

THE PERIODICAL OVERTURE IN 8 PARTS VI

JOHANN STAMITZ

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

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Editors: Barnaby Priest & Alyson McLamore



COMMENTARY

The sixth issue in the *Periodical Overture* series represented several milestones: it culminated the first set (since mid-century symphonies were frequently issued in groups of six); it was the first overture to cost more than two shillings; and it was the first time Robert Bremner (c. 1713–1789) featured a “repeat” composer, Johann Stamitz (1717–1757). A work by Stamitz had been published only three months earlier as *Periodical Overture No. 3*, and it is tempting to speculate that it had enjoyed good sales, thus prompting Bremner to offer a second selection by that leading member of the Mannheim school. Indeed, six more symphonies by Stamitz would appear in the *Periodical Overtures*, which put Stamitz in a tie for first place as the “most-represented” composer in the series, alongside the eight works by Johann Baptist Vanhal (Vanhal) (1739–1813) that Bremner also issued in the later years of this long-running publication.



As is true with all the *Periodical Overtures*, we do not know how Bremner came by the parts for *Number 6*. The Parisian printer Anton Huberty had published two slightly different versions of this E-flat symphony twice in the late 1750s, once in a collection with multiple composers and once as the first item in an “Opus V” set devoted to symphonies by Stamitz.¹ Neither of these Huberty prints had contained the D major symphony that Bremner had used for *Periodical Overture No. 3*, so clearly Bremner had accessed various sources as he assembled items for his London series. The Huberty concordances with *Periodical Overture No. 6* both had four movements; in fact, Stamitz had been among the first wave of composers to add a minuet to symphonic works. But, as Bremner had done with the previous Stamitz symphony, he eliminated the minuet movement. English audiences seem to have been slow to embrace the continental expansion of symphonies into the four-movement “sonata cycle” model, so by again trimming the original work, Bremner brought it more in line with British taste.

All of the prints, whether in Paris or in London, were posthumous publications for Stamitz, demonstrating a continued high regard for his compositional skill. 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.”²

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

¹ Eugene K. Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz: A Study in the Formation of the Classic Style* (Utrecht: Bohn, Scheltema & Holkema, 1981), 432.

² 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.

other orchestra in Europe.”³ 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).⁴

NEW MUSIC
 This Day is published, Price 2s. 6d.
 To be continued Monthly, Number VI. of
THE PERIODICAL OVERTURE.
 Composed by Sig. J. STAMITZ.
 Printed by R. Bremner, at the Harp and Hautboy,
 opposite to Somerset House in the Strand
 N. B. As this Number compleats the first Set, those
 who have got the former Numbers will please to call for
 a general Title to all the Parts.

Bremner’s title page retain the customary “two shillings” cost (as shown on the inner title page of this *Musikproduktion Höflich* edition), while others reflect his increased charge for this particular issue. In addition, as noted in Bremner’s newspaper advertising, this symphony “compleat[ed] the first Set,” and thus he catered to purchasers who were possessed of a collector spirit by offering “a general Title” page that could be bound with the full group of six. Perhaps the increased charge also helped to defray his costs for this gratis supplement.

As had been true with Bremner’s previous publication of a Stamitz symphony, his three-movement version had a wide reach. Records show that *Periodical Overture No. 6* was performed in concerts of the Edinburgh Musical Society twice a year during 1768 and 1769, and it was then played three times in 1770. It was heard sporadically in the Scottish concerts over the next decade and a half: once a year in 1771, 1778, 1779, and 1780; then twice in 1781, once in 1782, three times in 1783, and once again in 1785.⁵ Four years later, “The 6th Periodical Overture of J. Stamitz” opened the second half of the final concert in a three-performance 1789 subscription series offered in New York by pianist Alexander Reinagle (1756–1809) and cellist Henri Capron (fl. 1785–95).⁶ Reinagle had emigrated from London three years earlier; perhaps he carried the *Periodical Overture* in his luggage.⁷ As had been true for the previous *Periodical Overture* by Stamitz, the British Library’s copy of *No. 6* had been sold by a rival of Bremner: Welcker’s Musick Shop on Gerrard Street, St. Ann’s, in Soho.⁸

