

Antonio Rosetti (1750–1792)

Antonio Rosetti spent the most productive years of his life in two rural residential capitals in southern and northern Germany, far removed from the centres of contemporary musical life. Yet the poet-composer Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart and the well-travelled English musical savant Charles Burney numbered him among the most important and beloved composers of his day, the latter even placing him on a par with Haydn and Mozart. Not only do the many known performances of his music prove that it was indeed popular and widely disseminated in his day, his success is also reflected in the fact that more than half of his output was issued in print by renowned publishers until well into the late 1790s.

Rosetti's oeuvre encompasses some 40 symphonies, a good 70 concertos for piano, violin, viola, flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, and roughly 20 compositions for wind instruments, some scored for large forces. He also wrote piano pieces, chamber music, songs, and sacred works for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, producing altogether some 400 works within the barely conceivable period of not even 20 years. His entire output is characterised by forceful and vivacious melodic writing, often drawn from the vocal music of his native Bohemia, and by highly imaginative orchestration. Few composers of his time were able to match his colourful writing for the winds; to quote Ernst Ludwig Gerber, "Often a heavenly beauty distinguishes his pieces for wind instruments, which he employs in the orchestra to altogether masterly effect". The works of his maturity are especially noteworthy for their pronounced fondness for contrapuntal textures and their high degree of structural unity. Sometimes his imaginative use of timbre and his richly expressive and chromatic harmonies anticipate the romantic era. No less noticeable is the stylistic influence of French music – to be precise, the music en vogue in Paris during the final three decades of the 18th century – and this even before he embarked on his Paris journey of 1781–82. The early Mannheim school seems also to have left a mark on his music. But by far the greatest influence, at least as far as his instrumental music is concerned, was, as many of his contemporaries duly noted, the music of Joseph Haydn, who, as is well known, had a formative impact on an entire generation of composers. Stylistic features such as the economic handling of thematic material or a love of formal experimentation that increasingly come to the fore in Rosetti's mature works, not to mention his keen sense of musical humour, are unthinkable without Haydn's guiding example.

Rosetti's childhood, youth and early years of creativity are largely shrouded in obscurity. The information commonly cited in his early biographies stems entirely from an article printed by the Speyer music publisher Heinrich Philipp Bossler in his *Musikalische Korrespondenz* in 1792. Although little of this information has been verified by archival evidence, it is nevertheless reliable, for Bossler was not only one of Rosetti's principal publishers but also a personal friend. According to this source, Rosetti was born in the town of Leitmeritz (Litomeřice) in northern Bohemia in 1750. Nothing is known about his family background. Originally destined for the clergy, while still a child he was sent to Prague, where he received a solid education and training (including in music), probably from the Jesuits. At the age of 19 he decided, although "already ordained as a secular divine", to abandon the clergyman's profession, which he had chosen only at the urging of his family, and to devote himself entirely to music. Recent research findings, evidently also based on Rosetti's own statements, show that in the early 1770s he served as an instrumentalist and composer in the "Russian Orlov Regiment", the commander of which may have been one of the Orlov brothers who figured significantly in the overthrow of Tsar Peter III in 1762.

In autumn 1773 Rosetti entered the service of Count Kraft Ernst zu Oettingen-Wallerstein, who was elevated to the rank of Imperial Prince only a few months later. The records show that he began as

a servant; it is not until July 1774 that he is first mentioned as a salaried court musician. Before long Rosetti had produced his first compositions for the court orchestra. In January 1777 he married Rosina Neher, the daughter of an innkeeper who would in turn bear him five daughters. By the late 1770s his fame as a composer had already spread beyond the confines of southern Germany. Beginning in 1776–77 his compositions were circulated in handwritten copies by the publishing house of Breitkopf in Leipzig. His first printed publication, a set of three symphonies, was issued by Le Menu et Boyer, Paris, in late 1779. The next three-piece set, published by Schmitt in Amsterdam, was lauded to the skies in Cramer's *Magazin der Musik*: "Rosetti's symphonies have so many new and ear-catching things, and often take us by surprise while abounding in variety. Since first becoming acquainted with them, we have heard them performed to much applause, and every connoisseur and lover of music will want to see more of his works engraved".

In 1781 Prince Kraft Ernst enabled his highly successful court composer to undertake a journey of several months to Paris. He set out in late October and presented, on his arrival, a letter of recommendation that opened the doors to the salons of the upper aristocracy and other influential circles. He studied musical life at the opera and concert hall and successfully arranged to have his works performed and published. When he returned in May 1782, he brought with him not only a wealth of fresh ideas but an artistic reputation lastingly enhanced by his Paris sojourn and the contacts he had made there. Many of his works were issued by leading publishers (André, Artaria, Bossler, Hummel, Sieber) and conquered the musical capitals of Europe. His symphonies and concertos became permanent fixtures of the leading concert series in Paris (Concert Spirituel) and London (the Professional Concerts, Salomon's Concerts and others).

At the latest by the time of his return from Paris Rosetti, together with the cellist Joseph Reicha, served as the head of the Wallerstein court orchestra. After Reicha's departure in spring 1785 he became the orchestra's sole director, and a year later Prince Kraft Ernst awarded him the title of chapel-master. But Rosetti's achievements on behalf of musical life at the Wallerstein court and his international reputation contrasted sharply with his meagre salary, which amounted to 400 gulden annually from the late 1770s and remained unaltered even after he took charge of the orchestra. His deteriorating finances, which did not improve despite repeated petitions, and his worsening health caused him to look for a better-paid position elsewhere. He found it in early 1789, when he learnt of the death of Carl August Friedrich Westenholtz, the court chapel-master in Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Without informing his prince, he travelled to Ludwigslust, where Duke Friedrich Franz I accepted his demands without demur. The two men quickly reached an agreement, and in the summer Rosetti left Wallerstein to assume his new position with a salary of 1 100 *Reichsthaler*, a house with garden and many perquisites. It lifted him into an entirely new income bracket.

In his final years Rosetti increasingly received commissions from high-ranking music lovers, including Klemens Wenzeslaus of Saxony (the Prince-Archbishop of Trier) and King Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia. At the Mozart memorial concert held in Prague on 14 December 1791, Rosetti's *Requiem*, originally composed in 1776 for the funeral of Prince Kraft Ernst's first wife and widely known throughout the late 18th century, was performed to an audience of 4 000. In early March 1792 the King of Prussia had Rosetti's oratorio *Jesus in Gethsemane* and his cantata *Halleluja* performed in Berlin. The composer travelled to Berlin for the occasion, where he met up with his long-standing friend, the music publisher Bossler. Bossler, who had not seen him in years, reported that the composer "arrived ill and exhausted. The good man had suffered for four years from a malignant catarrh that left him utterly prostrate, and I feared that, unless he should fall into the hands of a good physician, he would soon depart from us for the lower regions like our good Mozart". Bossler's fears proved all-too justified: Rosetti immediately returned from the concert in Berlin City Palace to Ludwigslust, after which nothing is known about him for four months. The Ludwigslust church

register lists his death on 30 June 1792; the cause of death is given as “exhaustion”, suggesting a lengthy illness.

Same 12 years earlier Rosetti’s music had first reached Paris, then regarded somewhat as the “world capital” of music. As already mentioned, three of his symphonies were published there in late 1779 by Madame Le Menu and her son-in-law Charles-Georges Boyer as *Trois SIMPHONIES / A Grand Orchestre / Composées / Par A. Rosetti. / Oeuvre 1er*. The person who arranged for this publication is unknown, but it cannot have been Rosetti himself, for at that time he lacked the necessary contacts. Perhaps it came about through the intercession of Karl Türschmidt (the son and prize pupil of the Wallerstein horn player Johann Türschmidt), who had made his career in the French capital and helped keep the Wallerstein court supplied with sheet music. Whatever the case, it was Karl Türschmidt who succeeded in introducing Rosetti’s music at the Concert Spirituel: on 24 March 1780 he and his duo partner Johann Palsa, both of whom served in the orchestra of Prince Jules-Hercule de Rohan-Guéméné, gave the first performance of one of Rosetti’s spectacular concertos for two horns in the Palais de Tuileries.

Günther Grünsteudel

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Most music enthusiasts know the music of the late eighteenth century almost exclusively through the works of Haydn and Mozart. In fact, the works of the Viennese masters forms only a small portion of the total repertory of this rather short time span. The rest was the product of dozens of other capable composers working in Europe. Many of these so-called “Kleinmeister” were highly imaginative and creative practioners of the musical taste of their day. One of the most talented is Antonio Rosetti (ca. 1750–1792).

Essential to musical life of the late eighteenth century were the many small courts that dotted the map of eighteenth-century Germany. Among this group few could match the musical excellence of the tiny Swabian court of Kraft Ernst, Prince of Oettingen-Wallerstein (1748–1802). The prince had a special fondness for music, and at Wallerstein he created a *Hofkapelle* of remarkable brilliance which by the 1780s boasted some of the best musicians of its day. The prince attracted to his “Hofkapelle” not only superb performers, but also a group of talented composers. Primary among the Wallerstein court composers was **Antonio Rosetti**.

Although many details of his early life remain obscured by the shadows of time, it is believed, that Rosetti was born Anton Rösler in Litomeřice (Leitmeritz), Bohemia sometime around 1750. Originally intended for the priesthood, he received his early musical training from the Jesuits. In 1773 he left his homeland and joined the south German *Hofkapelle* of Kraft Ernst, Prince of Oettingen-Wallerstein. About this time he adopted the Italian form of his name and thereafter continually referred to himself as Antonio Rosetti. Wallerstein remained Rosetti’s home for the next sixteen years. Hired as a servant and double-bass player, he was quickly promoted to *Hofmusikus* and around 1786 assumed the duties of *Kapellmeister*. In July 1789 Rosetti left the prince’s service to become *Kapellmeister* at the north German court of Friedrich Franz I., Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. He remained there until his death three years later in 1792 at the age of forty-two.

As a court composer, Rosetti created a steady stream of symphonies, concertos, partitas, chamber music and vocal pieces for the two noble houses he served.

The skilful employment of harmonic chromaticism and contrapuntal textures is one of the elements of Rosetti’s musical language that distinguishes his music from that of many of his contemporaries. Also characteristic of Rosetti’s style is his employment of extended passages for

winds alone – a texture that he perfected in the many wind partitas composed for the prince’s table entertainment – and his tendency to conclude fast as well as slow movements with a tapering off of the dynamics to achieve a fading away effect (*perdendosi*).

In his lifetime Rosetti’s music was highly regarded and widely performed. Many of his most popular compositions appeared in prints issued by the major publishing houses of Europe. Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart styled him “one of the most beloved musicians of our time”.

Sterling E. Murray

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“*Rosetti*. One of the most beloved composers of our time. [...] And certainly something easier, fuller of light, and more honey-sweet than the pieces of this man can hardly be imagined. *Naiveté* is in particular his principal trait. As easy as his compositions may seem, however, they are just as difficult to perform if one does not have feeling in one’s own heart. The mere musical aerial acrobat who seeks his fame simply in *salti mortali* will fail if he should present a work by Rosetti. The grace and beauty is of such an infinitely fine nature that one false twitch of the hand, and then their tender outline is destroyed, and the Venus portrait becomes a grotesque visage.” It was thus that Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart wrote of Antonio Rosetti (1750–92) around 1785 in his *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst*.

Antonio Rosetti’s early biography for the most part lies shrouded in darkness. Rosetti is thought to have been born in Leitmeritz/Litomeřice, Northern Bohemia, and received a comprehensive education (also in matters musical) at a Jesuit college in Prague, perhaps at the Clementinum. His original name was Anton Rös(s)ler. After he had abandoned his studies for the priesthood, Rosetti served as “Compositore della Musica bey dem Russisch Orlovschen Regiment” in the early 1770s and then entered the employ of Prince Kraft Ernst zu Oettingen-Wallerstein as a servant and double bassist in the autumn of 1773. Soon thereafter he composed his first works for the court ensemble and for outside commissioners. A half year’s stay in Paris in 1781–82 made the composer a known quantity in the music world. His orchestral works became a mainstay of the Paris Concerts spirituels and the important London concert series. Rosetti wrote from Paris in March 1782: “As far as symphonies go, one hears nothing but Haydn and – (if I may say so) Rosetti! – now and again a bit of Ditters.” On Joseph Haydn’s recommendation the London impresario Johann Peter Salomon included symphonies by Rosetti in his concert programmes. In 1785 Rosetti succeeded Josef Reicha as Hofkapellmeister in Wallerstein, where he composed most of his numerous vocal and instrumental works.

Despite his diligence and notwithstanding the acclaim he received, Rosetti’s financial circumstances remained unsatisfactory. A position at the court of the Duke Friedrich Franz I von Mecklenburg-Schwerin at Ludwigslust in 1789 finally improved his circumstances. Not long afterwards, Rosetti was summoned to Berlin to perform his works at the Court of Prussia, and he was also commissioned to compose a Requiem for the memorial service for Mozart in Prague. Rosetti died at Ludwigslust in 1792 at the young age of forty-two.

Rosetti’s music was extraordinarily popular during the late eighteenth century, and his compositions formed part of concert programs throughout Europe. More than half of Rosetti’s more than four hundred extant works (including forty-four symphonies, more than sixty solo concertos, above all for winds, wind partitas, chamber music, piano compositions, and vocal works) were printed during his lifetime by renowned music publishers (André, Artaria, Bossler, Hummel, Sieber, etc.).

Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart referred to him as “one of the most popular composers of our time” as early as 1784. Other contemporaries praised Rosetti’s sense of form, his contrapuntal finesse,

bold chromaticism and highly imaginative instrumentation (with his treatment of the wind parts in the orchestra in particular bringing him universal praise), putting him on a par with Haydn and Mozart. His lyrical talent and frequent flashes of humour made Rosetti's music generally popular. Rosetti's slow movements in particular anticipated the Romantic era, yet his music was forgotten after 1800.

Johannes Moesus

Symphonies

Symphony in C major (Murray A1 / Kaul I:8)

(Probably composed 1776)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Andante ma allegretto*
3. *Menuetto moderato*
4. *Finale. Allegro ma non presto*

The Symphony in C major (Murray A1; Kaul I:8) is one of three symphonies in Rosetti's op. 1. It was probably composed in 1776. Like its companion in E flat major (Murray A29; Kaul I:9), before it appeared in print, it was distributed in handwritten copies by Breitkopf of Leipzig. Apparently it soon became very popular, as evidenced by the many surviving copies and the fact that the Paris print of 1779 was reissued in 1785.

Indeed, this symphony is captivating from its very first bars. The propulsive eighth-note motif of the opening, introduced each time by a chordal hammerblow, evolves into a broadly conceived and violently agitated orchestral tutti. In keeping with classical sonata form, the second theme, with its undulating pastoral motif adopts a lyrical character to set it apart from the first theme. The development section, migrating through the minor keys, takes up the lyrical oboe solo of the second theme and showcases the sound of oboes and horns. After the abridged opening of a reprise, the movement continues in a developmental vein.

A cheerful and relaxed scherzando inflection dominates the second movement, where the muted strings constantly step aside for the winds (sometimes solo) or enter into a dialogue with them. Not until the *minore* middle section, introduced by dramatic orchestral accents, does unrest begin to spread, intensified by signal calls from the oboes.

Even the following minuet reveals Rosetti's ability to produce a sophisticated orchestral texture, exceeding what was normally expected for such movements at the time. A violent, jolting triadic fanfare from the full orchestra is followed by good-humoured figuration from the strings. The middle section, surprisingly set in the minor mode, is likewise sophisticated in its compositional texture. A dance tune from Rosetti's native Bohemia may have been the model for the unassuming trio, which is given entirely to the solo oboe with a discreet pizzicato string accompaniment.

