

CLARIFYING THE SPOHR WORK LIST

Three Related Items

by Keith Warsop

1. Spohr's missing opus numbers

WHEN he compiled his monumental Spohr thematic catalogue, Folker Göthel identified three types of works; those published with opus numbers during Spohr's lifetime; others, both published without opus numbers and unpublished to which he allocated numbers of his own (Werke ohne Opus = WoO); and dubious or spurious works, a section of minimal content which does not concern us here. The section of the catalogue devoted to works published with opus numbers follows their numerical order rather than the chronology of composition date. Thus, the three sonatas concertantes for harp and violin composed between 1806 and 1811 but not published until 1840-41 as Opp. 113-115 appear after Op. 112 of 1837 and immediately before the *Historical Symphony*, Op. 116 of 1839. However, the "works without opus numbers" section adopts a different plan based on medium and genre. Here Göthel divides his catalogue into compositional groups; WoO.1-8 are orchestral works, WoO.9-20 are for solo instruments with orchestra and so on. Within each group the order is chronological.

Although some published works appear in the WoO section (because they were published without opus numbers), yet Spohr himself in a number of cases did allocate an opus number which he entered into his own catalogue of his compositions. These account for a significant amount of the opus numbers missing from Göthel's first section. In view of Spohr's own decision to assign these opus numbers, it seems a pity that Göthel did not use them, especially as his catalogue is not a chronological one (to be fair, he does mention these numbers in his notes appended to each work). Even though some of Spohr's published opus numbers are a long way out in a chronological sequence of his compositions (as with Opp. 113-115 as we have seen above), the additional ones generally give a fair idea of where the work appears in his output. For this reason it is thought useful to list the missing opus numbers between his Op. 1 (First Violin Concerto) and Op. 154 (Six Songs for baritone, violin and piano) and, where applicable, the works to which Spohr assigned them.

Op. 14 This was originally intended for the *Die Prüfung* overture, composed in the autumn of 1806. However, this was published as Op. 15 (Simrock, Bonn, 1809) but this number was also used for Spohr's fourth and fifth string quartets (Kühnel, Leipzig, 1809) so that the title page of the overture edition was amended to Op. 15^A which is how it appears in Göthel.

Op. 18 There is no record of this number being used.

Op. 19 There is also no record of this number's use.

Op. 76 This was given to the overture to *Pietro von Abano*. The opera was composed between February and August 1827 and the overture published without opus number (Schlesinger, Berlin, 1828). Göthel does not list the overture separately from the complete opera (WoO.56) though, strangely, he does so for opera overtures published with opus numbers.

Op. 99 This was the number for the *Fantasia in the form of a Concert Overture Die Tochter der Luft*, which was composed in November 1836. The work was never published and its whereabouts are not now known though Spohr reworked it as the first movement of his Fifth Symphony. Göthel WoO.6.

Op. 100 There is no record of this number being used.

Op. 104 Spohr assigned this number to his setting of Klopstock's *Vater Unser*, composed in January 1838 for a choral festival in Frankfurt. The work underwent three compositional stages; the first with piano accompaniment which was published without opus number in Frankfurt at the time of the 1838 festival; the second which Spohr orchestrated in March 1838 for "harmonie musik" or wind band which is still unpublished; and finally for full orchestra in January 1845 for a performance in Kassel at that time. This is also unpublished. Göthel catalogues the work as WoO.70.

Op. 109 This is another number which does not appear to have been used.

Op. 134 Spohr's opus number for his setting of Psalm 84 in a German translation of Milton's metrical version and composed in September-October 1846 with orchestration following in February 1847. It was not published until after Spohr's death (Pohle, Hamburg, 1873). Göthel WoO.72.

Op.151 This was the number Spohr gave to his Six Songs for four-part choir composed in the spring of 1855 and another work which was not published until after Spohr's death (again, Pohle, Hamburg, 1873). Göthel's number is WoO.87.

Apart from the last composition published during Spohr's lifetime with opus number, the songs, Op.154, the literature on the composer also includes further numbers Opp.155-157. These were assigned by the musicologist Hans Glenewinkel on the following basis. Soon after completing the songs in 1856 Spohr wrote his 35th string quartet (which he mistakenly numbered 34, see below for expansion on this subject). He was dissatisfied with the work, revised it, was still not happy and so withdrew it. He next, in the spring of 1857, wrote his 10th Symphony which he also withdrew as he again felt it was not up to standard. Finally, later in 1857 he began his 36th and final string quartet. It was evidently intended to replace the previous, withdrawn, one for he again marked it No.34 but this time added Op.157. Glenewinkel argued that this was proof that, as the songs were Op.154, the previous quartet must be Op.155 and the symphony Op.156 as Spohr had composed nothing else to which those numbers could be applied. We continue our own list with these three "Glenewinkel" numbers:

Op.155 String Quartet No.35 in E \flat major in the revised version (originally in G minor), composed autumn 1856. Göthel's number is WoO.41.

