

# THE PERIODICAL OVERTURE IN 8 PARTS III

## (*SINFONIA PASTORALE*)

### JOHANN STAMITZ

Published by Robert Bremner at the Harp and Hautboy, opposite Somerset-House, in the Strand

Issued: 31 August 1763; price 2 shillings

Source: Henry Watson Music Library – Courtesy of Manchester Libraries,

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Editors: Barnaby Priest & Alyson McLamore



#### COMMENTARY

Although the first two issues in the *Periodical Overture* series reflected composers trained in the Italian operatic tradition, Robert Bremner (c.1713–1789) turned to a leading member of the Mannheim School of orchestral music for his third publication, the “Sinfonia Pastorale” by Johann Stamitz (1717–1757). Stamitz had moved to Mannheim from his native Bohemia around 1741, joining the court ensemble as a violinist. On the last day of 1742, Elector Carl Philipp died, and his successor, Carl Theodor, proved to be a generous patron of the arts. Within three years, Stamitz was earning 900 gulden, making him the highest-paid instrumentalist in the Mannheim court, and in 1750, a new post was created for him: “Director of Instrumental Music.”<sup>1</sup>

The international reputation of the Mannheim orchestra soon soared, celebrated for its precision and exciting dynamic effects. Even after Stamitz’s death, the ensemble maintained its stellar reputation for decades. In 1772, Charles Burney famously described the ensemble as “an army of generals, equally fit to plan a battle, as to fight it,” since its membership included “more solo players and good composers . . . than perhaps in any other orchestra in Europe.”<sup>2</sup> Indeed, several other members of the ensemble were represented in Bremner’s series, and some of them had been Stamitz’s former composition students, such as Christian Cannabich (1731–1798), Anton Fils (1733–1760), and Ignaz Fränzl (1736–1811).<sup>3</sup>

It is tempting to speculate that it was yet another former student who influenced Bremner to feature a work by Stamitz in the third *Periodical Overture*, as well as in seven subsequent issues. Thomas Alexander Erskine, the Earl of Kelly (1732–1781), had studied both violin and composition with Stamitz for several years during the early 1750s. Kelly returned to his Scottish home in 1756, fully indoctrinated in the Mannheim style, and by 1761, he had finished writing his Opus 1, a set of six orchestral overtures. The Edinburgh publisher of those dazzling pieces was Bremner, who would then open his London shop the next year and launch the *Periodical Overtures* the year after that. It does not seem to be too much of a stretch to think that Bremner had made note of Kelly’s late teacher while he was engraving the Opus 1 plates. Since Bremner’s *Periodical Overtures* series promised to present the “most celebrated Authors” and works that had never been published in Britain, the renowned Stamitz was a logical candidate. Could Kelly—who spent a good deal of time in



<sup>1</sup> Eugene K. Wolf, “Johann Stamitz,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), Vol. 24: 265.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces* (London: T. Beckett, 1775), 1:93.

<sup>3</sup> Wolf, “Johann Stamitz,” 265.

London in the early 1760s—even have assisted Bremner in making the connection?<sup>4</sup> We are likely never to know the answer.

Unlike Bremner's first two *Periodical Overtures*, which seem to have been the first-ever publications of those pieces anywhere, Stamitz's "Sinfonia Pastorale" had been published at least once and perhaps twice before appearing in Bremner's series. In 1758, the Parisian printer "Huberty" (Anton Huberty) had issued it as "Sinfonia II" of Stamitz's *Six Symphonies*, Opus 4.<sup>5</sup> In Amsterdam, the publisher Johann Julius Hummel labeled the work as "Sinfonia V" within his own *Six Symphonies* by Stamitz.<sup>6</sup> Hummel's print is dated 1763, but it is unclear whether it appeared before or after Bremner's 31 August 1763 publication. Either way, it seems evident that it was the Parisian version that served as Bremner's model, since he retained the wavy lines (indicating vibrato) that are present in Huberty's edition and are absent in Hummel's.