The fugato opening of the finale, set in sonata form, recalls baroque forebears. Its driving impetus is a plain ascending triadic motif after which the texture further accelerates with the entrance of triplets. The jocular second theme, accompanied by pizzicato basses, has all the hallmarks of a street ditty. The fugato motif, the triadic motif and the triplets provide material for a dramatic development section intensified rhythmically by superimposed duplets and triplets. After a fairly conventional recapitulation the symphony comes to a powerful and mighty close.

Günther Grünsteudel

Symphony in C major (Murray A3 / Kaul I:43)

(Composed between 1773 and 1776)

1. *Adagio assai – Presto – Adagio – Presto*
2. *Menuetto – Trio*
3. *Presto*

We have very little detailed information about any of the works included in the present release. In the case of the **Symphony in C major Murray A3**, we can date it only very roughly to the period between 1773 and 1776. Although the title-page of the copy of the score that was made available for the present recording and that is currently lodged in the Court Library of the Princes of Thurn und Taxis in Regensburg bears the date 10 June 1780, the work cannot be later than 1776 since the symphony, including its incipit, is mentioned in the 1776/77 supplement to Johann Breitkopf's annual catalogue of printed music.

Rosetti's delight in experimentation in developing symphonic forms is clear from all three of the symphonies featured in this release. The four-movement symphonic model was by no means binding at this date, and the Symphonies in C and G both eschew a slow movement. Instead, the opening movement of the C major Symphony begins with an *Adagio assai* that takes up two-thirds of the movement and that could be interpreted as a slow movement. But thanks to its use of harmonic suspense, its propulsive syncopations and its sudden moments of stasis, this *Adagio* maintains a latent tension that finally finds release in the five chords of the triple-time *Presto* that follows. The listener searches in vain for clearly separated themes here. Instead, the movement, which is characterized by its paratactical approach to motivic procedures, develops its own special kind of dualism, the first subject being stable and tableau-like in its design, while the second uses rhythm to create an impulsive power that drives the music forwards. In stark contrast are bridge passages which, harmonically unstable, modulate to the secondary key by exploring witty byways. The music avoids the usual repeat of the exposition but passes straight from a rest in the whole orchestra to the development section, in which rhythmically static, archetypally powerful tableaux modulate step by step from A minor to E major, seeming to sink down beneath the weight of their own blows. The recapitulation begins with brusque abruptness, taking the listener by surprise with the re-entry of the *Adagio* rather than the expected transition to the second subject. In this way a *cantabile* element is built into the opening movement, the composer's handling of this passage affording further evidence of his originality. The movement ends with a recapitulation of the second subject in the home key of C major. The *Menuetto* creates the impression of an earthy scherzo with its rustic wind Trio, while the final *Presto* in 2/4-time, erupting with tempestuous power, rounds off this picture of a rugged, powerful and impulsive character thanks, not least, to the brawny sound of its C basso horns.

Christian Binde

Symphony in C major (Murray A6 / Kaul I:11)

(Composed around 1780–1781)

1. *Adagio majestoso – Allegro molto*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Menuetto fresco non Allegretto*
4. *Presto*

The symphony was designed specifically for the prince's orchestra. The instrumentation of the work (violins I-II, violas I-II, basso, two oboes, and two horns) reflects the personnel of the court orchestra at this time. The fact that the work is preserved today in multiple manuscript copies and that

the symphony was published in the composer's lifetime attests to their popularity with eighteenth-century audiences.

In the autumn of 1781, Rosetti was given a leave of absence to travel to Paris. One of his objectives was to establish contact with music publishers there in hopes of having some of his music printed. Among the compositions he brought with him was the Symphony in C major (Murray A6; Kaul 11), which probably was composed sometime in the previous year. On March 5, 1782 Rosetti reported to his prince: "*I have had six symphonies and several other pieces printed here, dedicated to your Highness; they are all finished, and I shall send you a sample of them through the gardener Griess.*" When the six symphonies appeared as Sieber's op. 3, the C major symphony held a position of favour as the first in the set. This work achieved such popularity that six years later it was issued in a second print, this time by Hummel in Berlin/Amsterdam.

The first movement of the Symphony in C major (Murray A6; Kaul I:11) begins with an *Adagio* in which Rosetti employs dynamic nuance and chromatic inflection to achieve a highly expressive mood. The beginning of the *Allegro molto* that follows immediately casts this pensive mood aside with an explosive rocket-like theme that serves as the primary theme of the sonata-form exposition. A broad-phrased secondary theme in the dominant is introduced with a quirky sense of humor reminiscent of Haydn. This soon gives way to a robust closing area culminating in an orchestral union. After an energetic development, the recapitulation – for the most part – faithfully reviews the material first heard in the exposition.

In the *Adagio*, Rosetti's gift for lyric melody and expressive dynamic nuance is given full sway in an extended sonata form. The strings dominate throughout most of the movement, but in the recapitulation, Rosetti draws on the oboes and horns to add an effective layer of coloring to his original material.

The earthy and vigorous quality of the minuet is hinted at in its characterization as *Menuetto fresco*. In the trio, Rosetti wrote a delightful oboe solo for his friend and fellow countryman, Gottfried Clier.

The finale, like many of this period, offers a lively conclusion in a *Presto* tempo. Unlike the rondo finales of the 1780s, here Rosetti has opted for a sonata form. Cast in a duple meter, Rosetti manages to instil considerable rhythmic interest by vacillating between duple and triplet rhythmic groupings.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in C major (Murray A8 / Kaul I:26)

(Composed 1786)

1. *Grave – Allegro assai, come presto*
2. *Menuetto. Allegretto fresco*
3. *Andante ma allegretto*
4. *Finale. Allegro molto*

In 1779 Prince Kraft Ernst initiated a reconstruction of his "Kapelle". He hired several new musicians including several superb wind players. With this new ensemble Rosetti had at his disposal an orchestra, whose capabilities must have seemed unlimited. Working with these musicians on a daily basis, Rosetti was able to tailor his compositions to their special talents. The Symphony in C major (Murray A8; Kaul I:26) was composed specifically for this newer ensemble.

The title page of the autograph score for the Symphony in C major (Murray A8; Kaul I:26) bears the following inscription, "composta nel mese di Giungio 1786 a Wallerstein". Like the Symphony in

F major (Murray A33; Kaul I:24) it was among those compositions that Rosetti took with him to his new post in Ludwigslust. The Symphony in C major is distinguished by a rich harmonic palette, an adventure some deployment of counterpoint, and tight and cohesive approach to structure.

The slow Grave introduction introduces already a distinctive rhythmic motive first heard at the opening in the winds, which reappears throughout the Allegro assai come presto. The movement in sonata form concludes with a coda given over to the winds alone. Such “Harmoniemusik” tags become a distinctive trademark in many of Rosetti’s later symphonies. Often in the late eighteenth century the minuet movement was considered a relaxing interlude within the symphonic structure. The menuetto fresco that follows could fulfil this expectation. In fact, the minuet proper includes one of the most chromatic passages, which happens to also combined with a gesture of subtle rhythmic complexity. For the trio Rosetti again turns to “Harmoniemusik”. Perhaps it is this more rustic sound that the composer had in mind when applying the term “fresco” to the movement as a whole. The slow movement provides an opportunity for Rosetti to exercise his special skill at creating passages of lyric sweetness and expression. The finale, which Rosetti has designed as a “capriccio” is cast in a rondo format. Here the composer illustrates his clever sense of humor in a movement distinguished by unexpected and often surprising turns of phrase, chromatic twists, and pauses.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in C major (Murray A9 / Kaul I:21)

(Composed 1783–84)

1. *Vivace non presto*
2. *Menuetto fresco & Trio*
3. *Romanze: Andante gracioso*
4. *Capriccio: Allegro molto*

The Symphony in C major (Murray A9; Kaul I:21) was issued in January 1785 by Artaria in Vienna and again two years later as J.J. Hummel’s Op. 5 published in Berlin and Amsterdam.

The symphony opens with an energetic movement structured as a sonata form. One of the most distinguishing features of this *Vivace non presto* is its creative employment of counterpoint – suggested early in the exposition, but brought to full force in a remarkable development area. After a faithful review of the exposition in the recapitulation Rosetti tacks on a rather surprising coda that explores some astounding five-voice chromatic counterpoint and a brief showcase passage for winds alone before dying away with a *pianissimo* string *pizzicato*.

As an alternative to the elegant court minuet, in the 1780s Rosetti sometimes employed the designation ‘menuetto fresco’. The present minuet captures some of the rustic charm associated with such a style. In keeping with the *al fresco* image, the trio is scored for winds alone (*Harmonie*).

The lyric *Romanze* that follows remains one of Rosetti’s most remarkable creations. Although only about thirty-five years old when he composed this Symphony, the subtlety of expression found in the dynamic shadings, articulations, and phrasing of this movement suggest a composer of considerable stylistic maturity.

In keeping with its designation as a *Capriccio* the final movement is full of surprising turns of phrase, chromatic twists, and pauses.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in C major (Murray A9 / Kaul I:21)

(Composed 1783–84)

1. *Vivace non Presto*
2. *Menuetto fresco – Trio – Menuetto*
3. *Romanze: Andante grazioso*
4. *Capriccio: Allegro molto*

The Symphonies in C major (Murray A9; Kaul I:21) and G major (Murray A40; Kaul I:22) were both composed about the same time (1783–84) and first published together by Artaria in Vienna in 1785. Two years later, they were again paired in a second print issued by Hummel in Berlin and Amsterdam, and later, after the composer's death, in chamber arrangements published in London.

The Symphony in C major (Murray A9; Kaul I:21) opens with an energetic movement in sonata form, which is distinguished by its skilful and creative application of counterpoint. Unlike most late eighteenth-century music, which tends to sidestep the complexities of counterpoint in favour of tuneful melodies laid out over standardized accompaniments, Rosetti's mature symphonies seem to delight in refreshing and engaging contrapuntal subtleties. The energy and bustle of this movement concludes in a soft *pianissimo* for pizzicato strings.

The rustic charm of the *Menuetto fresco* offers an alternative to the traditional courtly minuet. The *al fresco* motif is continued in a trio cast as *Harmoniemusik* for winds alone.

The intricacy of construction and subtlety of expression of the slow movement that follows make it one of Rosetti's most remarkable symphonic essays.

The good-natured humour of the final movement, which the composer labels *Capriccio*, results primarily from its surprising and sometimes abrupt changes of direction.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in D major (Murray A12 / Kaul I:12)

(Composed April 1780)

1. *Allegro moderato*
2. *Andantino*
3. *Menuetto: Trio & Moderato*
4. *Allegretto capriccio*

The Symphony in D major was completed at Wallerstein in April 1780. One of Rosetti's most popular symphonies, this work is preserved today in as many as fifteen manuscript sources including an arrangement as a divertimento. In 1782, Rosetti included it in a set of six symphonies published in Paris by Jean-Georges Sieber and dedicated to the Prince von Öttingen-Wallerstein. In general, this Symphony retains vestiges of Rosetti's galant compositions of the 1770s.

The triple metre and song-like themes of the first movement as well as its conventional deployment of sonata form link this work with an older symphonic tradition.

The *Andantino* variation set found as the slow movement in Sieber's print and in several manuscript sources is absent from the autograph score. Variation design is not often found in Rosetti's symphonies; the composer may have added this movement specifically for the Parisian print.

The routine minuet that follows includes a passage for solo flute in the trio.

The finale is fashioned as a jocular rondo labelled *Allegretto capriccio*.

Symphony in D major (Murray A13 / Kaul I:30)

(Composed 1788 or early 1789)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Adagio non tanto*
3. *Menuet: Allegretto fresco – Trio I – Trio II – Menuet*
4. *Finale: Allegretto*

The Symphony in D major (Murray A13; Kaul I:30) probably dates from about 1788 or early 1789, near the end of the composers Wallerstein tenure. It was certainly among the compositions that he took with him when he left the prince's service.

Like the other Wallerstein symphonies included here, this work opens with a sonata-form movement remarkable in its cogent and economical treatment of material. The skilful handling of a persistent motivic manipulation and development within full textures distinguishes this movement as one of Rosetti's most ambitious.

The slow movement, marked *Adagio non tanto*, offers a superb illustration of the nuance and attention to expressive detail for which the Wallerstein orchestra was often praised. Meticulous dynamic shadings and careful phrasing, articulation, and ornamentation in movements like this set Rosetti's mature symphonies apart from those of many other court composers of his day.

The minuet is supplied with two trios, an arrangement more characteristic of Rosetti's wind partitas.

The joyous spirit of Haydn is evident throughout this symphony's finale movement. Although it is laid out as a five-part rondo (ABACA), Rosetti achieves a particularly strong sense of thematic cohesion by allowing a distinctive rhythmic motif to leave its stamp on each section of the form.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in D major (Murray A14 / Kaul I:29)

(Composed between 1789 and 1792)

1. *Andante – Allegro*
2. *Andante*
3. *Rondo. Allegro*

Rosetti wrote the Symphony in D major (Murray A14; Kaul I:29) during the last years of his life in Ludwigslust between 1789 and 1792. Its three-movement structure – there is no minuet – recalls the Paris symphonic tradition.

The relatively long 28-bar *Andante* introduction prepares the way for the principal theme of the first movement, characterized by a dotted rhythm. The strikingly rhythmic introductory motif of the theme derives from a march-like melody beginning in bar 18 in the oboes and horns, performed over a monophonic orchestral accompaniment and involuntarily recalling the *Marseillaise*. Was this coincidence or a deliberate allusion to the events of the French revolution? Or did Rosetti know the tune as a folk-song from his time in Paris? The first part of the exposition with first subject unfolds with great energy in the ensuing *Allegro* section. With its repeated notes in the winds, the subsidiary theme is likewise characterized by rhythm rather than melody. Rosetti surprisingly returns to the introductory *Andante* at the end of the exposition, using modulating harmony and introducing a short

development section at whose end the rhythmic pattern of the *Marseillaise* motif leads into the recapitulation section.

One might now expect a lyrical romance or cheerful set of variations as a second movement, so that the way the *Andante* immediately establishes a mood of dismal gloom comes as a surprise. The whole movement is thematically based on an ostinato melody of very limited range which is illuminated by the timbres of various wind instruments and then subjected to variations in the middle part and dramatically intensified. A descending wind fanfare assumes the function of a subsidiary theme, going over into the major in the final section to prepare the way for an almost cheerful close.

In the third movement Rosetti again makes use of his beloved rondo “à la chasse”. Virtuoso orchestral treatment, harmony that modulates unexpectedly, rhythmic finesses and full use of wind timbres bring the symphony to an effective close.

Perhaps more than any of Rosetti’s other late symphonies, this work seems to anticipate the nineteenth century. Its harmony and the colourfulness of the relatively large wind section bring to mind the symphonies of the early Romantics. This work – perhaps Rosetti’s last symphony? – thus makes a strangely subdued impression: the Classical world is behind us, the new announces its coming.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in D major (Murray A16 / Kaul I:7)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Andante gracioso ma un poco Vivace*
3. *Presto*

Like the Symphony in F major (Murray A32; Kaul I:10), the Symphony in D major (Murray A16; Kaul I:7) also numbers among Rosetti’s early symphonies. It appeared in prior in 1781–82 together with symphonies by Antoine Rigel and Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf with the Paris publishing company of Madame Le Menu. The three-movement work has the movement sequence fast-slow-fast and recalls the form of the Italian opera *sinfonia*. Common structural elements of the three movements such as movement beginnings in *piano* and dynamic contrasts over a short space strengthen this impression.

