

THE PERIODICAL OVERTURE IN 8 PARTS XII

JOHANN STAMITZ

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

Issued: 2 June 1764; price 2 shillings

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COMMENTARY

Publisher Robert Bremner (c.1713–1789) must have breathed a sigh of relief in June 1764 as he printed the twelfth *Periodical Overture in 8 Parts*. For a solid year, he had honored his pledge to issue a new symphony—one that had never been published in Britain—every month.¹ In fact, he may have decided to stop the series at this point, inasmuch as it would be two more years before a thirteenth issue was announced.

Periodical Overture No. 12 marked the end of the second set of six symphonies, and as Bremner had previously done with the publication of *No. 6*, he offered a “general Title”—a special cover sheet—to customers who had acquired the full preceding set of six pieces.² That cover page made it very obvious that Johann Stamitz (1717–1757) had been well represented in the “Opera Secondo,” having contributed *Nos. 7, 9, 11, and now 12*. Since there had also been two earlier Stamitz symphonies issued in the “Opera Primo” (*Nos. 3 and 6*), he had been responsible for fully half of the dozen works published as *Periodical Overtures*.



The prevalence of compositions by Stamitz was almost certainly an indication of their marketability as well as an acknowledgment of the late composer’s continued stature. 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.”³

NEW MUSIC.
This Day is published, Price 2 s.
NUMBER XII. of the
PERIODICAL OVERTURE :
Composed by Signor J. STAMITZ.
N. B. This Number compleats the second Set; to which a general Title for each Part may be had gratis.
Printed and sold by R. Bremner, opposite Somerset-House, in the Strand.
Of whom may be had, just published, a second Set of Lessons for the Harpsichord, composed by Signor F. Pellegrino, Price 5 s. The favourite Songs now sung at Ranelagh, &c. A second Set of Violin Titles by Sig. Zannetti, 5 s.

The international reputation of the Mannheim orchestra soon soared, celebrated for its precision and exciting dynamic effects. Stamitz also enhanced his personal standing by making two successful trips to Paris in the 1750s.⁴ Even after Stamitz’s death, the ensemble maintained its stellar reputation for decades. In 1772, Charles Burney famously described the orchestra as “an army of generals, equally fit to plan a battle, as to fight it,” since its membership included “more solo players

¹ *The St. James’s Chronicle; or, The British Evening-Post*, Saturday, 25 June, to Tuesday, 28 June 1763, p. 2.

² *The Public Advertiser*, 2 June 1764, p. 1.

³ 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.

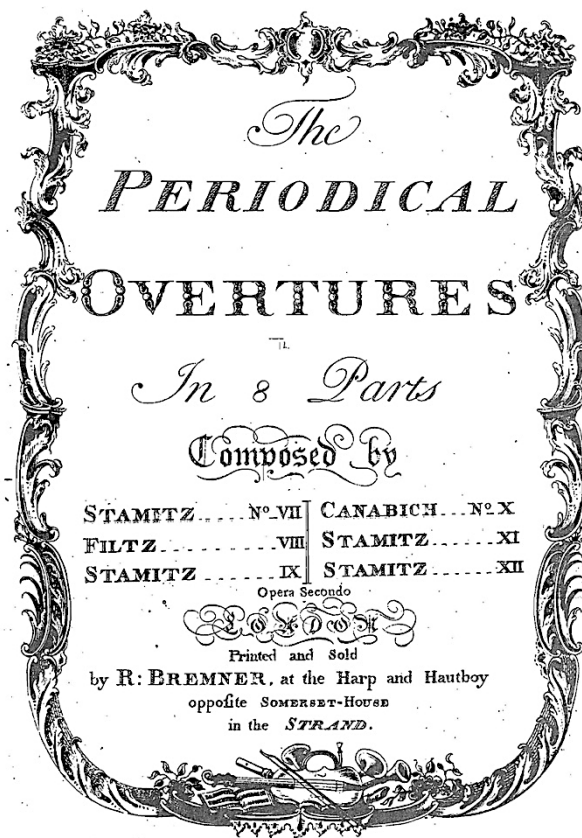
⁴ Wolf, “Johann Stamitz,” 265.