Stamitz used the key of E-flat major for all the movements of *Periodical Overture No. 6*, but the opening “Allegro” in common-time differs from the others by employing a sonata-form structure without

The higher price of two shillings six pence for *Periodical Overture No. 6* was almost surely due to the greatly increased length of the symphony in comparison to the previous five issues. With its three movements comprising 220, 104, and 314 measures, this was the first time that Bremner needed to exceed two pages each for the first and second violin parts (in fact, *No. 6* required four pages for each of those parts, while the viola and basso parts each ran to three pages). Curiously, some surviving copies of

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³ Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces* (London: T. Beckett, 1775), 1:93.

⁴ Wolf, “Johann Stamitz,” 265.

⁵ 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), 310–345 *passim*.

⁶ O. G. Sonneck, *Early Concert-Life in America (1731–1800)* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907), 187–8.

⁷ Robert Hopkins, “Reinagle: (2) Alexander Reinagle,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), Vol. 21: 153.

⁸ British Library, g.474.n.(4).

repeats. The first half of the opening polyphonic theme sustains its *pianissimo* dynamic over “drum 4ths” for a surprisingly extended twenty-one measures, then pauses for a fermata. The second half of Theme 1 is a robust *forte* with sequential upward rockets in the first violins. The transition (m. 38) employs the Mannheim school’s beloved measured tremolos, and the second theme in B-flat major—at measure 62—is closely related to the first theme, similar to the monothematic sonata-form approach that Joseph Haydn would use in a number of his works. The main contrast in this passage is Stamitz’s increased emphasis on the oboes, who play a much more active line; another measured tremolo leads to the start of the development (m. 113). The development’s sudden drop to *pianissimo* launches another favorite Mannheim device: a full-ensemble crescendo to *fortissimo* over the next nine bars. Moreover, the horns are given an extensive “vibrato” indication by means of a long, wavy line. The recapitulation’s return to the tonic (m. 174) also returns to the *pianissimo* dynamic, but the winds are given an even more prominent role, including some distinctive triplets.

Both the second and third movements employ the same form, diagrammed as ||: a/I b/V :||: a/V b/I :||. James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy have labeled this pattern as a “Type 2 Sonata.”⁹ The duple-meter “Andante” reduces the scoring to strings only, playing a fairly disjunct “a” theme and a more conjunct, triplet-filled “b” melody (m. 29). The finale employs the full ensemble, again in duple meter, but now at a lively “Presto.” The first theme is syncopated with quick upward arpeggiations (and vibrato passages in the winds), while the more lyrical second theme (m. 57) showcases the oboes above “drum 8ths.” The lengthy second half of the Type 2 binary sonata form features some lovely harmonic progressions and employs another Mannheim crescendo that starts in measure 205. The movement represents one of Stamitz’s most extended structures, leading Eugene K. Wolf to classify it as a very late work, as well as “probably also [Stamitz’s] most dramatic.”¹⁰

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.

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.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz*, 338.