The sonata movement designed as an introductory *Allegro assai* thrives on the alternation between the string orchestra often playing in the higher range and a tutti of sound magnificence and virtuosity.

The bright tone of the first movement again appears in the *Andante gracioso ma un poco vivace* middle movement in the song form (ABA) and reserved for the strings alone. The expressive middle part in minor, in which a dialogue between the first violin and the violoncello “liberated” from the double bass calls attention to itself, recalls serenade music. The composer thus also already in his early compositions demonstrates his ability to design slow movements that stir the emotions and are full of feeling.

The concluding *Presto* brimming with performance joy once again displays humour typical of Rosetti with a second theme of absolute hit quality.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony D major (Murray A19 / Kaul I:13)

(Composed around 1780–1781)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Adagio non molto*
3. *Presto*

The symphony was designed specifically for the prince's orchestra. The instrumentation of the work (violins I-II, violas I-II, basso, two oboes, and two horns) reflects the personnel of the court orchestra at this time. The fact that the work is preserved today in multiple manuscript copies and that the symphony was published in the composer's lifetime attests to their popularity with eighteenth-century audiences.

In the autumn of 1781, Rosetti was given a leave of absence to travel to Paris. One of his objectives was to establish contact with music publishers there in hopes of having some of his music printed. Among the compositions he brought with him was the Symphony in C major (Murray A6; Kaul 11), which probably was composed sometime in the previous year. On March 5, 1782 Rosetti reported to his prince: "*I have had six symphonies and several other pieces printed here, dedicated to your Highness; they are all finished, and I shall send you a sample of them through the gardener Griess.*" When the six symphonies appeared as Sieber's op. 3, the C major symphony held a position of favour as the first in the set. This work achieved such popularity that six years later it was issued in a second print, this time by Hummel in Berlin/Amsterdam.

The Symphony in D major (Murray A19; Kaul I:13) was advertised in the 1781 supplement to the Breitkopf Thematic Catalog. This work was included with the Symphony in C major (Murray A6; Kaul I:11) among the six symphonies printed by Sieber in 1782.

The sonata form of the first movement begins with an expansive treatment of the primary theme which is laid out in a three-part design, whose middle phrase offers an unexpected turn of events. In the midst of a typically vigorous and driving initial theme, Rosetti abruptly halts the progress and inserts a section of contrasting intent. The initial forte gives way to piano; oboes emerge to take the lead in presenting the theme. This unexpected detour is short, and without further warning, the composer propels his listeners back into the mood of the opening with an energy that leads into the new tonality. The secondary theme of this movement is noteworthy for its extensive use of chromaticism. Rosetti rounds out the exposition by returning to thematic material strongly reminiscent of the primary theme in his closing section. The development is short and given over almost exclusively to the strings, with the winds added only at the last minute to assist in creating the harmonic tension needed to prepare the return of the tonic.

A recapitulation faithful to the design of the exposition rounds out this opening movement. The middle movement introduces a dramatic change of mood. Here Rosetti has created one of his most compelling lyric essays. Eighteenth-century critics commented on the meticulous attention given in performances by the Wallerstein orchestra to dynamics, articulation, and expression. Movements like this *Adagio* may well have provided opportunity for such observations.

Although not so designated, the finale recalls the mood of the hunt. The duple meter is interpreted throughout with triplets that approximate the rollicking 6/8 meters and exposed wind passages often associated with "La Chasse" compositions.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in D major “La Chasse” (Murray A20 / Kaul I:18)

1. *Vivace*
2. *Romance. Adagio non tanto ma andantino*
3. *Menuetto majestoso – Trio*
4. *Allegro non presto*

Rosetti’s decision to sojourn in Paris in the winter of 1781/82 proved to be a very fortunate one. Only a fortnight after his arrival, he was able successfully to present a symphony of his own at one of the *Concerts Spirituels*, the most prominent concert series in Paris. Rosetti wrote to Wallerstein on December 12, 1781: “... nonetheless, with the help of Mr Le Gros (director of the *Concerts Spirituels*) I found a way to present my large symphony to general applause in the first *Concert Spirituel* on December 7, and shall have to write more of the same for this orchestra”. Calling for two flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets and kettledrums and a large string orchestra with divided violas, the Symphony in D major “La Chasse” (Murray A20; Kaul I:18) is obviously another work Rosetti wrote for the orchestra of the *Concerts Spirituels*, which comprised more than fifty professional musicians at the time. There is nothing surprising about the idea of composing an especially effective “*Simphonie de Chasse*”, as the edition published by Sieber in Paris in 1786 called it, for hunt symphonies were extraordinarily popular in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The sensational opening section of Rosetti’s “La Chasse” probably sufficed to enthuse the spoilt Paris audience. It begins *pianissimo* in the first violins; in quick succession, the other instrumental sections join in one by one until a magnificent crescendo is reached. The whole process is repeated three times. The ensuing sonata-form first movement derives its tension from the contrast between the energy-laden principal theme, with its powerful forte-piano effects, and the lyrical subsidiary theme.

The second movement, a romance, also brings in surprise effects. The cantilenas of the clarinets and bassoons are repeatedly interrupted by unexpected pizzicato chords in the strings. The highly expressive middle section, presented here in the formally more balanced Wallerstein version of the second movement, seems to anticipate the sound of the Romantics.

While the minuet is characterized by a mood of courtly festivity, the trio with solo parts for the winds creates the rustic and idyllic tone of a romance.

Only the fourth movement justifies the symphony’s name. On the basis of the 6/8 time typical of “à la chasse” movements, Rosetti develops a whole repertoire of expressive means to depict events typical of the hunt, like horses galloping, a startled animal fleeing, hounds barking, hunting-horn calls, shots being fired and the agonized throes of a wounded animal. This symphony almost certainly ensured that Rosetti’s name was not forgotten in Paris.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in D major “La Chasse” (Murray A20 / Kaul I:18)

1. *Vivace*
2. *Romance: Adagio non tanto*
3. *Menuetto majestoso – Trio – Menuetto*
4. *Allegro*

In the winter of 1781–82, Prince Kraft Ernst granted Rosetti a leave of absence to visit Paris. The composer reported on the city’s various orchestras in letters to his prince. That of the Concert Spirituel impressed him the most, and in a letter dated 28 January 1782 Rosetti confided to his prince that he was working on “a powerful symphony” (“eine starke Sinfonie”) for this ensemble. The work to which Rosetti refers is his Symphony in D major (Murray A20; Kaul I:18), published in 1786 as *Simphonie*

De Chasse by Sieber in Paris. Such hunting symphonies were a popular vogue of the day. Among the composers who contributed to this special repertory were Gossec, Franz Joseph Haydn, Hoffmeister, Méhul, Stamitz, and Paul Wranitzky.

This work's expanded instrumentation – including, in addition to strings, a full complement of double winds with trumpets and timpani – reflects the ensemble of the Concert Spirituel. The first movement opens with an introductory gesture whose three-fold crescendo was probably designed specifically to cater to the Parisian audiences' well-documented preference for fast and exciting beginnings. The spirit and excitement of this opening is relaxed only to accommodate the *dolce* secondary theme of sonata form.

A completely different mood prevails in the lyric Romance, which begins quietly with a sweet and melancholy interlude for wind instruments, in which clarinets and bassoons are allowed a special voice, followed by a darker middle section in minor and a da capo-like recall of the opening.

The sweep and vigor of the minuet aptly justify its designation as “majestoso”.

It is in the final movement that Rosetti draws on the imagery of the hunt which gives this work its name. Here the composer employs an arsenal of musical devices to suggest the excitement of the hunt, including clichéd galloping rhythmic patterns within a 6/8 meter, accented *acciacatura* dissonances, and even the quotation of a specific *sonnerie* (horn call) borrowed from the hunting field.

In the seven-year period between his return from Paris in May 1782 until his departure from Wallerstein in July 1789, Rosetti composed approximately eleven symphonies, among which are the other three included on this recording – all designed specifically for the Wallerstein court orchestra. As a group, they stand far above the norm of their day. Their style is distinguished by engaging melodies, imaginative orchestration, a rich harmonic vocabulary tightly-knit motivic structures, and a skilful deployment of counterpoint.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in D major (Murray A21 / Kaul I:20)

(Composed November 1782)

1. *Largo – Allegro assai*
2. *Andante scherzante*
3. *Menuetto fresco – Trio*
4. *Allegro moderato*

“The Concert spirituel roars and thunders”, Rosetti wrote from Paris to his prince in Wallerstein. When Rosetti composed his Symphony in D major (Murray A21; Kaul I:20) in Wallerstein in November 1782, he was still very much influenced by the impressions gained during his stay in Paris during the winter of 1781/82. It had meant a real breakthrough for him, with his symphonies being performed with great success in the *Concerts spirituels*, the most prominent concert series in Paris. The Symphony in D major was a work commissioned for the large orchestra it featured.

The slow introduction begins very effectively on three pounding chords, going on to introduce the principal theme of the following *Allegro assai* sonata movement. Its motif of repeated notes sharpened by two rapid appoggiaturas develops a dynamism which lends impetus and motivic cohesion to the whole movement. Using ornaments derived from the principal theme's appoggiatura motifs, the songlike subsidiary theme has the sole function of providing moments of repose. Dominated by the principal theme, the development section employs subtle contrapuntal work and makes detours into

rather remote keys to concentrate the tension in the music. Instead of ending on the expected *forte* note, the movement dies away in *piano*.

The second movement, in variation form, is based on a songlike, folksy theme from which Rosetti proceeds to elicit various humorous elements in the course of the ensuing variations. In the second variation we encounter pure writing for winds, a much-acclaimed feature of Rosetti's symphonies. Whilst composing the bassoon part in the fifth variation, Rosetti may well have been thinking of his friend Christoph Hoppius (c. 1750–1824), a highly esteemed virtuoso bassoonist in the court orchestra of Wallerstein.

The appoggiatura motif used in the ensuing minuet links up with the principal theme of the first movement. In the trio, clearly intending to establish a link with the humorous character of the second movement, Rosetti surprises the listener with a pizzicato effect in the violins.

Though a rondo might reasonably be expected to end the work, the last movement turns out to be in sonata form again. Its principal theme is built upon a catchy triadic motif that develops heightened dramatic intensity amid unexpectedly modulating harmonies. As in the first movement, the now more playful subsidiary theme has moments of melodic repose and does not enter into the thematic development. As at the end of the first movement, here too the coda seems to want to end softly, but the usual effective *forte* finale does arrive to close the symphony.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in D major (Murray A22 / Kaul I:28)

1. *Largo – Allegro vivace*

2. *Allegretto*

3. *Finale. Allegretto*

Rosetti left Wallerstein at the end of July 1789 to take up the post of Hofkapellmeister at Ludwigslust in Mecklenburg. His staged cantata “Das Winterfest der Hirten” (Murray G8), composed in homage to his prince for his thirty-third birthday on December 10, 1789, gave Rosetti the opportunity to demonstrate his abilities and to convey his thanks to the prince for the extremely generous salary he was paying him. Rosetti seems to have so liked his overture to “Das Winterfest” that he made it into the last movement of his Symphony in D major (Murray A13), written in Wallerstein, transforming that work into a full three-movement symphony. The resulting work, the Symphony in D major (Murray A22; Kaul I:28), was published by J. J. Hummel as “large symphony for numerous instruments, most respectfully dedicated to his majesty, Tsar Paul I, ruler of all Russians, on the occasion of his coronation in Moscow”.

Set for large forces, the first movement has a slow introduction featuring fanfare-like, rising arpeggiated triads and the dotted rhythms of the French overture – music of a majesty and magnificence befitting the tsar. But the *piano* sections are in sensitive style, perhaps reflecting the common description of Paul as the “picture of benevolence”. The dominant structural element for the first movement proper is a motif consisting of three repeated upbeat quavers and a descending arpeggiated triad; the rhythmic energy of the entire movement derives from it. The lyrical subsidiary theme is developed from the first *piano* bars of the principal theme. The exposition closes with a newly introduced ländler motif and solo flute. Treating elements of the principal and subsidiary themes, the development section begins by presenting the principal theme in the minor. The movement ends with the return of the ländler, this time with an oboe as solo instrument.

The simple song form of the second movement, originally intended as an atmospheric prelude to put the listener into the pastoral mood of “Das Winterfest”, is dominated by a solo cello. Flutes and oboes underline the pastoral character of the movement.

A simple dominant seventh chord leads directly into the final rondo movement. Derived from the rondo theme, an ever-present, rhythmically striking motif – beginning with three repeated quavers like the most important structural element of the first movement – ensures inner cohesion between all the sections of the movement, in the course of which Rosetti resorts to all the tricks of the contrapuntist’s trade – imitations, fugato passages, voice-exchange and independent counterparts. The symphony ends magnificently in a blaze of horns and trumpets.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in E flat major (Murray A23 / Kaul I:5) (Version A)

1. *Allegro moderato*

2. *Andante*

3. *Prestissimo*

One of the works Rosetti completed during this time is the Symphony in E flat major (Murray A23; Kaul I:5). Although conceived in only three movements, it is one of the most comprehensive works in Rosetti’s oeuvre.

The middle movement alone, an *Andante* in B flat major is over 200 bars long – all repetitions included – and is one of the most evocative slow movements in Rosetti’s entire output. The delicate and almost limitless *con sordino* passages of the string section are interspersed with colourful harmonies from the winds.

The conventionally structured outer movements are modelled after the sonata form: an introductory *Allegro moderato* – unmistakably close in style to Haydn’s middle period – and a rousing *Prestissimo* finale.

Rosetti appears to have been very satisfied with the quality of the work: it was among six symphonies he took with him on his visit to Paris at the end of October 1781, where he hoped to have his music published. Paris was the centre of musical life in Europe at the time and thanks to the Prince’s recommendation letters, he was quickly introduced to the most influential salons of the French capital. Rosetti used his stay to familiarize himself with the city’s concert and opera scene; he also came in contact with music publishers such as Jean-Georges Sieber (1738–1822), who proceeded to publish a great number of his works over the course of the following years, including the set of six symphonies mentioned above with a dedication to Prince Kraft Ernst in the winter of 1782.

Günther Grünsteudel

Symphony in E flat major (Murray A27 / Kaul I:32)

(Composed 1792)

1. *Allegro vivace*

2. *Adagio agitato*

3. *Menuet: Allegretto – Trio – Menuet*

4. *Finale: Allegretto*

The Symphony in E flat major (Murray A27; Kaul I:32) has been preserved in only two manuscript copies, both found in the remains of the Royal Prussian music library in Berlin. One copy was prepared in Ludwigslust by Rosetti’s copyist there, Karl Jäppelt. Its wrapper states that the work

was first performed in Berlin on 10 March 1792. It is, in fact, possible that this symphony was composed specifically for the Berlin court. Not only does it share its four-movement organization and instrumentation with the Wallerstein works included here, but several stylistic traits already pointed out about those pieces are equally valid in the case of this work, too: contrapuntal density, chromaticism, economic use of thematic material, and isolated passages for winds alone.

The Symphony in E flat major (Murray A27; Kaul I:32), is the last of Rosetti's essays in this genre, composed in Ludwigslust in the last year of his life.

From a harmonic perspective the *Adagio agitato* is one of Rosetti's most exceptional creations. Beginning in A flat major the tonality veers far afield, reaching at one point F sharp major.