Op.156 Symphony No.10 in E \flat major, composed spring 1857 (completed in April according to the autograph). Göthel numbers it WoO.8.

Op.157 String Quartet No.36 in G minor composed during the summer of 1857. Göthel WoO.42.

2. Spohr's String Quartets: The New Grove Corrected

THE Spohr work list appended to Martin Dreyer's article on Spohr in the New Grove has caused some problems for those referring to it for information about his string quartets as it suffers from misprints and a confused presentation of dates of composition. In view of this, we have been asked to provide detailed information on the relationship of the opus numbers to a chronological ordering of the quartets. To undertake this project raises a number of issues which need to be resolved.

Firstly, Spohr himself introduced errors when he started to number his quartets, beginning with the A major, Op.132 of 1846. He gave it the number "30" when, in fact, it was his 31st. Whether Spohr forgot to include the A major *quatuor brillant*, Op.93 of 1835 which stands rather in isolation as the only one he wrote between the Op.84 set of 1831-32 and the Op.132 quartet is not clear but he continued the mistaken sequence for the remainder of his quartets. No.32 in C major, Op.141 (1849) was published as "No.31"; No.33 in G major, Op.146 (1851) became "No.32"; and No.34 in E \flat major, Op.152 (1855) was "No.33".

We have noted above details of the composition of Spohr's two final quartets. The first of these, his 35th, which was originally in G minor but revised in E \flat major, was numbered "34" by Spohr as was the final and 36th quartet in G minor which also exists in a revised version. Because of this anomaly over the numbering of the later quartets some reference works give Spohr's total of string quartets as 33 and others as 34, ignoring the withdrawn quartets, whereas the correct figure is 36.

Secondly, a few of the quartets were not published in the order in which they were composed. The most significant displaced work is the *quatuor brillant* in B minor, Op.61 (1819) which did not appear in print until 1823 after the three quartets of Op.58 (1821-22). Also, the three quartets of Op.29 were not printed in their chronological sequence which was: No.3 in F minor (1813), No.1 in E \flat major (1814) and No.2 in C major (1815). The general practice has been to number Spohr's quartets in publication order; Op.29/1-3 are 7-9, Op.58/1-3 are 15-17 and Op.61 is 18.

The list in the New Grove shows the published sets in a composite entry which is misleading over dates of composition. It also ignores Folker Göthel's research into the dates of composition of the earliest quartets and, worst of all, is finally in error in its identification of Spohr's two final published quartets because of misprints. The relevant problem entries in the New Grove catalogue are as follows (place and date of publication in parentheses):

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| Op. | |
| 4 | Two Quartets, C, g, 1807 (Leipzig, 1807) |
| 11 | <i>Quatuor brillant</i> , d, 1807 (Bonn, 1808) |
| 15 | Two Quartets, E \flat , D, 1808 (Leipzig, before 1814) |

- 29 Three Quartets E \flat , C, f, 1813-15 (Vienna, 1815)
 30 Quartet, A, 1814 (Vienna, before 1819)
 142 Quartet, E \flat , 1855 (Leipzig, 1856)
 146 Quartet, G, 1851 (Leipzig, 1856)

Finally, we append a correct list of Spohr's quartets, compiled by Martin Wulforst and expanded by us to include more details on dates of composition and publication. He lists the quartets in publication order but the number assigned to each work is based on compositional order. He also adopts Spohr's designation of *solo quartet* for Opp.27 and 30 although, for the composer, this term was interchangeable with *quatuor brillant*. Here, that category is reserved for the three-movement works Spohr wrote in this style; *solo quartet* here indicates a four-movement quartet fully worked out thematically but with *quatuor brillant* texture, ie the dominance of the solo violin. In addition, the alternative versions of the posthumous quartets are given:

Op. No.	Key	Date	Place	Published
4/1	1 C major	1804-05	Brunswick/Gotha	Leipzig, 1806
4/2	2 G minor	1804-05	Brunswick/Gotha	Leipzig, 1806
11	3 D minor (<i>Quatuor brillant 1</i>)	1806	Gotha	Bonn, 1808
15/1	4 E \flat major	1806-08	Gotha	Leipzig, 1809
15/2	5 D major	1806-08	Gotha	Leipzig, 1809
27	6 G minor (<i>Solo quartet 1</i>)	1812	Gotha	Vienna, 1813
29/1	9 E \flat major	Autumn, 1814	Vienna	Vienna, 1815
29/2	10 C major	January, 1815	Vienna	Vienna, 1815
29/3	7 F minor	Spring, 1813	Vienna	Vienna, 1815
30	8 A major (<i>Solo quartet 2</i>)	May, 1814	Vienna	Vienna, 1819
43	11 E major (<i>Quatuor brillant 2</i>)	Jan & May, 1817	Rome/Thierachern	Leipzig, 1818
45/1	12 C major	March-July, 1818	Frankfurt	Leipzig, 1819
45/2	13 E minor	March-July, 1818	Frankfurt	Leipzig, 1819
45/3	14 F minor	March-July, 1818	Frankfurt	Leipzig, 1819
58/1	16 E \flat major	Nov-Dec, 1821	Dresden	Leipzig, 1822
58/2	17 A minor	Nov-Dec, 1821	Dresden	Leipzig, 1823
58/3	18 G major	Dec/Jan-Mar, 1821-22	Dresden/Kassel	Leipzig, 1823
61	15 B minor (<i>Quatuor brillant 3</i>)	Summer, 1819	Frankfurt	Leipzig, 1823
68	19 A major (<i>Quatuor brillant 4</i>)	October, 1823	Kassel	Leipzig, 1825
74/1	20 A minor	August, 1826	Kassel	Leipzig, 1827
74/2	21 B \flat major	November, 1826	Kassel	Leipzig, 1827
74/3	22 D minor	December, 1826	Kassel	Leipzig, 1827
82/1	23 E major	October, 1828	Kassel	Berlin, 1829
82/2	24 G major	November, 1828	Kassel	Berlin, 1829
82/3	25 A minor	February, 1829	Kassel	Berlin, 1829
83	26 E \flat major (<i>Quatuor brillant 5</i>)	August, 1829	Kassel	Berlin, 1830
84/1	27 D minor	November, 1831	Kassel	Offenbach, 1834
84/2	28 A \flat major	January, 1832	Kassel	Offenbach, 1834
84/3	29 B minor	March, 1832	Kassel	Offenbach, 1834
93	30 A major (<i>Quatuor brillant 6</i>)	Sep-Oct, 1835	Kassel	Vienna, 1837
132	31 A major	February, 1846	Kassel	Leipzig, 1847
141	32 C major	February, 1849	Kassel	Kassel, 1849
146	33 G major	Oct.-Nov., 1851	Kassel	Leipzig, 1856
152	34 E \flat major	June-July, 1855	Kassel	Leipzig, 1856
155	35 G minor (<i>first version</i>)	Autumn, 1856	Kassel (WoO.41a)	Unpublished
155	35 E \flat major (<i>second version</i>)	Autumn, 1856	Kassel (WoO.41b)	Unpublished
157	36 G minor (<i>first version</i>)	Summer, 1857	Kassel (WoO.42a)	Unpublished
157	36 G minor (<i>second version</i>)	Summer, 1857	Kassel (WoO.42b)	Unpublished

Spohr's Danzi Variations: The Orchestral Version

BOTH the compositional and the publishing history of Spohr's *Fantasie and Variations on a Theme of Danzi*, written for the clarinet virtuoso Simon Hermstedt in the autumn of 1814, are rather involved. The music itself was based on a newly-written Potpourri for violin and harp on themes of Vogler and Danzi but not published until 1841 (as "on Themes of Handel and Vogler"!). In revising this work for Hermstedt, Spohr jettisoned the Vogler material (from that composer's then popular opera-ballet *Castor und Pollux*) and concentrated purely on the Danzi theme. Clive Brown, in the 1991 *Spohr Journal*, tackled the problems involving the source of the "Danzi" theme whereas our task here is to place on record a new discovery in the publishing history of the piece.

In his memoirs, Spohr tells us that "Hermstedt came [to Vienna during the 1814 Congress] at a time when the concerts were so numerous that he could not give one of his own. He played, however, with immense applause at a concert of the flautist Dressler [November 20th] in which he accompanied the air with clarinet obbligato in *La Clemenza di Tito*, accompanied and played a potpourri of mine which I wrote for him for the occasion after a new composition for harp and violin that had particularly pleased Hermstedt. Both compositions were afterwards published; that for clarinet with quartet accompaniment as Op.81 at Schlesinger's in Berlin, and that for harp and violin as Op. 118 by Schubert in Hamburg". Spohr mentions the work only once more; the extract from his diary of a concert at the Frankenhäuser Musical Festival on October 20th, 1815. The previous day Spohr's cantata *Das befreite Deutschland* and Gottfried Weber's *Te Deum* were performed, and the concert on the 20th included Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony, Spohr's Seventh Violin Concerto, an oratorio aria with chorus by Paer, "an Adagio and Potpourri of mine for the clarinet played by Hermstedt, likewise very favourably received", and finally, a patriotic song with organ and orchestral accompaniment by Methfessel.