In the inaugural issue of the *Periodical Overtures*, Bremner had omitted Bach's trumpet and timpani parts so that the English publication would comply with the announced "Eight Parts" designation. Nevertheless, the rest of the work was left intact. In *Periodical Overture No. 3*, however, Bremner made his first major

**NEW MUSIC.**  
*This Day is published,*  
**THE PERIODICAL OVERTURE,**  
Number III.  
Composed by J. STAMITZ.  
Printed and sold by R. Bremner, at the Harp and  
Hautboy, opposite to Somerset House in the Strand.  
Where may be had,  
Number I, composed by J. C. Bach. · Number 2, by  
P. Ricci. · Campioni's Sonatas for the Harpsichord  
Harpsichord Miscellany, Book 2 · Stamitz Duets for  
one Violin.  
With Variety of Music for Concerts.

structural change to a pre-existing work: he completely eliminated the third movement—a minuet and trio—that had appeared in both the Parisian and Amsterdam prints. In fact, Stamitz had been in the first wave of composers to add that dance to their symphonic works. Nevertheless, English audiences seem to have been slower than their continental counterparts to embrace the expansion of symphonies into the four-movement "sonata cycle" model, so Bremner arbitrarily trimmed Stamitz's symphony by 25%, apparently to bring it more in line with British taste. Since Stamitz had died even before Huberty's print

appeared, Bremner would have been unable to seek the composer's consent to the change, but since international copyright laws did not yet exist, it is doubtful that Bremner would have felt any need to obtain permission.

Bremner's three-movement version of the symphony had a wide reach. In 1768, five years after its publication, records show that it was performed twice during concerts of the Edinburgh Musical Society (on 4 March and 15 July). It was played again the next year, on 17 February and 8 December; twice in 1770; again on 27 November 1778; thrice in 1781; two times in 1782; three times each in 1783 and in 1784; and once again in 1785.<sup>7</sup> Also in 1785, when the Moravians founded a community in Fairfield, England, Stamitz's *Periodical Overture No. 3* was among the works in their music library.<sup>8</sup> It may have been the unnumbered "Periodical Symphony" by Stamitz that closed the second act of a 1771 concert in Boston, Massachusetts, although Bremner had issued five other works by Stamitz before that point, any of which could have been the symphony in the concert listing.<sup>9</sup> The simple fact that Bremner rapidly published six Stamitz symphonies within the first year of his series also suggests that the initial issue had enjoyed strong sales. Moreover, a sticker on the British Library's copy of the overture indicates that it had been sold at Welcker's Musick Shop on Gerrard Street, St. Ann's, in Soho.<sup>10</sup> It seems unlikely that a music retailer would carry a rival printer's publication unless it was in high demand.

An interesting feature of *Periodical Overture No. 3* is that it is an early example of a cyclic symphony. All three of its movements incorporate a motif drawn from a Czech Christmas carol, "Nesem vám noviny," sung in German as "Kommet, ihr Hirten" and adapted in English as "Bells Ringing in the Tower" and "Come,

<sup>4</sup> David Johnson, "Kelly [Kellie], 6th Earl of [Erskine, Thomas Alexander]," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), Vol. 13: 464.

<sup>5</sup> The British Library, h.2785.rr (4/2).

<sup>6</sup> [https://imslp.org/wiki/6\\_Symphonies\\_\(Stamitz,\\_Johann\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/6_Symphonies_(Stamitz,_Johann)).

<sup>7</sup> Jenny Burchell, *Polite or Commercial Concerts?: Concert Management and Orchestral Repertoire in Edinburgh, Bath, Oxford, Manchester, and Newcastle, 1730–1799*, Outstanding Dissertations in Music from British Universities, ed. by John Caldwell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 310–344 *passim*.

<sup>8</sup> Karl Kroeger, "An Unknown Collection of Eighteenth-Century Instrumental Music," *Fontes Artis Musicae* 35, no. 4 (October–December 1988): 277, 280.

<sup>9</sup> O. G. Sonneck, *Early Concert-Life in America (1731–1800)* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907), 262.

<sup>10</sup> British Library, g.474.n.(3).