The *Allegretto* finale explores various sonorities and textures. A special feature of this movement is its challenging writing for the horns. At Wallerstein Rosetti was free to write what he wished as the court's Bohemian horn duo, Joseph Nagel and Franz Zwierzina, seemed to be able to negotiate even the most difficult of passages, but one wonders whom the composer had in mind for the passages in this symphony's finale.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in E flat major [Dis] (Murray A28 / Kaul I:23)

(Composed 1784)

1. *Largo – Allegro assai*
2. *Menuet: Allegretto – Trio – Menuet*
3. *Andante*
4. *Finale: Allegro molto*

The Symphony in E flat major (Murray A28; Kaul I:23) probably dates from about 1784, as it was advertised in the Breitkopf catalog supplement of 1785–1787. Although composed for the Wallerstein orchestra, this was one of the compositions that Rosetti took with him when he moved to Ludwigslust in 1789. It was performed at the Berlin court and may have been included in the first season of Solomon-Haydn concerts in London. It was also known in a printed version published by the Viennese firm Artaria in 1786.

The symphony was composed for the Wallerstein orchestra. The instrumentation of the symphony conforms to that of the Wallerstein court orchestra during the mid 1780s: strings (including two violas and cello), two oboes, and two horns augmented by a solo flute and a solo bassoon.

The first movement, which is cast in a sonata form, opens with a slow introduction, whose thematic material is then recalled as counterpoint to the main theme of the exposition. Such economical deployment of material is characteristic of Rosetti's later works. A chromatic and intense development leads to the recapitulation in which Rosetti replaces the second theme of the exposition with a graceful and dance-like new idea.

The second movement is a playful minuet, the trio of which is an example of *Harmoniemusik*, i.e., music written for wind instruments alone. The Wallerstein orchestra was noted for the quality of its wind players, many of whom were born and trained in Bohemia. This particular trio features a bassoon solo that Rosetti wrote for his close friend Christoph Hoppius (*d.* 1824). When Rosetti made his move to Ludwigslust, he convinced Hoppius to join him there – much to the anger of the prince.

The *Andante* in B flat major is cast in an ABA design. The graceful and song-like outer sections flank a mid-section of greater rhythmic and harmonic activity.

The symphony concludes with a rollicking 6/8 finale. Although possessing some of the “hunting” character of such finales, this movement sports a strangely dark quality which may result from its rich harmonic palette and contrapuntal density.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in E flat major (Murray A29 / Kaul I:9)

(Composed in the mid 1770s)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Andante ma allegretto*
3. *Minuet. Moderato – Trio*
4. *Presto non tanto*

The Symphony in E flat major (Murray A29; Kaul I:9) probably was composed in the mid 1770s. Already in this time the Wallerstein “Hofkapelle” enjoyed a reputation as an excellent court ensemble, whose membership included such superb performers as the violinist Anton Janitsch, a student of Pugnani, the cellist and composer Joseph Reicha, and Joseph Fiala, who earned his reputation as an oboist, but also played cello and viola da gamba. The fact, that this work has been preserved eighteen manuscript sources and mentioned in several court music inventories suggests that it was among the most popular of Rosetti’s “Galant” symphonies. It was included along with two other symphonies (Murray A1 and A32) in “Trois Symphonies A Grand Orchestre” by the Parisian house of Le Menu et Boyer in December, 1779. Like most of Rosetti’s early compositions, the present symphony is distinguished by the pleasant diversion expected of the “galant” style.

The opening movement (*Allegro molto*) is structured as a sonata form. Except for dotted-rhythm punctuations in the manner of the fanfare played by the winds, the movement is dominated by the five-part string ensemble. In the development area of the form, Rosetti contents himself with exploring various tonal areas through the use of standardized figuration patterns. The minuet and trio, which is lacking in the Parisian print as well as certain manuscript copies, is of special interest. Here Rosetti has constructed a trio which is actually the minuet played in retrograde. The model for this technique might have been Franz Joseph Haydn’s Symphony in G major, Hob. 1:47 of 1772. Haydn’s symphonies – including in the one in question – were part of the Wallerstein court repertory, and it is likely that Rosetti was acquainted with Haydn’s use of this structural technique. The *Andante ma allegretto* is fashioned as a diminutive sonata form, whose thematic material unfolds in regular and balanced phrase units. The development section offers several interesting contrapuntal moments. Although in most of his later symphonies Rosetti favors a finale structured as a rondo, in the 1770s he more characteristically employed a sonata form design for the finale movement. The *Presto non tanto* contains interesting features. But like many of Rosetti’s early symphonic finales this movement suffers from too much repetition.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in E flat major (Murray A29 / Kaul I:9)

(Composed around 1777–78)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Andante ma allegretto*
3. *Menuetto moderato*
4. *Presto non tanto*

The Symphony in E flat major (Murray A29; Kaul I:9) is one of three symphonies in Rosetti's op. 1. Like its companion in Symphony in C major (Murray A1; Kaul I:8), before it appeared in print, it was distributed in handwritten copies by Breitkopf of Leipzig.

Like most of Rosetti's early works, the Symphony in E flat major (Murray A29; Kaul I:9), composed around 1777–78, is partly beholden to the *galant* style. The opening movement is laid out in sonata form. Apart from its opening motif, a wind fanfare in dotted rhythm, it is dominated by a five-voice string ensemble.

The next movement, *Andante ma allegretto*, is likewise in sonata form, its thematic material unfolding in regular and balanced phrases. The development section contains interesting contrapuntal elements.

The minuet, which is missing not only in the Paris print of 1779 but in several surviving manuscripts, is especially interesting, for the trio is no more than the minuet in retrograde. The "prototype" for this technique is probably Haydn's Symphony in G major, Hob. I:47 (1772). As Haydn's symphonies (including Hob. I:47) are known to have formed part of the Wallerstein repertoire, it is not difficult to see where Rosetti learned this technique.

Though the finales of most of his later symphonies are laid out as rondos, in the 1770s he still preferred to employ sonata form. Despite the classical formal design, the concluding *Presto non tanto* sounds almost like a *perpetuum mobile*.

Günther Grünsteudel

Symphony in F major (Murray A32 / Kaul I:10)

(Composed around 1776–77)

1. *Grave – Allegro assai*
2. *Andante ma Allegretto*
3. *Presto non tanto*

Rosetti's symphonies "are not only modern for their time but also pronouncedly original pieces, with rich harmony, colorful instrumentation with a dazzling treatment of the woodwinds [...], an extremely flexible combination of contrapuntal and homophonic-concertante composition and above all a tendency toward thematic economy" (Ludwig Finscher). The Symphony in F major (Murray A32; Kaul I:10) is in three movements, like about half of Rosetti's some forty symphonies, and exhibits the classical instrumentation with two oboes, two horns, bassoon, and strings. Composed around 1776–77, it numbers among Rosetti's early symphonies and at the same time was one of his most popular such works. It was published as his Opus 1 by Le Menu et Boyer in Paris in 1779 together with two other symphonies.

A grand oboe solo of song design dominates the slow introduction designed like a little scene; the curtain is opened, so to speak, in the introduction with four tutti chords before the oboe appears on the stage as the actor. A descending scale motif in the ensuing *Allegro assai* enters, presented first in piano and then slightly varied in *forte*, and forms the first thematic complex. Delightful, in part drastic melodic ideas with high entertainment value follow until the first violins intone the second theme in *piano dolce*. After harmonically sharpened dramatic processes in the development section, the orchestral winds appear toward the end of the movement in a solo role, and the movement closing in *pianissimo* is also reserved for them. The foiling of the audio expectations of the listeners in this way is an effect very much loved by Rosetti and a sign of an underlying sense of humour that repeatedly flashes forth.

The characterization by Ernst Ludwig Gerber applies precisely to the *Andante ma Allegretto* second movement: “It is also not to be denied that in his works a pleasantly flattering and sweetly teasing tone of his own dominates, and his compositions for wind instruments quite often turn out to be heavenly beautiful, and on the whole he knows how to use them masterfully with the orchestra.”

The concluding movement *Presto non tanto* begins in *piano* like the Allegro of the first movement and again obtains its main motif from the descending scale and relies on virtuosic orchestral effects in all the voices. A second theme in *piano* seems to have been borrowed from a dance melody from Rosetti’s native Bohemia. The main theme in inversion opens the short development section, in which remote keys such as E flat major, A flat major, and F minor are reached with highly expressive, gesturally rich sighing motifs of the upper strings continuing until the movement ends animatedly with a unison fanfare motif.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in F major (Murray A33 / Kaul I:24)

(Composed sometime around 1784–85)

1. *Presto*
2. *Andante*
3. *Menuetto & Trio: Fresco ma non troppo allegro*
4. *Allegro molto*

The Symphony in F major, composed at Wallerstein sometime around 1784–85, opens with a triple-metre *Presto*, which, although in sonata form, projects a decided scherzo-like character. The use of a single motive as the basis for both exposition themes and then again throughout the development provides a tightly woven cohesion somewhat in opposition to the playful profile of the thematic material.

The *Andante*’s spacious and song-like outer sections flank a middle contrasting passage coloured in dark tonalities and beset with fussy and hyperactive rhythms.

Although designated *Menuetto fresco*, the minuet that follows retains much of the character of a courtly dance, momentarily interrupted in the trio by the bucolic colour offered in a solo passage for oboes and bassoon.

For the finale Rosetti turns to his favoured concluding structure: a five-part rondo with *minore* episodes. Although some fire momentarily flares up in the contrasting episodes, this movement remains rather conventional until its surprising conclusion.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in F major (Murray A35 / Kaul I:24)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Menuetto fresco*
3. *Romanze – Andantino*
4. *Allegro non troppo*

The Cistercian monastery at Stams is also the source of our only surviving copy of the **Symphony in F major A35**. The parts were copied by Johann Anton Paluselli in around 1780 and formed the basis of our own recording of the work. Formally speaking, this is a conventionally structured piece, adopting the four-movement model that had become established by the second half of the 18th century. And yet the apparently conventional form conceals within it a number of surprises.

The winds launch the opening movement with a two-bar head-motif that is repeated note for note and then taken up by the strings, which transform it into a ten-bar theme. Shortly after the start of the symphony this theme then peters out in imitative figures, culminating in a whole bar's rest. There follows a lyrical transition that erupts in its sixth bar, introducing the second subject with a series of forte effects. This unpredictability remains typical of the rest of the opening movement, with its delight in dramatic contrasts. No part of its formal structure ends with the same affect as it began: sudden changes in the dynamic markings, abrupt periods of stasis and brief, rhythmically memorable interjections disrupt the flow of the music and create an atmosphere both harried and diffuse. Interestingly, the first subject never reappears in the development section. Instead, it is replaced by new and equally contrastive motifs that underscore the "headless" impression left by the exposition. Asymmetrical themes of seven, nine and ten bars help to define the structure not only of the slow movement but also of the *Menuetto* and Trio. Time and time again our sense of symmetry is undermined by interpolations and rhythmic shifts that relocate the stresses within the bar. The final movement is launched by the strings playing repeated triplets marked "piano", recalling the distant clip-clop of horses' hooves and risking a forte outburst even in the very first bar. The theme that emerges is notable for its use of dynamic contrast. By the seventh bar it has already galloped towards its first point of stasis in the form of a fermata only for it to be taken up at once and developed by the winds. Only thirty-eight bars long, this movement creates the impression of a hunting scene marked by a sudden departure, after which the riders come to a rest before striking out in different directions.

In general the Symphony in F major recalls the vaguely condescending description of Prince Kraft Ernst and his "manifold fitful whims" that we owe to the prince's secretary of many years' standing, Carl Heinrich Ritter von Lang, who viewed with a critical eye not only his employer's arbitrary working methods but also the hunts that caused considerable damage to the rural economy and which he condemned as "military campaigns against the local game". Rosetti will hardly have thought in such concrete terms, but he may very well have found in his employer a suggestive model for the portrait presented in his Symphony in F major.

Christian Binde

Symphony in G major (Murray A39 / Kaul I:16)

(Composed March 1781)

1. *Grave. Allegro*
2. *Menuet. Moderato*
3. *Allegretto*
4. *Presto*

Rosetti concluded his Symphony in G major (Murray A39; Kaul I:16) in Wallerstein in March 1781. The score calls for two oboes, two horns, a bassoon, and the divided violas typical of Wallerstein and explicitly distinguishes between the parts for double bass and violoncello. This impressive and tonally magnificent symphony is known to have been presented to the Paris public in 1782 in the Concerts spirituels and was printed by the Sieber publishing house in Paris in 1781.

The slow introduction begins with a mighty chord, and during its course the first theme of the ensuing sonata-form movement is presented in advance in a little fugato. The light and merry *Allegro* finds its way to dramatic tones first in the development section elaborating the two main themes.

The second position is occupied, contrary to the customary practice, not by the slow movement but by the *Menuett*, with its festive character contrasting with the folk character of the melody in the oboe solo in the *Trio*.

In the following *Andante* a theme in the manner of a folk song unfolds in four highly expressive variations intensifying into the dramatic; in the variations the winds maintain their own independent position over against the strings. At the end of this movement we encounter an example of the roguish delight in unexpected modulations always present in Rosetti's music.

The last movement is modeled on the sonata form and again requires great virtuosity from the orchestra; it concludes the symphony on an upbeat and optimistic note.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in G major (Murray A40 / Kaul I:22)

(Composed September 1784)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Menuetto & Trio: Moderato*
3. *Andante ma allegretto*
4. *Finale: Presto non tanto*

The Symphony in G major (Murray A40; Kaul I:22) dates from September 1784. This symphony was issued in January 1785 by Artaria in Vienna and again two years later as J.J. Hummel's Op. 5 published in Berlin and Amsterdam. Frequent changes, corrections, and modifications in both the score and parts suggest that this work may have been created in haste and under some pressure.

The opening movement is one of the composer's most interesting essays in sonata form. The initial motive of the primary theme is recalled as a building block in each of the principal thematic units, although each time reinterpreted through changes of orchestration, harmony, and counterpoint. Rosetti uses the development section to explore the special expressive potential of the minor mode, as well as introduce a completely new theme highlighted in the remote key of E major. A truncated recapitulation brings the movement to a convincing conclusion.

Rosetti does not seem to have been particularly satisfied with this minuet and trio. Extensive changes written into the score indicate that at some point he rethought a significant portion of the minuet, and in the set of parts the composer has pasted over the original trio a substitute taken from an earlier symphony.

The *Andante*, so rich in nuance and expressive details, is an effective showcase for Rosetti's special lyric talents.

A rondo finale provides a fast pace, energetic, and light-hearted conclusion to the Symphony.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in G major (Murray A40 / Kaul I:22)

(Composed September 1784)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Menuet: Allegretto – Trio – Menuet*
3. *Andante ma allegretto*
4. *Finale: Presto non tanto*

The Symphonies in C major (Murray A9; Kaul I:21) and G major (Murray A40; Kaul I:22) were both composed about the same time (1783–84) and first published together by Artaria in Vienna in 1785. Two years later, they were again paired in a second print issued by Hummel in Berlin and Amsterdam, and later, after the composer's death, in chamber arrangements published in London.

The Symphony in G major (Murray A40; Kaul I:22) was completed in September 1784. The numerous corrections, short cuts, and second thoughts found throughout the score for this work suggest that it may have been composed under pressure and in some haste. Typically, the first movement is in sonata form. Particularly striking here is the thematic economy of this movement, whose principal motif provides the fuel for much of the rest of the design, where it is repeatedly recalled although each time enhanced and reinterpreted through textural, harmonic, and color changes.

The following minuet seems removed from the world of dance. Instead, its canonic opening, abundant details of dynamics, and melodic chromaticism demand that it be taken seriously within the symphonic cycle.