The 1830 Schlesinger publication issued the work in an arrangement for clarinet and piano as well as for clarinet and string quartet which latter version is, one presumes, Spohr's preferred medium. However, late in the 19th century the German clarinetist Robert Stark (1847-1922), composer of three clarinet concertos himself as well as numerous pedagogic works, edited a publication by C.F. Schmidt of Heilbronn. According to Folker Göthel's *Spohr Thematic Catalogue*, the clarinet and piano arrangement had the Schmidt volume number 90 while the string quartet parts were number 91. What Göthel does not list are the parts for full orchestra which have the number 92 (the double-bass part, however, is given the number 91 in parentheses; therefore one assumes it was also an optional part for the chamber version to be used when the work was performed in this form in larger halls). The orchestra consists of two flutes, two oboes, two B \flat clarinets, two bassoons, two horns in F, two trumpets in F, three trombones, timpani and strings. These parts have been brought to our attention by the clarinetist John Denman who has just recorded this version. They were discovered by the North American clarinetist David Glazer in the library at Marburg, near Cologne and made available by him for John Denman's recording. It would appear from library stamps on the material (Deutsche Musiksammlung BERLIN bei D. Kgl. Bibliothek) that it was once held by one of the main Berlin libraries and was among music sent out of the German capital for safe keeping soon after the start of the Second World War.

The question which arises over this orchestral version is whether it is authentic Spohr and we must say right away that this essay is not able to answer that question outright; but there is some circumstantial evidence both for and against the proposition. Arguments against Spohr's authorship include the fact that the string parts remain exactly as they are in the quartet version whereas Spohr's usual practice when providing variant versions was to make some compositional changes too; for instance the Potpourri on Themes of Mozart, Op.24 for solo violin and string trio is changed so much when arranged for violin and piano (as Op.42) that the original second theme, "Batti, batti" from *Don Giovanni*, is scrapped and replaced by "Voi, che sapete" from *Figaro*. However, with Op.81 it could be argued that Spohr had already undertaken something of this sort in revamping the original violin and harp potpourri. Another argument against is the fact that when Spohr sold the work to Schlesinger for the 1830 publication he also sold the Potpourri on Themes of Winter which appeared as Op.80 at the same time and in this case was published for orchestra. One argument in favour of Spohr is Hermstedt's performance of the work at the Frankenhäuser Musical Festival; the day before, Spohr's *Das befreite Deutschland* had been given and that

work includes three trombones, instruments which also appear in the Danzi orchestration. Perhaps, therefore, the orchestral version was prepared just for this occasion which would explain why the string parts do not have any material transferred to the woodwinds and why Spohr did not publish it; it is possible he felt that the orchestra was too large for a piece for the standard clarinet repertory.

One other piece of evidence can be called on to support Spohr following the practice of providing an orchestral version, though for a different composition. The Potpourri, Op.22 was published for solo violin, string quartet and optional double-bass but when he played the work in Paris in 1821 (he refers to it in his memoirs as “the Potpourri on the duet from *Don Juan*”) he says: “In the [...] potpourri, some of the wind instruments failed twice, from a negligence in observing the pauses.” But no orchestral version is known today though if one were discovered we could point to Spohr’s memoirs to vouch for its authenticity.

If Spohr was not the author of the Op.81 orchestration, then perhaps Robert Stark was the man who prepared this arrangement although, unusually, there is nothing in the printed parts to indicate his responsibility. We now await further comments from Spohr scholars which might solve the conundrum. In the meantime, Göthel’s catalogue needs updating with the addition of the Schmidt orchestral parts.

Note

1. Both Op.81 and Op.118 were published as “fantasies” rather than “potpourris”. So we can infer that by about 1830 the term “Potpourri” was falling into disrepute, caused perhaps by the number of such works which were just “medleys” in modern parlance rather than the more structured compositions at which Spohr aimed. Some justification for this view can be found in the fact that Spohr’s last published works with the title “Potpourri” were the two based on material from his opera *Jessonda*, dating from autumn 1823 (opp.64 and 66). Later, he preferred the title “Fantasie” as in his Op.117 composed in January 1841 and based on themes from his opera *Der Alchymist*.