

# INTRODUCTION

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The works in the present volume, the Concerto in B-flat Major, Wq 39, and the Concerto in E-flat Major, Wq 40, are the last keyboard concertos Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach wrote before he left Berlin in 1768. In NV 1790 (pp. 33–34), they appear as nos. 40 and 41 among the concertos, both with the date 1765 and the remark “also for oboe” (auch für die Hoboe gesetzt). In the catalogue of the Schwerin organist and collector Johann Jacob Heinrich Westphal they bear the numbers 43 and 44 with the notation, “This concerto is also for oboe . . . but somewhat altered” (Dies Concert ist auch für die Hoboe gesetzt . . . jedoch etwas verändert). A corresponding remark appears by the listings of the oboe concertos.<sup>1</sup>

## History and Sources of the Concertos

Undoubtedly both works were conceived as oboe concertos. The oboe versions, Wq 164 and 165, survive in autograph scores that are included in the composite manuscript D–B, Mus. ms. Bach P 356, along with scores of the four immediately preceding keyboard concertos, Wq 35–38 (the first dating from 1759, the others from 1762), the last three of which are also autographs.<sup>2</sup> At the end of the autograph of Wq 165 in P 356 is a draft for measures 323–39 of the third movement of Wq 40. Otherwise the keyboard versions are exclusively transmitted in sets of parts: Bach’s autograph house copy of Wq 39 (source A), which probably originated while Bach was still in Berlin; copies of both concertos made for Westphal in 1792 by the Hamburg copyist Johann Heinrich Michel (Wq 39, source D 1, and Wq 40, source B);<sup>3</sup> and three copies of Wq 39 by other hands (sources D 2–D 4).

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1. [Johann Jacob Heinrich Westphal,] “Catalogue thématique des Oeuvres de Ch. Ph. Emm. Bach,” B-Br, Fétis 5218 (Ms. II 4140 Mus.), fol. 11, 44.

2. For details, see CPEB: CW, III/5, III/9.11, and III/9.12.

3. On Michel, see Georg von Dadelsen, *Bemerkungen zur Handschrift Johann Sebastian Bachs, seiner Familie, und seines Kreises* (Trossingen: Hohner, 1957), 44; Joachim Kremer, *Das norddeutsche Kantorat im 18. Jahrhundert* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1995), 300–1; Jürgen Neubacher, “Der Organist Johann Gottfried Rist (1741–1795) und der Bratschist Ludwig August Christoph Hopff (1715–1798): zwei Hamburger Notenkopisten Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs,” *BJ* 91 (2005): 121–22.

From the surviving sources and documents it is not possible conclusively to establish either the reason why Bach transcribed the two concertos for keyboard or all the details of the process. Aside from NV 1790, there are no dates or documents concerning external factors or obligations that might have occasioned the reworkings. All the sources for Wq 39 have the right hand of the cembalo in soprano clef while those for Wq 40 (Bach’s draft in P 356 and source B) have it in the more modern treble clef. This might have some bearing on the chronology of the transcriptions, but is not enough in itself to support a firm conclusion.

The extent of the revisions was not clear to Bach’s heirs in the years after his death. In a letter of 13 June 1792 to Westphal concerning the production of Michel’s copies of both versions of both concertos for his collection, Bach’s daughter Anna Carolina Philippina explained, “for the concertos no. 27, 40, and 41 the accompanying parts for the different solo instruments are the same.”<sup>4</sup> She was forced to retract the statement a few weeks later:

I must humbly beg forgiveness on behalf of my copyist. He did not take enough care in looking over [the music]. The two concertos cannot be performed as oboe concertos with the [accompanying] parts prepared for the keyboard versions; the parts for the oboe versions certainly differ from them here and there, as your Honor may already have noticed from the different numbers of measures.<sup>5</sup>

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4. “Zu den Concerten N. 27, 40 und 41 sind die Begleitungsstimmen der verschiedenen Conc. Stimmen dieselben.” The surviving letters from Bach’s heirs to Westphal, which were written by Anna Carolina Philippina (under the name of her mother Johanna Maria until the latter’s death in 1795), are published in Schmid 1988; Janet K. Page kindly allowed the use of her English translations. Concerto no. 27 exists in versions for keyboard (Wq 26), flute (Wq 166), and violoncello (Wq 170); the other two concertos exist in versions for keyboard (Wq 39 and 40, respectively) and oboe (Wq 164 and 165).

5. “Ich muß im Namen meines Notisten sehr um Vergebung bitten. Er hat beym Nachsehen nicht Aufmerksamkeit genug angewendet. Beyde Concerte können mit den zum Clavier ausgeschriebenen Stimmen nicht als Hoboe Concerte aufgeführt werden; weil die Stimmen zur Hoboe allerdings hin und wieder von diesen abweichen, wie Ew. Wohlgeb. auch solches schon aus der Verschiedenheit der Tactzahl bemerken können.” Letter to Westphal dated August 1792, Schmid 1988, 500.

Michel in fact copied a set of parts to Wq 165 for Westphal, making use of a source for Wq 40, only to discover that the final tutti of the third movement contained seven concluding measures (mm. 388–94) not found in the oboe version that he had to cross out (his copy otherwise follows the oboe version).<sup>6</sup> The other differences between Wq 165 and Wq 40 are so substantial that Michel could not have copied Wq 40 from the autograph of Wq 165. Presumably the model that Michel used for Wq 40, source **B**, and for the crossed-out passage in Wq 165, was itself a set of parts, most likely a house copy like Wq 39, source **A**; this hypothetical lost model is designated Wq 40, source **[A]**.