Rosetti's special lyric gift is given full sway in the graceful *Andante ma allegretto* that follows. Designed as a large-scale ternary design (ABA) with a middle section in minor, this movement is particularly distinguished by its fine ensemble balance and the interest of its contrapuntally-conceived inner voices.

A rollicking and fun-like rondo brings the symphony to a robust and convincing conclusion.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in G major (Murray A41 / Kaul I:44)

1. *Adagio – Allegro (Andante)*
2. *Menuetto (Moderato) – Trio*
3. *Allegro (Scherzando)*

We know no more about the **Symphony in G A41** than what is vouchsafed by the only surviving source from the Cistercian monastery at Stams in Austria. According to Sterling E. Murray's research, the Stams copy was prepared by the *regens chori* Johann Anton Paluselli – known within the order as Father Stefan – in around 1780. Murray numbers it among Rosetti's early works.

Whereas the introduction to the *C major Symphony* takes up one third of the movement as a whole, the present introduction gets to the point with the help of a simple cadence and, above all, by means of silence: three separate forte chords modulate from E minor to G major. Throughout the rest of the symphony, too, the musical argument exploits the interplay between major and minor in an altogether idiosyncratic way. In the opening movement's first subject the home key is already weakened by the seventh in the second violins, while repeated cadences ending on the third degree of the scale further undermine the impact of the tonic. After a *Generalpause* at the end of the first subject, a resolute tutti chord in B major ushers in a transition to the second subject that is notable for its rapid interplay of emotions and its tendency to cloud the harmonic writing with modulations to the minor. This tendency proves to be typical of the movement as a whole. The minor tonality follows the wind calls like a shadow, and yet it is ingratiating, warm and humorous rather than gloomy in tone. Characteristic of this serenely melancholic mood is the charming grace of the rhythmically playful gestures. Particularly striking in terms of the overall picture is the rapid interplay of emotions, dynamics and instrumentation. The unmediated entry of a whole range of musical figures has something harlequin-like and mischievous about it. The movement finally dies away in a series of pianissimo interjections with which the music disappears from sight. Starting out from E minor, the *Menuetto* and *Trio* begin by striking a powerfully lyrical note, while the music grows increasingly expansive and self-contained, its mood expressive of yearning rather than drama. The symphony ends with a turbulent *Allegro scherzando* in E minor, its restless forward momentum, massive thrice-repeated cadential chords and impassioned language standing in stark contrast to the opening of the

symphony. With its mixture of sonata form and suite, this final movement is as puzzling as its title “Symphony in G” – after all, the work both begins and ends in the key of E minor.

Christian Binde

Symphony in G minor (Murray A42 / Kaul I:27)

(Composed March 1787)

1. *Vivace*
2. *Menuet fresco: Allegretto – Trio – Menuet*
3. *Andante ma Allegretto*
4. *Finale Capriccio: Allegro scherzante*

Rosetti’s Symphony in G minor (Murray A42; Kaul I:27) is an exceptional work that deserves to take its place alongside the better-known symphonies in this tonality by Haydn and Mozart. The autograph score indicates that it was “composta nel mese di Marzo 1787 à Wallerstein”. Considering its exceptional quality, it is strange that this work was never published in the composer’s lifetime and today is preserved in only two manuscript copies outside Wallerstein – one in Berlin and the other a related copy of 1790 in the Royal Music Collection of London’s British Library.

The symphony was composed for the Wallerstein orchestra. The instrumentation of the symphony conforms to that of the Wallerstein court orchestra during the mid 1780s: strings (including two violas and cello), two oboes, and two horns augmented by a solo flute and a solo bassoon.

Although beginning softly, the first movement is marked by a dramatic intensity and energy created in part through motivic concentration and rhythmic drive. A highpoint is reached in the development where Rosetti adroitly demonstrates his ability to maintain interest through continued manipulation of the opening motive while exploring distant and colorful tonal regions. Throughout this movement the listener is struck by the careful deployment of dynamics. In 1784, only a few years before this symphony was written, the critic Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart wrote that in the Wallerstein orchestra, “the finest gradations of tone, often virtually unnoticeable, are especially due to Rosetti’s often pedantic conscientiousness”. Several critics of the period acknowledged the precise execution of the Wallerstein orchestra, and even Haydn is reputed to have remarked that no orchestra played his symphonies with such precision.

Although still in minor, the minuet offers a brighter mood, sweeping away some of the intensity of the work’s opening. Rosetti, in fact, has emphasized his intent by labeling the minuet “fresco”. A coy trio terminates in a quiet and unassuming manner.

The *Andante ma Allegretto* in B flat major is one of those soft lyric statements for which Rosetti was so well known. Here one can also appreciate his considerable skill at linking ideas to insure a smooth and uninterrupted flow of sound.

As a finale Rosetti constructs an exciting and energetic capriccio which brings the symphony to an optimistic conclusion in major.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in B flat major (Murray A43 / Kaul I:19)

(Composed July 1782)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Andante*
3. *Capriccio. Allegro non presto*

After his triumphant breakthrough in Paris, Rosetti returned to Wallerstein in May 1782 and immediately set to work on commissions he had obtained in France. The Symphony in B flat major (Murray A43; Kaul I:19) was already complete in July 1782. It was published by Sieber in Paris together with its sister work, the Symphony in D major (Murray A21; Kaul I:20), which bears the remark “Du Repertoire du Concert Spirituel”. Its three-movement form reflects the symphonic fashion prevailing in Paris at the time.

Rosetti seems to follow two compositional principles in this symphony. First, the main themes of all three movements are derived from arpeggiated triads; secondly, every means of achieving special tone colours is exploited. The preference given to the upper registers of the strings and oboes and use of horns in high B flat results in an unusually bright basic sound which, set against the bass section of the orchestra, creates a fascinatingly broad sound spectrum. The frequent use of unison passages in the sonata-form first movement leads to an effective contrast between energy-laden and lyrical sections.

Taking the form of a theme and four variations, the second movement derives special charm from muted strings playing *pianissimo*. Its subtle dynamic nuances, unexpected modulations as far afield as E flat minor and even a double-bass solo must have astonished the Paris audience.

Headed “Capriccio”, the third movement features in its middle section the amusing idea of presenting every possible variant of a simple arpeggiated triad. It appears in unison, it is passed note for note from one orchestral section to the other, it is played solo, softly, loudly, in the major and in the minor, it is heard in fugato form and even as the introductory motif of the subsidiary theme. A simple *pianissimo* cadence in the strings seems to announce a surprisingly quiet end to the symphony – and one without a coda. It therefore comes as a shock when the coda bursts out *fortissimo* in the whole orchestra, with dissonant diminished chords and very remote harmonies that hold the listener in suspense until the home key of B flat major is finally reached right at the end.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in B flat major (Murray A45 / Kaul I:14)

(Composed between 1773 and 1776)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Menuet. Moderato*
3. *Larghetto*
4. *Allegro*

The Symphony in B flat major (Murray A45; Kaul I:14) composed between 1773 and 1776 numbers among the six symphonies mentioned by Rosetti to his prince in March 1782 while announcing their printing as an important result of his Paris stay: “Here I have had engraved with a most humble dedication to Your Most Serene Highness six symphonies and some other pieces besides which are really perfect and of which I will send a copy by way of Gardener Grieb to Your Highness.” These symphonies very popular during that time appealingly combine melodies of folk character with clear formal design. A contemporary reviewer also described the quality of these works as follows: “Rosetti’s symphonies have so much of the new about them and what catches the ear’s attention as something often surprising, together with a great deal of variety.”

The first movement designed as a sonata-form movement already creates a cheerful basic mood. Its first theme, consists of a unison of the strings in which Rosetti roguishly leaves the listener in the dark about the metrical emphases and of a motif of pastoral character featuring the oboes and horns. The dialogue constructed here between wind and string instruments serves as a structural model for the whole movement. The second theme distinguished by saucy inserts on the part of the bassoon is

also marked by a basic mood of pastoralism. The forte passages of the whole orchestra stand in sharp contrast to the second theme and suggest downright boldness with their employment of ostinato figures and chromaticism.

The wind-string dialogue is continued in the following *Menuet*, with the expressively designed *Trio* standing in contrast to it.

The independence of the winds as equal partners of the strings is also maintained in the *Larghetto*, which entrusts its powerful principal motif to the winds alone. In the development section of this extended movement the composer seems to get caught up in the delicate web of a transparent string part, until the sudden entry of the wind motif introduces the concluding part of the movement.

The last movement depicts a wild chase with its lost 6/8 time *à la chasse* and with the hunting fanfares presented by the horns and oboes. After a surprising viola solo the movement unexpectedly finds some rest in four inserted adagio measures. It is from these measures that the oboe's farewell song finally takes shape: end of the chase, silence.

Johannes Moesus

Symphony in B flat major (Murray A48 / Kaul I:31)

(Composed 1790 or 1791)

1. *Vivace*

2. *Andante*

3. *Allegro*

Although the Wallerstein Kapelle provided Rosetti with rich opportunities to develop his musical language, his life at court was plagued by financial problems. In January 1789, Carl August Westenholtz, "Kapellmeister" to the Mecklenburg-Schwerin "Hofkapelle" in Ludwigslust, died. Seeing this as a potential solution to many of his practical problems, Rosetti applied for the post. Duke Friedrich Franz I. must have been particularly eager to secure his services as the salary he offered Rosetti was well in excess of what had been paid to Westenholtz. In August of 1789 Rosetti traveled to Ludwigslust to begin his service to the Mecklenburg-Schwerin court.

The Symphony in B flat major (Murray A48; Kaul I:31) was composed for this ensemble for the Ludwigslust orchestra. It dates about 1790 or 1791 and was probably the last symphony Rosetti composed. No autograph score exists; the only source is a set of parts prepared for Ludwigslust by the court trumpeter and copyist, Karl Siegismund Jäppelt. Unlike the symphonies designed for Wallerstein, this work is cast in three-movement format without a minuet.

The opening *Vivace* is laid out in a clear sonata form with few structural surprises. Most of the exposition vacillates between stormy passages for the full ensemble and quieter lyric melodies given over to wind sonorities. The overall effect is strongly reminiscent of Schubert's early symphonies. One special feature that colors this movement is the prominence of solo passages for clarinets, most of which appear to be designed for a professional soloist. According to court records, there were no clarinetists on the payroll of the Mecklenburg-Schwerin "Hofkapelle" during Rosetti's tenure there. One conceivable explanation is that Rosetti may have intended the clarinet parts in this symphony for visiting performers. Reasonable candidates for this theory might be Franz Maintzer, a violinist and clarinetist, who was music director to the "Graf von Schwerin in Schwerinsburg bei Anklam", and his son. In 1790 the Maintzers are known to have performed for Duke Friedrich Franz I. Maintzer's own patron, Count von Schwerin, was near death, and Maintzer was trying to locate a future position for himself and his son. Perhaps Rosetti composed the clarinet parts in this symphony specifically for the Maintzers. The expressive *Andante* is the sort of movement that Rosetti was particularly fond of in his

later career. The finale, designated *Allegro assai*, is filled with surprises. After a fast and furious opening Rosetti draws on abrupt and sometimes surprising changes in dynamic, rhythm, texture and orchestration.

Sterling E. Murray

Symphony in B flat major (Murray A49 / Kaul I:25)

(Composed July 1785)

1. *Vivace*
2. *Andante*
3. *Menuet: Allegretto – Trio – Menuet*
4. *Finale: Allegro non Presto*

According to the autograph score the Symphony in B flat major (Murray A49; Kaul I:25) was completed in July 1785. One of Rosetti's most popular symphonies, today this work is preserved in a dozen manuscript copies as well as a print issued sometime after the composer's death by Johann André in Offenbach am Main. It is also known in an oboe quintet arrangement made by Franz Rosiniack, an oboist of the Fürstenberg Hofkapelle in Donaueschingen.

The symphony was composed for the Wallerstein orchestra. The instrumentation of the symphony conforms to that of the Wallerstein court orchestra during the mid 1780s: strings (including two violas and cello), two oboes, and two horns augmented by a solo flute and a solo bassoon.

Cast in a normal sonata form, the first movement is distinguished by extreme motivic economy and a tight tonal organization as well as by several structural surprises such as the abrupt pause in the midst of the development.

The *Andante* in F major begins in a quiet manner with the strings alone. This theme is then alternated with two more turbulent sections in minor.

As with the E flat major symphony, this minuet features a *Harmoniemusik* trio.

The finale is reminiscent of Haydn, whose symphonies were well known at Wallerstein and often performed by the court orchestra under Rosetti's direction.

Sterling E. Murray

Piano concertos

Piano Concerto G major (Murray C2 / Kaul III:1)

(Composed 1781)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Romance. Adagio non tanto*
3. *Rondeau. Allegretto*

Rosetti's Concerto for Keyboard and Orchestra in G major (Murray C2, Kaul III:1) was probably completed at Wallerstein early in 1781. It was one of Rosetti's most popular compositions, appearing in three different prints during the composer's lifetime. This work appears to have been designed for a public audience rather than specifically for the Wallerstein court. In its instrumentation, for example, flutes replace the usual oboes, and – contrary to the normal procedure at Wallerstein – there is only one viola part.

The opening *Allegro* is the most extensive movement in the cycle. After an initial exposition for the orchestra alone, the soloist enters and takes up much of the thematic material first heard played by the orchestra, often subjecting individual ideas to reinterpretation. The structural logic of this movement is clear. The composer follows the traditional ritornello structure, although inflecting it with convincing structural features often associated with the sonata principle.

The second movement is a *Romance* in the sub-dominant key. Like many “Romances” in instrumental music of this period this movement unfolds as a three-part (ABA) design. The orchestra is kept in the background allowing the soloist the full spotlight. The abrupt shift to the parallel minor that announces the contrasting middle section looks ahead to a similar gesture in the final movement. An improvised cadenza draws attention to the return of the tonic and a faithful recall of the opening section.

The last movement is fashioned as a five-part rondo: ABACA. The inclusion of a minuet as the second contrasting unit of the rondo demonstrates even at this early stage in the composer’s career his search for unusual interpretations of traditional structural designs.

Sterling E. Murray

Piano Concerto G Major (Murray C3 / Kaul III:2)

(Composed around 1780–1781)

1. *Allegro con brio*
2. *Adagio non troppo*
3. *Rondo. Allegretto*

When the Speyer music publisher, Heinrich Bossler, published the Concerto for Keyboard and Orchestra in G major (Murray C3, Kaul III:2) in 1783 the title page indicated the composer as “Madame de SCHADEN & Msr. ROSETTI”. According to Gerber (*Neues historisch-biographisches Lexikon der Tonkünstler*, Leipzig 1812–1813), Nanette von Schaden composed the keyboard part and Rosetti provided the orchestration. While this may have been the way it worked, it seems unlikely. There is no question that Rosetti composed the orchestral parts, which are vintage Rosetti, including many of his favourite orchestral gestures. The keyboard part, which is closely integrated with the orchestral accompaniment, is challenging, making greater demands on the performer than typical of the normal dilettantish keyboard music of the day. As Nanette von Schaden was reputed to be an accomplished performer with an exceptional command of technique and a composition pupil of Rosetti, it would be denying logic to dismiss her participation in the creation of the key board part. She probably supplied ideas about figuration and technical passages – in several instances expanding on Rosetti’s basic conception. In addition, a donation by Nanette’s husband, Baron Franz Michael von Schaden, who held an important appointment at the Wallerstein court, might as well have convinced Rosetti to share the official authorship of this piano concerto with Nanette von Schaden.