and good composers . . . than perhaps in any other orchestra in Europe.”⁵ Indeed, two other members of the ensemble had already been represented in Bremner’s series, among them Stamitz’s former composition students Christian Cannabich (1731–1798; *Periodical Overture No. 10*) and Anton Fils (1733–1760; *Periodical Overtures No. 4* and *No. 8*); more would follow when the series was resumed.⁶

In four of the previous five symphonies by Stamitz that Bremner had published, Bremner had reduced the number of movements to three to suit the taste of his British customers. In the case of *Periodical Overture No. 12*, however, no four-movement version of this F-major symphony is known to exist. A curiosity of Bremner’s version is that it has oboe parts, which is not true of the earlier Parisian print by “Huberti” (Anton Huberty). That 1757 French issue—the last item of six symphonies by Stamitz labeled as Opus III—was for “Quatre Parties” (violins 1 and 2, viola, and basso), but also included parts for “les Cors de Chasses,” or French horns.⁷ Historian Eugene K. Wolf conjectures that Bremner created the parts himself “to make the work conform to the *a 8* format of the series.”⁸

Bremner’s “co-composed” *Periodical Overture No. 12* stayed in various ensembles’ repertory for quite some time. Surviving records from the Edinburgh Musical Society show that it was played once in 1768, twice in 1769, and three times in 1770. Although their records list many unnumbered (and uncredited) *Periodical Overtures* over the next fifteen years, *No. 12* by Stamitz was specifically referenced again in 1785.⁹ That same year, a Moravian community was founded in Fairfield, England, and Stamitz’s *Periodical Overture No. 12* was among the works in their music library.¹⁰

Wolf regards *No. 12* as a middle-period work by Stamitz, dating from approximately 1748–1752.¹¹ Perhaps for that reason, the opening movement’s sonata-form is somewhat vestigial. After three crisp “hammer-blow” strokes, or *premier coups d’archet*, followed by a series of arpeggiated chords, the first theme proceeds into a measured-tremolo passage (a characteristic “Mannheim” gesture) that is repeated via a descending sequence.¹² Stamitz’s orchestration skill is evident in a delicious passage occurring first in measures 31–34, in which an upward-leap motif is quickly tossed between various families of the ensemble. The second theme (m. 47) is more lyrical; after ten *piano* measures, it ascends through a *forte* sequence above “drum 8ths.” It, too, is followed by a repetition of the upward-leap interplay, and the exposition concludes with arpeggiation that resembles the opening. The development (m. 79) begins with the hammer blows, now in C major, but the recapitulation (m. 141) starts with the second theme, and only a small fragment of the first theme’s arpeggiated material returns to wrap up the movement (m. 195).



⁵ Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and the United Provinces*, 2nd ed., corrected (London: T. Beckett, J. Rosson, and G. Robinson, 1775), I:95.

⁶ Wolf, “Johann Stamitz,” 265.

⁷ The British Library, g.98 (2/6).

⁸ Eugene K. Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz: A Study in the Formation of the Classic Style* (Utrecht: Bohn, Scheltema & Holkema, 1981), 391.

⁹ 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, 313, 317, 345.

¹⁰ Karl Kroeger, “An Unknown Collection of Eighteenth-Century Instrumental Music,” *Fontes Artis Musicae* 35, no. 4 (October–December 1988): 277, 280.

¹¹ Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz*, 391.

¹² 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.

As is the case with many early-Classic symphonies, the second movement shifts to the subdominant key of B-flat major and employs a binary-sonata pattern that James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy call a “Type 2 Sonata”; it can be diagrammed as an $||: a/I b/V :||: a/V b/I :||$ structure.¹³ The first theme is filled with energetic sixteenth-note triplets that are often performed homorhythmically by the strings-only ensemble; rapid dynamic changes occur every one or two measures. The second theme (m. 32) is conjunct and more lyrical, but it, too, features multiple dynamic contrasts. The first theme is presented in the dominant F major at measure 44, while it is only the second theme that returns to the tonic in measure 86.