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.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Mvt. 1 | Allegro | |
| m. 4 | Vn 2 | appoggiatura A4 added to 2nd beat (parallel with Violin 1) |
| m. 21 | Ob 2 | appoggiatura Eb5 added to 1st beat (accented passing note, parallel with Violin 1) |
| m. 35 | Basso | triplet eighth notes on 4th beat adjusted to three eighth notes over 3rd and 4th beats |
| mm. 63–66 | Hn 1 | transposed down one octave to facilitate dynamic level |
| mm. 63–67 | Hn 2 | transposed down one octave to facilitate dynamic level |
| m. 79 | Ob 2 | 1st beat changed to A♯5 (repetition of previous note) |
| m. 112 | Basso | rhythm on 2nd beat changed in parallel with orchestral rhythmic unison |
| m. 118 | Vn 2 | appoggiatura G4 added to 2nd beat (parallel with Violin 1) |
| m. 136 | Ob 1 | 2nd beat changed to Ab5 (unison with Violin 1) |
| m. 137 | Ob 1, Vn 1 | appoggiatura F♯5 added to 1st beat (repetition of previous note) |
| m. 140 | Basso | 2nd beat changed to E♯3 (maintain harmony from previous measure) |
| m. 140 | VA | 2nd beat changed to E♯4 (maintain harmony from previous measure) |
| m. 216 | Hn 1 | last beat changed to F4 (parallel with Oboe 1) |
| m. 217 | Hn 1 | first three quarter notes changed to parallel Oboe 1 |
| m. 219 | Basso | rhythm on 2nd beat changed to parallel orchestral rhythmic unison |
| Mvt. 2 | Andante | |
| m. 51 | Vn 1 | 1st quarter note changed to dotted quarter note (parallel with ensemble) |
| Mvt. 3 | Presto | |
| m. 51 | Hn 2 | pitch changed to D5 (correcting copyist error) |
| mm. 62, 66 | VA | pitch changed to A♯3 (accidental missing) |
| mm. 90, 94, 105, 124, 126 | VA | pitch changed to A♯4 (accidental missing) |
| m. 117 | Vn 1, Vn 2 | rhythm on 2nd beat changed in parallel with orchestral rhythmic unison |
| mm. 124, 126 | VA | pitch changed to A♯4 (accidental missing) |
| m. 156 | VA | last eighth note changed to A♯4 (accidental missing) |
| mm. 160–162 | VA | pitch changed to B♯3 (accidental missing) |
| m. 175 | Basso | figured bass changed to 4/3 (copyist error) |
| m. 176 | VA | first eighth note of 2nd beat changed to Ab4 (parallel interval with m. 174) |
| m. 176 | Basso | first eighth note of 2nd beat changed to Ab3 (parallel interval with m. 174); figured bass changed to b5/4/3 (copyist error and pitch adjustment) |

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------|---|
| Mvt. 3 | Presto, cont. | |
| mm. 246, 250 | VA | pitch changed to A \sharp 3 (accidental missing) |
| m. 264 | Hn 1 | appoggiatura Eb5 added to 1st beat (parallel with Oboe 1) |
| m. 264 | Hn 2 | appoggiatura C5 added to 1st beat (parallel with Oboe 2) |
| m. 271 | Hn 1 | appoggiatura Eb4 added to 1st beat (parallel with Oboe 1) |
| m. 271 | Hn 2 | appoggiatura C4 added to 1st beat (parallel with Oboe 2) |
| m. 272 | Hn 1, Hn 2 | 1st beat changed to quarter note (rhythmic unison with Oboes) |
| m. 313 | Ob 1, Ob 2 | second eighth note changed to two sixteenth notes (rhythmic unison with VN 1) |

CATALOGUE REFERENCES

- RISM A/I S/SS 4597 [Répertoire International des Sources Musicales;
<https://rism.online/sources/990060926>]
- DTB Es-dur 6 [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. 24 [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 57 [Peter Gradenwitz, *Die Werke*, Teil II of *Johann Stamitz: Leben—Umwelt—Werke*, Taschenbücher zur Musikwissenschaft, vol. 94 (Wilhelmshaven, Germany: Heinrichshofen's Verlag, 1984)]
- LaRue 11954 (S789) [Jan LaRue, *A Catalogue of 18th-Century Symphonies*, Volume I: Thematic Identifier (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988)]
- Wolf Eb-6b [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 (public domain in its source country on January 1, 1996, and in the United States).
- Publication announcement: *The Public Advertiser*, 1 December 1763, p. 3 (courtesy of the British Library Archives)
- Title page: British Library, g.474.n. (4.) (courtesy of the British Library Archives)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ESSAY

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



PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

Please contact *Musikproduktion Höflich, München*: <https://musikmph.de/>