Whatever the chain of events that produced this composition, the Concerto in G major (Murray C3; Kaul III:2) is an exceptional piece of music. The brilliance of the opening movement is matched by a remarkable lyricism and emotional intensity in the slow movement and capped off by a delightful concluding rondo that stretches one’s imagination while staying well within the bounds of decorum.

Sterling E. Murray

Piano Concerto in B major (Murray C4 / Kaul III:3)

1. *Allegro brillante*

2. *Adagio*

3. *Finale. Andante con variazioni*

Rosetti's Piano Concerto in B flat major (Murray C4; Kaul III:3), like its G-major companion (Murray C3; Kaul III:2), was composed in the late 1780s in cooperation with his gifted pianist-friend, Anna von Schaden. The two works are probably his final contributions to the genre of the instrumental concerto. Anna von Schaden, the wife of the Wallerstein court councillor and Augsburg council-director Joseph von Schaden, was a piano pupil of Ignaz von Beecke, music director at the Wallerstein court, and allegedly took composition lessons from Rosetti. Until she moved to Augsburg in early 1787 she participated in the court concerts on a regular basis. The composer Johann Friedrich Reichardt, royal chapel-master to the Prussian court, visited her in Augsburg in 1791 and called her "by far the best female pianist" he had ever met, adding that "perhaps no virtuoso surpasses her in dexterity and sureness of touch". The title page of the printed edition of this concerto, published by Bossler in 1789, lists "Madame de Schaden & Msr. Rosetti" as co-authors. According to Gerber's *Neues Tonkünstlerlexikon* (1814), Schaden was responsible for the piano part and Rosetti for the orchestra. While the latter is undoubtedly true, Schaden's role in the creation of the challenging piano part, which places far greater demands on the player than the typical amateur literature of the day, must remain a matter of speculation. In any event, it seems unlikely that she created the piano part wholly independently, as Gerber would have it. Rather, we may assume that Rosetti, who apparently had an indifferent command of the instrument, sought the advice of this seasoned practitioner in matters of keyboard technique – a situation for which music history provides a great many examples without such "advisory functions" ever being mentioned on the title page.

The propulsively energetic opening movement, marked *Allegro brillante*, is laid out in sonata form, its tirelessly flowing strings of 16ths in the piano contrasting with cantabile passages to dominate large parts of the movement. Thanks to Rosetti's adroit orchestration, the powerful sections of dynamic contrasts are just as convincing as the lyrical passages with their emotional depth.

The heart of the work, the slow second movement, opens with mysterious harmonies already foreshadowing early romanticism. Jagged, gloomy and brooding, the G-minor *Adagio* is almost akin to a dramatic stage scene. In its bleak austerity this impressive movement is virtually unique in Rosetti's oeuvre. How much more he might have contributed to posterity if he had only been given more time!

In sharp contrast to the slow movement, the finale is a set of variations on a folk theme at a sauntering tempo in which the orchestra and the soloist join hands in a merry and playful round-dance. Once again the pianist is allowed to display instrumental brilliance with virtuosic aplomb.

Günther Grünsteudel

Symphonie concertantes

Symphonie concertante in D major for 2 Violins and Orchestra (Murray C14 / Kaul I:36)

1. *Allegro maestoso*

2. *Rondo. Allegretto non tanto*

Paris was introduced to the *symphonie concertante* – a concerto for two or more solo instruments and orchestra – by Carl Stamitz in 1773 and the form enjoyed great popularity among Paris audiences. It is therefore not surprising that Rosetti became interested in it whilst staying in Paris. His *Symphonie concertante* in D major (Murray C14) is for two violins and orchestra. It was published by the firm of Sieber.

His two-movement *Symphonie concertante* Rosetti uses a relatively long orchestral introduction to present the principal and subsidiary themes in a manner comparable to the exposition section in a symphonic movement. The solo parts alternate sections of thematic development with virtuoso display, solo passages with subtle dialogue and harmonious interplay.

In elated 6/8 time, the other movement is a rondo “à la chasse”, a form Rosetti frequently chose for final movements. The solo oboes and horns in the middle part of the orchestral ritornello reflect a horn idyll.

This is the only “concertante” Rosetti wrote for two violins. His *symphonies concertantes* for two hand horns and orchestra were better known.

Johannes Moesus

Violin Concertos

Rosetti probably wrote six concertos for solo violin and orchestra, and five of these works are extant in full. It is not known for whom he wrote them – perhaps for the violinist Johann Anton Hutti (1751/52–85), who in October 1773 moved from the Stuttgart court ensemble to a richly salaried post in Wallerstein. His own violin concertos, offered by the Breitkopf publishing company during the 1780s, reveal a technically well-versed and capable soloist. The fact that Rosetti’s Violin Concerto in F major (Murray C11) has been transmitted in two part copies, one under Rosetti’s name and the other, with minor modifications, under Hutti’s name, may point to cooperation between Rosetti and Hutti.

In March 1774 an already internationally recognized virtuoso was appointed to the Wallerstein court ensemble in the person of Anton Janitsch (ca. 1752–1812), and he also may have exerted influence on the composition of Rosetti’s violin concertos. As a child prodigy and the young student of the eminently renowned Italian violinist Gaetano Pugnani (1731–98) in Turin and of Karl Joseph Toeschi (1731–88), the concertmaster of the Mannheim court orchestra, Janitsch led the life of a traveling virtuoso already as a young man. In Wallerstein too he immediately created a sensation. As Schubart wrote in 1775, “Janitsch is the first virtuoso of this court. He conjures away on his violin everything that one places in front of him, and he is the greatest reader that I know.” Already beginning in March 1776 Janitsch again found himself on various travels. He constantly encountered financial difficulties and made his remorseful return to Wallerstein in 1782, only then to be dismissed for good in 1785. In 1796 he was appointed concertmaster for life of the orchestra of Count Ludwig von Bentheim-Steinfurt, who “has much to object about his wild and rough manner, but he nevertheless continues to remain a great note devourer”. He died in Burgsteinfurt in 1812.

Johannes Moesus

Violin Concerto No. 1 in D major (Murray C6 / Kaul III:9)

1. *Allegro moderato*
2. *Adagio poco Andante*
3. *Rondeau. Moderato*

Rosetti’s Violin Concerto in D major (Murray C6; Kaul III:9) is thought to have been composed in cooperation with Hutti during the 1770s and recalls Italian models. The wind instrumentation with two oboes and two horns corresponds to the solo concerto standard of the time.

After a very dynamic, sonorous beginning the orchestral introduction presents a series of catchy melodic ideas divided by “Mannheim” crescendo passages. The solo violin draws on the thematic material of the orchestral introduction and begins an animated interplay between thematically bound passages and highly virtuosic ones in which the tonal and technical resources of the solo instrument

are revealed in full and over its whole range. Unusual sound mixtures such as the combination of double stops on the solo violin with the horns make the hearer sit up and listen. With its 310 measures the movement is unusually long, and its parts in minor keys in particular have a special atmospheric effect.

This effect corresponds to the expressivity of the second movement in D minor, which is accompanied only by the strings and makes for a thoroughly Italian impression and in which the solo violin develops a wealth of lyrical cantilenas.

The rondo theme of the third movement is of folk character and recalls melodies from Rosetti's native Bohemia. The component sections are again stamped, especially in the minor parts, by very expressive melodic parts and passages with high technical demands. The movement concludes with a coda employing the winds in a very effective manner.

Johannes Moesus

Violin Concerto No. 2 in D minor (Murray C9 / Kaul III:5)

1. Allegro maestoso

2. Adagio

3. Rondeau. Moderato

Together with the Horn Concertos in D minor (Murray C38 and C39), Symphony in G minor (Murray A42), and String Quartet in C minor (Murray D12), the Violin Concerto in D minor (Murray C9; Kaul III:5) numbers among the few works by Rosetti in a minor key. It may have been composed sometime around his Paris stay. Influences from Ignaz Fränzl (1736–1811), a violin virtuoso and the concertmaster of the Mannheim court orchestra are possible; he celebrated great successes in Paris and, like Rosetti, published with Sieber in Paris. The Storm-and-Stress character of the first movement, however, would have appealed directly to the Wallerstein concertmaster Anton Janitsch, who, as can be gathered from reports by his contemporaries, must have been not only a virtuoso and temperamental violinist but also an eccentric one. Schubart wrote, "His solo is strong, rich in difficult passages; and his recital on the whole possesses full clarity; even amid the storm of fantasy he is not swept over the banks of tact". Writing of his encounter with Janitsch in Salzburg in 1778, Leopold Mozart recalled Antonio Lolli (ca. 1730–1802), the concertmaster of the Stuttgart court orchestra, "Janitsch has the manner of Lolli, but the adagio is much better. I am simply not an admirer of such horrors: velocities at which one can hardly bring out everything with the half tone of the violin and, so to speak, can hardly touch the violin with the bow and must practically play in the air." It is perhaps no mere coincidence that one of the two extant copies of this concerto was prepared in 1785 and today is contained in the holdings of the Library of the Prince zu Bentheim-Tecklenburg (in the University of Münster Library): in 1785 Janitsch had left Wallerstein, perhaps with this concerto in his baggage, and ended up settling in the County of Bentheim-Steinfurt.

The long orchestral introduction typical of Rosetti in the first movement is dominated by a wide-ranging first theme, which, in turn, is followed by appealing major and minor motifs in entertaining alternation. The solo violin begins with a new motif and in its alternation of melodic and virtuoso passages exhibits its own unique compositional signature.

The simple D major theme of the winds at the beginning of the second movement, which is in the manner of a romance, is embellished by the solo violin. Here Rosetti reveals an atmospheric wealth establishing his credentials as a master of the sensitive, intimate tone. The profoundly emotional romances of the coming years anticipating the world of romanticism have their origin here.

The concluding *Rondeau* in D major, with the D minor of the first movement recurring only in the episodes, successfully combines motifs of dance stamp from Bohemia with virtuoso passage work and bariolage effects, thus paying refined and varied tribute to Parisian musical taste. Toward the end of the movement one is briefly reminded of Vivaldi's *Seasons*, until here too a blaring wind part powerfully concludes the movement.

Johannes Moesus

Oboe Concertos

“Les hoboïs et les Cors sont l'ame de l'orgueſtre, et pour des bon hoboïs nous aurons de la difficulté” (Oboes and horns are the soul of the orchestra, and precisely because of good oboes we will have difficulty). The later court music director Ignaz von Beecke (1733–1803) wrote these words in March 1772 in a letter from Paris to his employer, the Hereditary Count Kraft Ernst zu Oettingen-Wallerstein (1748–1802), who had begun to think about the formation of a court chapel while anticipating his inheritance of the rank of ruling prince in August 1773. And in fact the standard instrumentation of many orchestral works from the second half of the eighteenth century consisted of two oboes, two horns, strings, and bassoons reinforcing the string basses. The two first soloists of the court ensemble under formation since 1773 were Franz Xaver Fürall (ca. 1750–80) from Vienna and Josef Fiala (1748–1816) from Lochowitz (Lochovice) in Central Bohemia. After Fiala's departure in the spring of 1777, Markus Berwein from Salzburg, who like Fiala was well-acquainted with the Mozart family, was engaged as the second oboist.

After Fürall's early death Kraft Ernst was again able to obtain the services of a “virtuoso on the oboe” for his ensemble in the person of Gottfried Klier (1757–1800), a native of Prague. Two oboe concertos by Antonio Rosetti (Murray C29 and C36) extant in the former court library are marked “Ex Rebus Gottfridt Klier”. From an inventory of musical instruments compiled in February 1785 and extant in the prince's private archive it may be gathered that Klier played an oboe by the Dresden instrument maker Jakob Friedrich Grundmann. An oboe by Grundmann continues to be found even today in the holdings of the House of Oettingen-Wallerstein. It is in a request made by Klier to Prince Kraft Ernst for the adjustment of his salary to meet those of the first bassoonist Christoph Hoppius and the two hornists Joseph Nagel and Franz Zwierzina that we first learn of the oboist's severe illness, which in the end would lead to his complete abandonment of his instrument. In August 1788 the *Musikalische Real-Zeitung* reported, “Mr. Glier is dispensed on account of his chest but chose another instrument”, presumably the violin. Like Klier, not a few oboists of the time enjoyed only relatively short careers on their instrument. Many died during their young years, and others, like Fiala, who ended up turning to the violoncello and viola da gamba, had to seek another field of activity. In his *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart wrote about the high demands placed on oboists and their health as well, “For this instrument a lot of feeling and especially the finest guiding of the breath is required. He who is not the master of his breathing throughout some measures, he who suffers the most minor damage to his chest, let him not try his skill on the oboe.”

With Rosetti as its conductor, the Wallerstein court chapel gained unanticipated esteem to which the highly qualified wind instrumentalists, most of them from Bohemia, made their own special contribution. Rosetti composed solo concertos not only for the hornists and the first bassoonists but also for the oboists and was apparently also known as a composer beyond Wallerstein's borders for his music for this demanding instrument. The Ansbach court violinist Johann Friedrich Kiesewetter (1732–84), for example, wrote to Rosetti: “For a long time I have been looking forward to the oboe concertos most kindly promised to me here. [...] In case the bassoon concerto only a short time ago sent to Mr. Oboist Walther might nicely be made applicable to the oboe, I would like to ask to have

such sent over to me too; at the same time, however, that you immediately undertake work on the composing of three new oboe concertos with fine rondeaux and melodious adagios [...].”

Johannes Moesus

Oboe Concerto in C major (Murray C29 / Kaul III:32)

(Composed around 1781/82)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Adagio poco Andante*
3. *Rondeau. Allegretto*

The Oboe Concerto in C major (Murray C29; Kaul III:32) must have been for Gottfried Klier; the part copy formerly in the holdings of the court library (and today in the Augsburg University library, 02/III 4 ? 4° 438) was in his possession, as the note “Ex Rebus Gottfridt Klier” on the title page demonstrates. This concerto composed around 1781/82 had previously been regarded as unplayable because several parts were lacking, Helmut Scheck was first able to find another source for the work from the music library of the Brüdergemeine in Zeist and today preserved in the Utrecht Archive (formerly the Rijksarchief Utrecht: inventory number 1265). He collated this source with a copy of the solo part in the Mecklenburg Land library in Schwerin (shelf number: Mus. 1341/2) and the Wallerstein part copy in order to prepare a complete score. A wind instrumentation with two oboes and horns each predominates in most of Rosetti’s solo concertos, but in his oboe concertos (apart from the Concerto in C major Murray C31) the composer always selected the tonally contrast-richer variant with flutes and horns. The concerto designed in three movements (as would not otherwise be expected) is the most extensive of Rosetti’s oboe concertos.

The long orchestral introduction characteristic of Rosetti in the first *Allegro assai* movement arouses fascination with its variety of instrumental (e.g. little solos for the flutes and violas), melodic, and harmonic ideas. The principle of motivic sequencing predominates, even if incipient efforts toward the development of two main themes in the manner of the classical sonata form are in evidence. A unison motif full of energy and inserted before the melodiously broadly developed main theme assumes a structuring function even when transposed to other keys. The virtuoso solo part with its expansive melodic lines, fast shifts in articulation and dynamics, broad leaps exploiting the whole tonal range of the oboe, and fast figure work calls for great technical mastery and verges on the limits of what was possible on the instrument of that time. A dramatic, also harmonically sharpened outburst in the development section ebbs away in a surprising general rest before the orchestra, quietly and almost withdrawn into itself, leads back to the initial motif in C major signaling the beginning of the recapitulation, in which Rosetti repeatedly also displays the oboe’s humorous sides.