In several ways, the “Presto” finale meets the expectations of its era: it is in a gigue-like 3/8 meter and conforms to a standard sonata-form structure. The bouncy first theme arpeggiates the home key of F major and the melody is soon underpinned by Mannheim-esque measured tremolos and drum 8ths. Stamitz’s surprise arrives with the second theme, however, which is in the dominant minor mode (m. 44). Only with the closing theme (m. 63), with its forceful quadruple-stop chords, do we arrive at a full-fledged C major. The themes are presented in the same order during the recapitulation (m. 134), but the second theme retains its minor mode (m. 180). Again, however, the multi-stop closing theme (m. 198) steers the movement back into major mode, leading to an extended and robust coda.

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.

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.

¹³ 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.

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, *appoggiatura* 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 remain in F, the key of the Bremner originals. 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. 1	Hn 2	1st & 2nd beats changed to C4 (octave doubling with Horn 1)
m. 46	Ob 1	2nd beat appoggiatura C5 & D5 added (unison with Violin 1)
m. 58	Ob 1, Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura changed to B \sharp 4 (parallel with Oboe 1, m. 62)
m. 60	Vn 1	2nd beat changed to F \sharp 5 (unison with Oboe 1)
m. 62	Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura changed to B \sharp 5 (parallel with Oboe 1, m. 62)
mm. 96, 97	Hn 2	notes changed to F5 (parallel with Oboe 2)
m. 100	Ob 1	second eighth note changed to E \flat 5 (unison with Vn 1)
m. 135	Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura D6 added (parallel with Violin 1 in mm. 137, 139)
Mvt. 2	Andante	
mm. 3, 5	Vn 2	2nd beat rhythm changed (rhythmic unison with Violin 1)
m. 38	Vn 1	first sixteenth note of 2nd beat change to C \sharp 5 (parallel with Viola)
m. 64	Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura changed to E \sharp 5 (harmonic change)
m. 65	Vn 1	second & third triplet on 1st beat changed to G4 & A4 (unison with Violin 2)
m. 93	Vn 1	first sixteenth note of 2nd beat change to F \sharp 5 (parallel with Viola)
Mov 3	Presto*	
*	Hn 1, Hn 2	tempo indication is "Presto assai"
m. 25	Vn 1	appoggiatura added to 1st beat (parallel with Violin 1, m. 21)
m. 44	Vn 1	1st beat changed to dotted quarter note
mm. 71, 75	Ob 1	1st beat shortened to quarter note (octave parallel with Oboe 2)
m. 130	Ob 1	1st beat extended to dotted quarter note (parallel with Oboe 2)
m. 178	Ob 1, Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura changed to B \sharp 5 (continuation of harmony)
m. 185	Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura changed to A \flat 5 (continuation of harmony)
m. 196	Vn 1	1st beat appoggiatura changed to B \sharp 4 (continuation of harmony)
m. 213	Basso	1st beat changed to quarter note (parallel with Viola)
m. 221	Ob 2	1st beat changed to dotted quarter note (parallel with Oboe 1)
m. 225	Ob 1	1st beat changed to dotted quarter note (parallel with Oboe 2)
m. 263	VA, Basso	1st beat changed to dotted quarter note (parallel with orchestral unison)

CATALOGUE REFERENCES

- RISM A/I S/SS 4601 [Répertoire International des Sources Musicales; <https://rism.online/sources/990060930>]
- DTB F-dur 2 [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)]
- GZ 50 [Peter Gradenwitz, *Die Werke*, Teil II of *Johann Stamitz: Leben—Umwelt—Werke*, Taschenbücher zur Musikwissenschaft, vol. 94 (Wilhelmshaven, Germany: Heinrichshofen's Verlag, 1984)]
- LaRue 13997 (S789) [Jan LaRue, *A Catalogue of 18th-Century Symphonies*, Volume I: Thematic Identifier (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988)]
- Wolf F-2 [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)
- “Opera Secondo” title page: British Library, R.M.16.f.16 (22/6.) (courtesy of the British Library Archives)
- Publication announcement: *The Public Advertiser*, 2 June 1764, p. 1 (courtesy of the British Library Archives)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ESSAY

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



PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

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

