself of the genre as a field of operations for his personal mode of design and certainly also how to take advantage of the performance opportunities and resources available to him. These included in any case a full "symphonic" orchestra with strings and full wind and percussion sections. This orchestral type had been available to him during the performance in Vienna motivating Prince Lobkowitz to obtain his

services for himself; it evidently corresponded to the Prince's taste and therefore was also very much represented in his orchestra – as we also know from Beethoven's life. If we may assume that the numbering of the four symphonies is authentic, then Nos. 2 to 4 must have been written for this ensemble.

Cartellieri's symphonic movements have in common the recapitulation principle – which means that the initial part returns at the conclusion of the movement, as is the case in the classical symphonic movement. What occurs in the middle part of the movement, however, does not correspond to the scheme of the "classical" symphony. A really distinct secondary complex does not come into view; nor does a development like those by Haydn or Beethoven take place. Rather, individual segments, often in large numbers, are placed in a sequence; they are mostly developed variatively from the preceding ones but may also occur as contrast segments. In the process a great wealth of imagination comes into view as far as the constantly new development of the musical material is concerned. This naturally also especially manifests itself in the slow variation movements. Not only the composer's inspired capability to obtain constantly new aspects from a musical shape but also his manifold employment of the possibilities of a large orchestra with all its playing styles may contribute to the great variety of the musical phenomena in the middle of works. Examples of the latter include the employment of the orchestral tutti in opposition to various small instrumental ensembles and the playing out of the contrasts between the instrumental groups of the large classical orchestral as well as the opposition of solo instruments to various groupings extending up to the full orchestra. For instance, Cartellieri is fond of presenting the initial theme in a small instrumental group, mostly only consisting of strings and with limited volume, repeating it in this form, and then once more having it sound in forte in the full orchestra. Or outbursts of the full orchestra occur at the high point of the developmental processes or also as an extreme contrast after a quiet part.

Formally, the first, third, and fourth symphonies are in four movements, while the second exhibits the old three-movement structure. Accordingly, it is also the only symphony that does not contain a minuet. Its slow movement is a variation series with a short middle part inserted in between. The slow movements of the other three symphonies also are situated close to the variation form but bring in several thematically remote segments; the overall design here is also in three parts with a varied return of the first part as the conclusion. Certain individual features of Cartellieri's symphonies correspond very much to the developmental stage reached by the genre: extended length, employment of the minor key, a four-movement design with the minuet, and a finale preferably in 2/4 time as well as catchy melodies and highly emotional slow introductions. The last item displays ascending triadic chords mainly connected to the orchestral tutti in addition to themes on the basis of degree progressions (often on ascending triadic fanfare that then goes over into descending degree progressions).

However Cartellieri may design the structure of his movements and his symphonies in specific cases, he is always able, on the strength of his design capability, to link the entire course of things, often extended in length, to form a whole that convinces and captivates the listener.

Theophil Antonicek