The *Adagio poco Andante* slow movement in the fifth-related key of G minor is marked by tragic expression and melancholy, Here Rosetti seems to anticipate the expressive breadth of the early nineteenth century with deeply felt, almost romantic emotion, The major middle section suggesting brightness and optimism can only in passing make us forget the subdued basic mood of the movement.

A rondeau on the large scale with an *Allegretto* theme of popular musical style is heard again in the tonic key of C major and forms the merry and animated conclusion. In the virtuoso solo part Rosetti employs all the possibilities of the instrument in order to present the capabilities of the soloist in the best light in what is an entertaining fireworks display of technical and performative finesses. A fanfare motif of the orchestra introduced in the first minor part of the rondo becomes an organizing element in the clearly structured course of the movement and leads the concerto to a conclusion of magnificent sound.

Oboe Concerto in C major (Murray C30 / Kaul III:27)

1. *Allegro*

2. *Adagio*

3. *Rondeau. Allegro*

The *Allegro* first movement of the Oboe Concerto in C major (Murray C30; Kaul III:27) is marked by fresh invention and youthful vitality; in it the principle of motivic sequencing borrowed from the baroque concerto continues to predominate; presumably this concerto likewise instrumented with two flutes, two horns, and strings (with divided violas) was a relatively early work. It is not known whether or not the part copy preserved in the Oettingen-Wallerstein library was also owned by Gottfried Klier or originated earlier during the time of Franz Xaver Fürall; there is a second copy in the Prince Thurn und Taxis Court Library in Regensburg. After an entertaining and mirthful orchestra prelude in which a flute solo also cannot fail to appear the solo oboe draws on the introductory theme and varies it in virtuoso style. The solo part is distinguished by a variety of nuances and requires a soloist of great flexibility. Again and again Rosetti's subtle humor and Bohemian wit appear to shine forth. The extended virtuoso triplet chains in the minor domain are of special appeal in the middle section before the soloist once again has the opportunity to demonstrate his virtuoso capabilities and delight in playing in the recapitulation.

The highly atmospheric *Adagio* in the fifth-related F major key makes a strong impression with its songlike figurations but also sounds dramatic tones. The expansive melody lines of the middle part are deeply felt and show us Rosetti as a gifted melodist.

The *Allegro* rondo in on upbeat mood and again in a clear structure is the basis of the solo part, which here too is extremely demanding and again requires the greatest degree of instrumental mastery. A simplified version of measures 160–62 added in Gottfried Klier's hand in the Wallerstein manuscript indicates that here even this versed oboist found the technical demands to verge on the limits. After a spirited hunting fanfare of the united wind instruments – again thwarting listening expectations – the movement and concerto conclude in *pianissimo*.

Johannes Moesus

Oboe Concerto in G major (Murray C36 / Kaul III:30)

1. *Allegro molto maestoso*

2. *Adagio*

3. *Rondeau. Allegretto moderato*

“It is Rosetti (...) who has improved the concerto form, cut endless ritornellos down to size, appropriately interposed little moments of repose for solo instrument, combined brilliant display with elegance and set an instructive example in his compositions. In what we call instrumental practice, he has a commendable degree of thoroughness, and puts to shame the Kapellmeister of many a larger court.” This evaluation appeared in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz der Teutschen Philharmonischen Gesellschaft*, and might well apply to the Concerto for oboe and orchestra in G major (Murray C36; Kaul III:30) presented here.

Rosetti presumably composed it in the years 1781–1782 for the first oboist in the court orchestra of Wallerstein, Gottfried Klier (1757–1800), a highly regarded Bohemian virtuoso. The orchestra could boast of having several other Bohemian wind virtuosos besides, and with them in mind Rosetti composed numerous solo concertos for flute, clarinet and bassoon as well as for one and two horns. The Concerto for oboe and orchestra in G major is a typical example of his complete familiarity with

the technical and lyrical potential of the instrument. Like all solo concertos of the Classical period, the work is in three movements. An extended first movement in modified sonata form is followed by a lyrical slow movement which, though Rosetti does not explicitly designate it as such, is really a “romance” in the French style.

The third movement, a rondo, is natural and fresh and derives its substance from Bohemian folk music. Instead of the wind section comprising two oboes and two horns found in most of Rosetti’s other concertos, the composer here chose the more richly contrasting combination of two flutes and two horns, endowing the solo instrument with the “sole rights” to produce oboe sound.

Johannes Moesus

Flute Concertos

Flute Concerto in G major (Murray C24 / Kaul III:19)

1. *Allegro con molto spirit*
2. *Largo*
3. *Tempo moderato*

According to the Rosetti specialist Sterling E. Murray, the **Flute Concerto in G major C24** is one of the composer’s early works (“Not later than 1779, ca. 1773–1776”). There is little more that we can say about this extremely charming little jewel of a work. “Fortunately!” the reader may be tempted to exclaim, for the lack of facts gives free rein to our imagination – as well as to speculations. The concerto’s only known source is in the Court Library of the Princes of Thurn und Taxis in Regensburg. Rosetti’s employer, Prince Kraft Ernst of Oettingen-Wallerstein, married Marie Therese von Thurn und Taxis in 1774. She was a woman of clearly angelic qualities. “Exquisitely beautiful of person, but still more beautiful of spirit – 17 years old, full of innocence, kindness, and valiant spirit.” This description of Marie Therese by one of her contemporaries could have served as a model for the character of Rosetti’s *Flute Concerto*: in the outer movements the orchestral sonorities created by the use of strings and high-lying horns convey a light and weightless atmosphere, while the flute, hovering above the orchestra, seems playfully linked to the foundations, which lovingly support the weight of the solo figurations.

“It is impossible to imagine anything lighter and more radiant or more honey-toned than this man’s music.”

None of Rosetti’s contemporaries was better qualified to describe the composer’s qualities than Christian Daniel Schubart. In the slow movement, the solo flute, playing in an unusually low register, seems warm, heartfelt and inward-looking. Rosetti’s decision to adopt the form of a Baroque concerto makes sense in that it reflects the idea of an idealized figure, namely, the constancy and fidelity traditionally conveyed by the older form. The typical passages in which the flute is accompanied only by a bass line confirm Körner’s remark that “the mere outline of a figure, masterfully sketched on paper, is sufficient to provide laws for our fantasy”.

Christian Binde

Flute Concerto in G major (Murray C28 / Kaul III:21)

1. *Allegro molto*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Rondo. Allegretto*

The Concerto for Flute in G major (Murray C28; Kaul III:21), which also exists in an F major arrangement for oboe, is one of the thirteen surviving flute concertos Rosetti composed for the most part in the seventeen-seventies. Rosetti owed his special familiarity with the lyrical and virtuoso potential of wind instruments largely to the court orchestra of Wallerstein, whose outstanding wind players mainly came from Bohemia.

The typically long orchestral introduction to the first movement has a surprisingly predominant subsidiary theme; after a sudden unison passage in F major and a brief development section, it reappears in the home key of G major. The cheerful motif in thirds in the oboes and horns at the end of the orchestral introduction returns repeatedly, providing “brief, convenient moments of repose for the soloist”.

The extensive second movement is admirable for its expressiveness, contrasts of timbre, harmonic climaxes, intimacy and drama. The introductory bar, which consists of three chords and also frames the orchestra’s lyrical prelude, is an important structural element in this movement.

The concluding rondo sparkles with *joie de vivre*. The harmonically interesting interludes provide the soloist every opportunity for virtuosic display; a roguish dialogue between the solo instrument and the orchestra announces the return of the rondo theme each time.

Johannes Moesus

Horn Concertos

Under Rosetti’s leadership the court ensemble of the Principality of Oettingen-Wallerstein gained undreamed-of esteem. In 1784–85 Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart wrote in his *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* concerning the court orchestra that soon would be mentioned in the same breath with the famous Mannheim Orchestra, “Concerning the renown of the Wallerstein orchestra, the fact also merits mention that here the musical color has been much more precisely determined than in any other orchestra”. The court orchestra owed its “musical color” not least to its highly qualified wind instrumentalists, most of whom were from Bohemia. Widespread musical talent and intensive musical training at the schools operated by the Jesuits in Bohemia had produced numerous musicians and in particular capable wind instrumentalists: “Singing schools were founded even in the villages there, and the wind instruments in particular were practiced with such zeal that in this area the Bohemians until today outdo not only Italy but also the rest of Germany.” This is how Schubart described this phenomenon, and thus most of the Bohemian hornists in the Wallerstein court ensemble were also recognized masters on their instrument. During the ensemble’s zenith a total of a mere four instrumentalists performed in set duos, with each duo consisting of a high hornist and a low hornist. After the end of his service of the Bohemian Johann Türschmidt (1725–1800), “one of the best hornists of his time” (Gerber), and his no-less-famous colleague Johannes Nisle (1735–88), who “hardly has his equal in the second horn” (Schubart), the Wallerstein court music director Ignaz von Beecke around 1780 hired Joseph Nagel (1752–1802) and Franz Zwierzina (1751–1825), two highly regarded Bohemian hornists. Both numbered among the best-paid musicians of the court ensemble with their salaries of 475 guldens each. They had learned the novel “stopping technique” from Anton Joseph Hampel (1710–71) in Dresden, and it enabled them to play more than merely the natural tones on their horns, which still were without valves. Rosetti must have written most of his horn concertos, sixteen for one horn and seven for two horns, for Nagel and Zwierzina, who without a doubt had at their disposal capabilities such as “excellent lipping, swift tonguing, proper intonation, long-held breathing, and sweet-melancholic feeling” (Schubart). In response to the exceptional capabilities of these two hornists, concertos for two horns were composed not only by Rosetti but also by Joseph Fiala, Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Johann Georg Feldmayr, and Friedrich Witt. If the execution of these

concertos on valve horns today commands the greatest respect and requires masters in this instrumental field, then they hardly seem imaginable on horns without valves.

Johannes Moesus

Horn Concerto in d minor (Murray C39 / Kaul deest)

1. *Allegro moderato*
2. *Romance – Adagio agitato*
3. *Rondo – Allegretto*

Anyone who nowadays mentions a Horn Concerto in D minor can really be thinking only of Rosetti's **Horn Concerto C38**, a work that was published by Johann Peter Spehr in Braunschweig in 1790. After all, it is one of the staples of the horn repertory and has often been recorded. Relatively unknown is the fact that there is a companion piece, the *Horn Concerto in D minor C39*, which was published by Sieber in Paris in 1786. C38 is a variant of the earlier work. The only surviving copy of Sieber's publication is currently held by the Moravian Church in Christiansfeld, Denmark, but is missing the two tutti horn parts and the first oboe. A new edition, published by Robert Ostermeyer of Leipzig, includes a reconstruction of these missing parts on the basis of C38. For the present recording we have for the most part followed the reconstructed version represented by the Ostermeyer edition, the main exception being the slow movement, where we have omitted the first oboe part: instead of an oboe solo at the end of the *Adagio assai*, we have retained the rests which, in our view, have nothing deficient about them. Quite the opposite, in fact: as an expressive device, silence seems to us to be entirely typical of Rosetti's style. Here – as we mentioned at the outset – the listener is required to become actively involved and to fill in the rests with the help of his or her imagination.

From the very first bars the choice of tonality and the drama of the musical language make it clear that we are dealing with great theatre. From every point of view this is an unusual concerto in terms of its dimensions. The emotions expressed by the main themes in the opening movement range from implacable rigour (D minor) to an ebullient love of life (F major) and to playful joviality (A flat major), the various moods linked by transitional passages of great virtuosity and imaginative harmonic writing. The *Adagio assai* is an example of Rosetti's simple and – in the best sense of the term – naive power of expression, forming a heartfelt point of repose before the final movement, which, based on a straightforward rondo theme, develops into a dance that takes to its furthest extreme the ambivalence between naïveté and fate. Rosetti reveals his knowledge of the natural horn and explores to the full not only its rich expressive palette but also its technical opportunities in terms of virtuosity and hand-stopping. We know nothing about the circumstances in which the present piece was written and can only speculate on whether the solo part was composed with a virtuoso such as Giovanni Punto in mind.

Christian Binde

Horn Concerto in E flat major (Murray C48 / Kaul III:37)

1. *Allegro*
2. *Romance. Adagio*
3. *Rondeau. Allegretto*

The Concerto in E flat major (Murray C48; Kaul III:37) with the same orchestral instruments but for a high hornist must have been written in relatively close temporal proximity to the Concerto in E major, presumably at the beginning of the 1780s. May Türschmidt perhaps have ordered it for his partner Palsa? Another possibility is that it was composed in connection with Rosetti's Paris tour in 1781, for it was already issued in further printings by the Boyer publishing company of Paris in 1785.

The entertaining orchestral introduction, structured by motivic sequencing and richly varied, surprisingly begins in piano and emanates a basic lyrical mood continuing through the whole movement, with more animated orchestral tutti livelily standing out from it in forte. The lyrical initial idea is taken up by the solo horn, which repeatedly undertakes surprisingly inserted virtuosic “excursions” into the highest regions. The short development section is distinguished by motivic work and modulations into minor regions. An absolutely endless sixteenth chain toward the end of the recapitulation requires the highest instrumental mastery from the soloist.

The “Romance” in the fifth-related key of B flat major exemplarily illustrates Rosetti’s often-praised pleasant melodic style and in its formal clarity is a model example of this form. Rosetti uses the minor middle section for remarkable harmonic experiments.

The formally clear design of the concluding rondo is also typical of Rosetti; it radiates uncomplicated comfortability and may have been derived motivically from Rosetti’s native Bohemia. The orchestral wind section also makes a short solo appearance here. Harmonic and motivic wealth is spread out in the couplet interludes, and the soloist repeatedly has the opportunity to demonstrate his exceptional virtuoso capabilities.

Johannes Moesus

Horn Concerto in E major (Murray C50 / Kaul III:44)

1. Allegro

2. Romance. Adagio non tanto

3. Rondo. Allegretto

The Concerto in E major (Murray C50; Kaul III:44) might be from a relatively early compositional phase of Rosetti’s, for the first violins are mainly the bearers of the thematic material: the only task left to the rest of the string orchestra is that of harmonic support and accompaniment, and the violas are not yet divided here – this in contrast to Rosetti’s later Wallerstein orchestral works. The orchestral winds in the standard instrumentation with two oboes and two horns may supply color but are not the bearers of independent musical material. In formal respects, it is the principle of motivic sequencing recalling the baroque concerto that predominates.

The already typical long introduction begins with a forte chord in the tutti of the orchestra, followed by an energetic unison introductory motif. A second main motif is lent the character of a song and as a tender and fragile effect contrasting with the robust introductory ideas. The harmonic shift repeatedly encountered as a moment of surprise in Rosetti is also to be found here: an accentuated d foreign to the key and in unison immediately follows B major. The solo part lends special consideration to the strengths of its two hornists: flexibility and tonal beauty in the middle and low registers and the capability to play even low tones quickly and precisely. The solo horn takes up the introductory theme amid variation, and then scales in racing descent astonish the listeners. In the development section breakneck leaps of all sorts of different kinds alternate with cantilenas led in the low registers. Other difficulties also occur to Rosetti in the recapitulation, and it is perhaps for this reason that he thought that he could do without the solo cadenza as an additional demonstration of virtuosity.

The ensuing “Romance” in B major, in its key still in a fifth relation to the E major main key, is impressive for its expressive strengths, intimacy, and intensity of musical feeling.