All Ye Shepherds.”<sup>11</sup> A repeated motif in the last phrase of the carol (shown under the brackets)



lends its contour to various moments in the overture: in the woodwinds in mm. 10, 12, 14, and elsewhere in the first movement; in mm. 24, 25, and so forth in the “Larghetto”; and in augmentation at the start of the finale (mm. 2-3 and 6-7). Moreover, Stamitz designated the first movement as a “Pastorale Presto,” thus linking his symphony to a popular Nativity custom of writing “pastorella” works for performance in the Christmas season, often in church.<sup>12</sup>

Stamitz structured the quadruple-meter first movement in the pattern that James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy call a “Type 2 Sonata.”<sup>13</sup> The movement begins with a conventional exposition in D major; it transitions to the dominant A major and introduces a second theme at m. 35 and a closing theme at m. 47. However, when the first theme, filled with soft “drum 8ths” and a series of imitative descents, reappears in m. 66, it is also in A major. The return to the tonic key (m. 104) coincides with the recapitulation of the closing theme. That third theme is followed by the second theme (m. 120) as well as an additional statement of the closing theme at m. 132. The first theme does not return in the tonic key at all, and the movement ends at a *pianissimo*, reflecting its unconventionally quiet opening.<sup>14</sup>

Although the triple-meter “Larghetto” (in the subdominant key of G major) also starts quietly, it features numerous sudden *piano*–*forte* contrasts (and vice versa), reflecting the Mannheim taste for distinctive dynamic variety. Like the opening movement, it employs a Type 2 sonata pattern, this time with repeated sections in a ||: 1st theme/I – 2nd theme/V :||: 1st theme/V – 2nd theme/I :|| progression.

In contrast to the quiet openings of the first two movements, the “Vivace” in D Major begins at a vigorous *forte* and with a unison *premier coup d’archet*.<sup>15</sup> The finale conforms to a model sonata-form in a bouncy 6/8 meter. Richard Will suggests that this lively gigue-like conclusion supports the “glorifying and praising God” that concludes the St. Luke account of the Nativity story.<sup>16</sup> Even without a religious connotation, *Periodical Overture No. 3* presents a well-unified yet varied listening journey.

## EDITORIAL METHODS

*Transposing instruments:* Transposing instruments are written in conventional modern format indicating original key—parts in original keys are available [e.g., Horn I in F (orig. in D)].

*Slurs and ties:* Editorial slurs are indicated using dotted lines; editorial ties are indicated by brackets.

*Triplet/rhythmic grouping indications:* In general, modern practice is followed. Occasionally (especially in slow movements), original subdivisions are used. Where groupings are inconsistently realized in the original source material, modern groupings are adopted.

*Grace notes and appoggiaturas:* These are generally treated as appoggiaturas and are given a value of half the note they precede; in cases where it seems clear that grace notes are intended in the original, a slash is added.

*Alternate notes/ossia passages, etc.:* When a written note is unplayable, an alternative octave substitution is indicated in smaller font and within brackets.

*Accents/articulations/fermatas:* There is considerable inconsistency in articulation throughout the set of periodical overtures. Following the Bremner edition, a wedge is used rather than a staccato mark. In some cases, the printed edition uses wedges and staccato markings within a movement (usually the slow central movement). When this is the case, both marks have been used. Where parallel passages indicate the use of articulations, these have been included between brackets.

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.cpdl.org/wiki/index.php/Nesem\\_v%C3%A1m\\_noviny\\_\(Traditional\)](https://www.cpdl.org/wiki/index.php/Nesem_v%C3%A1m_noviny_(Traditional)); Eugene K. Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz: A Study in the Formation of the Classic Style* (Utrecht: Bohn, Scheltema & Holkema, 1981), 303.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven*, *New Perspectives in Music History and Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 86.

<sup>13</sup> James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 353–4.

<sup>14</sup> Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz*, 303.

<sup>15</sup> David D. Boyden and Peter Walls, “Coup d’archet,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), Vol. 6: 579.

<sup>16</sup> Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven*, 90.

*Dynamic markings:* In the original edition, the placement of dynamic marks can be inconsistent within the bar and sometimes across the barline. Where the correct placement of the dynamic is clear from the musical phrasing, the dynamics have been repositioned without comment. Where dynamics are less clear, or missing, the editor's dynamics occur within square brackets.

*Crescendo / diminuendo markings:* "Cresc." and "dim." markings are generally used, but there are rare exceptions to this with the use of hairpins. Where these are editorial, they are enclosed in square brackets. Other markings such as *rinf.* have been retained except where it seems clear that this refers to a crescendo.

*Realization of notational shorthand:* For spacing reasons, some use of notational short-hand has been used. When this is the case, the first full beat has been written out.

*Altered note values:* In the sources, there are occasional errors and inconsistencies in note values. Where these occur, the altered note values are given within brackets.