The rondeau inspired by a Bohemian dance melody conveys good humor and produces an entertaining effect with the fast alternation of briefly articulated passages, cantilenas, fast broken chords, and surprising general rests. After a deceptive cadence a highly expressive cantilena seeming

to anticipate the horn call of the romantic era in exemplary fashion emerges toward the end of the pianissimo of the strings. The extremely unusual concluding gesture of the solo horn leaves the listener amazed and cheered with an ironic wink. Perhaps this concerto was composed for Carl Türschmidt (1753–97), the son of the already mentioned Johann Türschmidt and a virtuoso on the “second horn”. Of him we read, “His tone was extremely strong, pure, and sure down into the 16’ depths of the contrebasse and his skill in passages of all kinds and through all the tones astonished every knowledgeable person.” He undertook concert tours through the whole of Europe as a high hornist in a duo with Johann Palsa (1752–92). In 1788 and 1789 Türschmidt resided in Paris, where the present concerto was later also printed by the Pleyel publishing company.

Johannes Moesus

Andante from: Concerto for 2 Horns & Orchestra in E flat major (Murray C55Q / Kaul III:54)

The authorship of the Concerto in E flat major (Murray C55Questionable; Kaul III:54) for two horns and orchestra is uncertain; Michael Haydn may also possibly have been its composer. The andante functioning as the concerto’s slow movement proves to be a romance in its form and content. The virtuosity of the soloists no longer serves the purposes of competition but becomes part of the unclouded and genuinely harmonious unity of the soloists distinguishing this movement.

Johannes Moesus

Concerto for 2 Horns & Orchestra in F major (Murray C61 / Kaul III:49)

(Composed March 1787)

1. *Allegro*
2. *Romance. Andante*
3. *Rondeau. Allegretto*

Rosetti expressly dedicated the Concerto in F major (Murray C61; Kaul III:49) completed in Wallerstein in March 1787 to these two hornists with the specification “fait pour Messieurs Nagel & Zwierzina”. This work instrumented with two oboes, two tutti horns, and strings with divided violas proves to be a large-scale sinfonia concertante, a form that in particular enjoyed great popularity in Paris and must have been studied intensively by Rosetti there.

At the beginning of the large-scale first movement of 307 measures an F major triadic chord executed in unison and led by the soloists is heard as the head motif. The further course of the orchestral introduction is of the extended length typical of Rosetti and follows the orientation of the formal scheme of the classical symphony; it has a primary theme and a secondary theme taking an additional color with their surprising modulations even into remote keys and is marked by motivic and dynamic contrasts. The soloists draw on the orchestral exposition in structural matters, occur in parallel leading, or engage in dialogue and display their virtuoso capabilities in extended fast passages placing the highest technical demands on the interpreters. The highly expressive cantilenas of the solo instruments in the minor area of the development section wonderfully demonstrate the romantic sound quality of the horn. The highest technical skill is also required of the soloists, each in his own instrumental register.

In the following “Romance”, a simple song form with which Rosetti had become acquainted in Paris and which he had learned to value, tonal beauty and expressive capability are in special demand. Here Rosetti succeeded in anticipating the expressive values of the nineteenth century with deeply felt emotion. The decision to compose this movement not in a key related to the fifth but in the minor key, F minor, of the same name also points ahead to the romantic era. While the first part of the movement,

which holds back at the beginning without the participation of the low strings, is marked by tragic expression, a deceptive cadence forms a transition to the middle part in A flat major, with this part suggesting brightness and optimism and temporarily making us forget the movement's prevailing melancholy mood.

The third movement also begins without the low strings. The fresh rondo theme in 6/8 time "à la chasse" presented by the soloists recalls the tradition of the natural horn as a hunting instrument and again requires the highest virtuosity. Rosetti's Bohemian wit is shown in his deliberate punctuation of the virtuoso playing with sudden general rests. The cheerful hunting music of the orchestral winds at the end of the rondo ritornello is submitted to ironic commentary by the exposed low tones of the second solo horn. While the first couplet in minor strikes dramatic tones contrasted with short major passages, the second couplet begins with a fugato: the first solo horn is followed by the second solo horn, which is followed in turn by the first violins, then by a further part of the strings, and lastly by the tutti. During the ensuing contest of the soloists the one attempts to outdo the other with passages of increasing virtuosity, and then in the short coda, in a countermovement, the first horn is driven into the highest registers and the second into the lowest registers by way of fast broken chords. Given this virtuosic, imaginative, and humorous music, it is no surprise that Rosetti's concerto for two horns enjoyed great popularity. Franz Kulmberger wrote from Fulda to Rosetti, "I take the liberty of writing to you, even though I cannot boast of the honor of having met you personally: through a duet concerto for two natural horns, [...] I have become acquainted with your name and unforgettable compositional style; I must admit that since your composition has been known to me I have wanted neither to hear nor to play anything else. I would like to have another or some other duet concertos for natural horn."

Johannes Moesus

Liturgical works

Requiem in E flat major (Murray H15) (Prague version)

1. *Introitus*
2. *Sequenz*
3. *Offertorium*
4. *Sanctus*
5. *Benedictus*
6. *Agnus Dei*
7. *Requiem aeternam*

"On the fourteenth of December at ten o'clock, exequies were held at the Church of St. Nicholas in the Lesser Quarter for the Kapellmeister and court composer Wolfgang Amadé Mozart who passed away in Vienna on the fifth of this month. The ceremony, executed by some of the finest local musicians under the direction of the honourable Joseph Strobach, was in fact most worthy of the great master. [...] Almost the whole city attended, such that there was not enough space on the upper part of the square to hold all the carriages; and neither was there enough space inside the voluminous church, capable of holding 4 000 people, to accommodate all those who came to pay tribute to the departed composer. The Requiem was by the famous Kapellmeister Rosetti [...] and it was so admirably performed by 120 of the best musicians, first among whom was the famous singer Duschek, that Mozart's great spirit in Elysium must have rejoiced." The above quote is an excerpt from an article about a memorial service for Wolfgang Amadé Mozart that appeared on the 17th of December 1791 in a Prague newspaper, the *Kaiserlich Königliche privilegierte Prager Oberpostamts-zeitung*. Similar reports appeared in the *Wiener Zeitung* and in the journal *Musikalische Korrespondenz* by music publisher Heinrich Philipp Bossler in Speyer. Mozart had a large and enthusiastic crowd of

supporters in the Bohemian capital ever since the highly successful production of *The Marriage of Figaro* in December of 1786 and even more so following the triumphant world premiere of *Don Giovanni* in 1787.

Joseph Strobach (1731–1794), the Kapellmeister of Count Nostitz' National Theatre who knew Mozart and his music well, was entrusted with the musical direction of the memorial service. The parish church of St. Nicholas, a baroque masterpiece in Prague's Malá Strana district where Strobach was choirmaster, had been chosen as the venue. Since the service was scheduled to take place only nine days after Mozart's death, time was of the essence. Strobach settled on a Requiem composed 15 years prior by his friend, the composer Antonio Rosetti.

Strobach's decision was well-founded: he needed a composition that was both readily available and preferably known to the performers; Rosetti's work fulfilled both requirements. In fact, Strobach had conducted the Requiem two years prior, using members of the same orchestra. Although not in print, the Rosetti Mass had become quite popular at the end of the 18th Century and numerous manuscript copies are preserved in various parts of Europe. The music was adapted to suit local requirements and several different versions exist. (Strobach's "Prague version" was selected for this recording.) Perhaps due to time constraints, Rosetti's original version from 1776 consisted of only four movements: *Introit*, *Sequence*, *Offertory* and *Sanctus*, with the opening movement's *Requiem aeternam* repeated at the end. Strobach's set of parts, now preserved in the manuscript collection of the Prague Loreto cloister, differs from the original in a number of ways: it includes two additional movements, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei*; the aria in the *Offertory*, originally composed for tenor voice, was changed to a soprano in the "Prague version"; and finally, Strobach's copy included parts for clarinet instead of oboes and added two bassoon parts.

The *Introit* is written in da capo form, and the psalm verse *Te decet hymnus* deviates considerably in dynamic markings, key (c minor) and tempo from the surrounding *Requiem aeternam*. A small but significant change of the liturgical text made by Rosetti underscores the original purpose of the Wallerstein Mass: Rosetti had composed the work for the funeral of his patron's wife, the Princess zu Oettingen-Wallerstein. Instead of the customary *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine* (*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord*), the passage reads *Requiem aeternam dona ei* (*Grant her eternal rest*). The same change exists in Strobach's manuscript with respect to Mozart. The *Dies irae*, performed by four soloists and mixed choir, is divided into contrasting sections corresponding to the eight verses taken from the Sequence. The *Offertory*, accompanied by a combination of two solo violas and two solo flutes, is not set to the canonical text *Domine Jesu Christe* but instead to the funeral hymn *Cur faciem tuam abscondis* (Hiob I 3, 24–25). The soloist was Josepha Duschek (1753–1824), one of the most famous sopranos of her time and a close friend of Mozart's; the master dedicated two of his most beautiful concert arias ("*Ah, lo previdi*", KV 272 and "*Bella mia fiamma*", KV 528) to her. The *Osanna*, a four-part fugue and arguably the most technically challenging section of the work, is distinguished by its rhythmic drive and intriguing harmonic permutations. All other parts of the movement are almost entirely homophonic in texture and should not have presented any difficulties for Strobach's singers.

With the exception of the *Osanna*-reprise at the very end, the *Benedictus* is more operatic in style and features the four solo voices prominently. By contrast, the *Agnus Dei* is less convoluted and appears to follow the ductus of the Wallerstein version closely. The authorship of the two additional movements remains unclear. It seems certain, however, that they did not come from the hand of Rosetti himself, who had become Kapellmeister at the court of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in 1789. Rosetti's mature style, evident in his work since the early 1780s (so for example in the last work on this recording), differs substantially from that of the Requiem's new movements. Strobach may well

have adapted or reworked the orchestration of the Mass, which was only 20 minutes long in its original form, to meet the liturgical requirements of the Prague performance.

It is not known whether Mozart and Rosetti ever met. Whatever the case may be, the opportunity for a meeting between the two existed in the fall of 1777. Mozart was on his way to Mannheim when his father advised him to make a stop at Hohenaltheim, the summer residence of Prince Kraft Ernst zu Oettingen-Wallerstein. The Mozarts had met the Prince a few years earlier on a journey to Italy, and he had invited them to pay him a visit. The timing of Mozart's was far from ideal; the Prince was still mourning his wife who had passed away the year before, and thus the court orchestra was still suspended and its best musicians were granted leave of absence. Rosetti however had stayed behind and used the time to compose.

Günther Grünsteudel

Graduale in E flat major (Murray H24)

Graduale in B flat major (Murray H25)

Meingosus Gaelle's musical parodies of the second and third movements of Rosetti's Symphony in E flat (Murray A23; Kaul I:5) form a rather unique part of the reception history of the composer's oeuvre. According to Georg von Dadelsen, musical parody is "a transmutation or reworking of an original piece of music into another; the substance remains intact while a partial remodelling of the musical form takes place". A set of manuscript copies of Gaelle's works is preserved at the library of Einsiedeln Abbey in Switzerland.

Gaelle was born at Buch in Swabia in 1752. He joined the Benedictine Abbey at Weingarten in 1769, where he took the Profession in 1771 and changed his name from Johannes to Meingosus. After the completion of his studies at the Benedictine University of Salzburg, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1777 and began teaching mathematics and philosophy at the Lyceum of Weingarten Abbey. Among many other responsibilities, he held the post of choir master at Weingarten for a number of years. Following the dissolution of the Abbey in 1802, Gaelle moved to Salzburg where he was appointed professor of dogmatics. He later became superior at the Basilica of Maria Plain where he died on February 4, 1816. Music played a major role in Gaelle's life as evidenced by a large body of church and chamber music, vocal and choral compositions, and by *The Creation of Adam and Eve*, a comic opera after Sebastian Sailer's musical comedy *The Swabian Creation*. The parodic treatment is particularly evident in his sacred music; many of the smaller works such as the graduals, offertories and antiphons, but also some of the larger ones such as the *Litany of the Most Precious Blood* for solo voices, choir and orchestra, are adaptations of works by other composers such as Rosetti, Joseph Haydn, Hoffmeister, Koželuch, Mozart, Pleyel and Vanhal.

Gaelle transformed the two movements of Rosetti's Symphony into graduals – a responsorial chant that is sung after the reading of the Epistle during Mass. With the exception of removing repetitions, Gaelle left the work's orchestration untouched. For the most part, his adaptation consists of the addition of a four-part homophonic section in which the choice, assignment and prosody of the liturgical text closely matches the symphonic character of the piece. The music is set to texts from the Gospel of Matthew ("*Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis*", Matthew 11:28) and from Psalm 97 ("*Viderunt omnes fines terrae salutare Dei nostri*", verse 3–4, 2). In order to understand the context of such adaptations, it is important to note that symphonic movements were often added to the celebration of Mass at the end of the 18th Century. These so-called "epistle symphonies" were inserted between the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel, and it is thought that this practice occurred at Weingarten Abbey as well. Without doubt, Gaelle's intention was to recombine the instrumental interlude with the liturgical text.

Günther Grünsteudel

Salve Regina in E flat major (Murray F85)

The *Salve Regina* is, like Rosetti's Requiem and Gaele's Parodies, very much an occasional work, although neither the date nor the circumstances of its creation are presently known. The only extant copy is an undated manuscript at the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, which also contains seven Marian antiphons and a *Miserere* by Rosetti. The manuscript was originally in the collection of Georg Poelchau (1773–1836), a famous Bach scholar. After Poelchau's death, it found its way to Berlin's Königliche Bibliothek. In terms of its compositional structure and instrumentation (soprano voice, two violins, viola and continuo), the *Salve Regina* is clearly indebted to the basso continuo tradition and is probably one of Rosetti's early works. Nevertheless, it is also a true gem in which Rosetti's melodic richness is once again revealed.

Günther Grünsteudel

Jesu, rex fortissimo. Hymnus in D major (Murray H31)

Rosetti's hymn "*Jesu, rex fortissime*", the last work on this recording, is a masterwork on a small scale. A set of manuscript parts is preserved in the collection of the Oettingen-Wallerstein court music library (now part of Augsburg University library). The music was composed for the confirmation of Prince Kraft Ernst's daughter Friedrike (1776–1831) on November 9, 1784. Friederike's mother, the Princess Maria Theresia, had died only days after giving birth; Rosetti was asked to compose a Requiem for her funeral, a version of which was later performed at Mozart's exequies in Prague. The sacrament of the confirmation was administered by Johann Nepomuk Ungelter von Deisenhausen, auxiliary bishop of Augsburg, at the parish church of St. Alban. The court orchestra provided the musical accompaniment to the ceremony, and Rosetti, the well-known court composer whose works were regularly performed at concert series in Paris, was asked to compose a hymn for four-part choir and orchestra based on a poem by Valentin Riegger, the parish priest at Wallerstein, to provide a fitting conclusion to the ceremony. Riegger commented on the creation of the work on a separate sheet in the Wallerstein parish records: "*On the 9th of November 1784, Her Highness the Princess Friderika received the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation; at the Prince's request, I composed the following aria, which was set to beautiful music by Hof-Compositeur Anton Rosetti and performed by the full choir at the conclusion of the service. [...] This Latin chant contains the essence of the Holy Confirmation, and the duty of the confirmed, which can also be given in the German language: O Jesus, almighty King! / Anointed with the Holy Chrism / and sealed with the Holy Spirit / we are ready to fight / for the Glory of your Cross; / We serve as your retinue; / we die for your Sake.*" Though only five minutes long, the hymn begins with a melancholy introduction – as if to memorialize the deceased Princess Maria Theresia – before joining the choir and orchestra in a powerful conclusion.

Günther Grünsteudel