*Accidentals:* As is standard modern practice, accidentals remain valid until the next barline. This differs from eighteenth-century practice where this convention was not consistently employed. Wherever this is the case, accidentals are added in brackets.

*Figured bass:* Although the eighteenth-century parts usually position the figured bass numerals above the relevant bass notes, the modern score and parts show them below the basso line.

*Missing music:* Where music is missing in the original, alternative sources are sought (e.g., when a bar is missing due to a printer's error or when music is unreadable). When eighteenth-century concordances are unobtainable, editorial notes are added in smaller font within brackets.

## CRITICAL NOTES

The notation of dynamics and articulation has been standardized throughout. Where these are missing in the original source, they have been reconstructed from parallel passages. These are indicated by the use of dotted slurs and brackets. Where there is inconsistency in the use of staccato articulation marks, the editors have taken decisions based on the collocation of the markings. As is common with music printed in this period, *appoggiature* are inconsistently notated. These have been standardized. Copyist errors have been corrected in brackets (see notes below), along with errors in accidentals. The horn parts have been transposed into F in the score. Metronome marks are a suggestion for performance only. Rehearsal letters, cues in parts, and bar numbers have been added for convenience.

<b>Mvt. 1</b>	<b>Pastorale Presto</b>	
mm. 56, 58	Ob 1	appoggiatura E5 added to 3rd beat, unison with Violin 1
m. 56, 58	Vn 1	appoggiatura E5 added to 3rd beat, parallel passages at mm. 105 and 107
mm. 105, 107	Ob 1	appoggiatura A5 added to 3rd beat, unison with Violin 1
m. 106	Ob 1	1st beat changed to F5, unison with Violin 1
m. 108	Vn 1	appoggiatura G5 added to 2nd & 4th beats, parallel passage at m. 136
m. 108	Vn 2	appoggiatura E5 added to 2nd & 4th beats, parallel passage at m. 136
m. 109	Vn 1	appoggiatura G5 added to 2nd & C6 added to 4th beat, parallel passage at m. 137
m. 109	Vn 2	appoggiatura E5 added to 2nd beat, parallel passage at m. 137
m. 129	Vn 1	2nd beat changed to quarter-note E5, parallel with passage at m. 44
<b>Mvt. 2</b>	<b>Larghetto</b>	
mm. 23, 25	Vn 1	final 8th note changed to C#4, unison with Violin 2
m. 42	VA, Basso	quarter notes changed to 8th notes, parallel with Violin 2
<b>Mvt. 3</b>	<b>Vivace</b>	
m. 74	Ob 2	1st beat changed to dotted quarter-note, parallel with Oboe 1

## CATALOGUE REFERENCES

- RISM A/I S/SS 4595 [Répertoire International des Sources Musicales;  
<https://rism.online/sources/990060924>]
- DTB III/1 D-dur 4 [Hugo Riemann, ed., *Sinfonien der pfalzbayerischen Schule (Mannheimer Symphoniker)*, Jahrgang III, vol. 1 of *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern* (Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst, Zweite Folge), ed. Adam Sandbergern (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1902)]
- Dürrenmatt No. 7 [Hans-Rudolf Dürrenmatt, *Die Durchführung bei Johann Stamitz (1717–1757): Beiträge zum Problem der Durchführung und analytische Untersuchung von ersten Sinfoniesätzen*, Serie II, Vol. 19 of Publikationen der schweizerischen musikforschenden Gesellschaft (Bern, SZ: Verlag Paul Haupt, 1969)]
- GZ 52 [Peter Gradenwitz, *Die Werke*, Teil II of *Johann Stamitz: Leben—Umwelt—Werke*, Taschenbücher zur Musikwissenschaft, vol. 94 (Wilhelmshaven, Germany: Heinrichshofen's Verlag, 1984)]
- Wolf D-4 [Eugene K. Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz: A Study in the Formation of the Classic Style* (Utrecht: Bohn, Scheltema & Holkema, 1981)]

## ILLUSTRATIONS

- Stamitz portrait: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Johann\\_Stamitz.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Johann_Stamitz.jpg) (public domain in its source country on January 1, 1996, and in the United States).
- Publication announcement: *The Public Advertiser*, 31 August 1763, p. 3 (courtesy of the British Library Archives)

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ESSAY

<https://repertoire-explorer.musikmph.de/en/periodical-overtures-details/>



## PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

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