Westphal had begun collecting the works of C. P. E. Bach in the 1780s and had corresponded with the composer in the last few years of his life. He continued his activity after Bach's death, dealing with the composer's widow and daughter on a variety of issues until the daughter, Bach's last heir, died in 1805. One of Westphal's aims was to assemble a complete set of Bach's unpublished instrumental works in manuscript copies. Much of his collection (a great deal of which was copied by Michel) passed to the Bibliothèque Royale and Bibliothèque du Conservatoire in Brussels by way of François-Joseph Fétis.<sup>7</sup> While Michel had worked for Bach throughout his Hamburg years and his copies were carefully prepared, the copies he made for Westphal after Bach's death are necessarily of secondary value compared with the sources written or supervised by Bach himself. Thus there is no first-rate source for Wq 40.

These concertos never became well known in either of their versions. On the title pages of the autographs of the oboe versions Bach has added the comment, "ist wenig bekannt," and on that of the house copy of Wq 39 he has written, "ist nicht sonderlich bekannt." The existence of four contemporary secondary MS copies of Wq 39 indicates that this version of this concerto achieved at least a limited circulation outside Bach's circle. Further, there are revisions to the keyboard part of the house copy of Wq 39 that suggest that Bach made use of the work over a period of time. The most significant of these is a revision of the right-hand part of measures 118–25 of the finale, but there are several smaller alterations in the second movement (mm. 63, 104, and 107; details appear in the critical report). The secondary copies **D 2** and **D 4** have the earlier readings of these passages (**D 3** lacks the keyboard part; **D 1** follows the house copy). As **D 2** appears to have been

copied in or near Hamburg, it appears that Bach must have undertaken these revisions after his move to that city. None of the other versions of either concerto seems to have been generally known, however. One may even question whether Wq 40 was ever performed, as the obvious clash between keyboard and basso parts in measure 116 of the second movement (see the commentary) shows no traces of a correction.

### Bach's Alterations in the Keyboard Versions

Bach's last Berlin keyboard concertos belong to a series of works arranged for keyboard from originals for melody instrument starting in 1750.<sup>8</sup> The reasons for this interest in arranging the same concerto for different solo instruments cannot be fully established, though it came at a time when Bach's overall production of concertos had dropped significantly. Jane Stevens is certainly correct in saying that in Bach's output as a whole the concerto "played a much less important role after the mid-1750s than did newer sorts of works for large ensemble."<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, Bach did expend significant effort to create the keyboard versions of these concertos. Certainly they follow the formal and harmonic plan of the oboe versions, but the solo sections incorporate new material and have been laid out quite differently. This of course principally affects the role of the melody and bass parts. In the solo sections of the oboe versions the solo instrument carries the melody, with accompaniment by the basso continuo. The keyboard takes its traditional role, playing the basso continuo in both solo and tutti passages.<sup>10</sup> By contrast, in the keyboard versions the keyboard must alternate between playing from figured bass as part of the tutti and playing fully written-out music as a soloist. This results in a greater contrast between the tutti and solo passages be-

8. Bach arranged the violoncello concertos Wq 170–172 of 1750–53 for both flute (Wq 166–168) and keyboard solo (Wq 26, 28, 29). Two slightly later concertos, Wq 34 (1755) and 35 (1759) are intended for either organ or harpsichord; Bach also created a flute version (Wq 169) of the first of these. Two earlier concertos, Wq 13 (1744) and Wq 22 (1747) also exist in versions for flute and for keyboard. The flute and violoncello concertos appear in CPEB: CW, III/4 and III/6, respectively, along with a detailed discussion of their histories.

9. Stevens, *The Bach Family and the Keyboard Concerto*, 222.

10. On the role of the figured bass in the north German keyboard concerto in the mid-eighteenth century, see Arnfried Edler, ed., *Norddeutsche Klavierkonzerte des mittleren 18. Jahrhunderts: Adolf Carl Kunzen (1720–1781), Johann Wilhelm Hertel (1727–1789)* (München: Katz-bichler, 1994), pp. x–xi; also Arnfried Edler, *Gattungen der Musik für Tasteninstrumente* (Laaber: Laaber, 1997), 2:18–19.

6. See commentary to Wq 165 in CPEB: CW, III/5.

7. For details, see Leisinger/Wollny 1997, 25–74, 85–89.

cause the violoncellos and double basses no longer play in the soli. Further, Bach fully takes into account the different nature of the solo instruments. In the quick outer movements the *cantabile* oboe lines moving in triplet eighth and sixteenth notes are transformed into rapid keyboard passagework, almost in diminution. In conjunction with this, the keyboard part may take over motivic material from the accompanying instruments, or contrarily—particularly in the slow movements—the strings may assume long-held notes from the oboe part (see Wq 39/ii, mm. 110–23). While the oboe part takes its rhythmic and melodic substance from the violins and moves in the same rhythmic values, often closely accompanied by them, the keyboard part is full of virtuosic *fioriture* and is generally more rapid and complex rhythmically and harmonically, and the strings accompany the soloist less often in the keyboard versions. The keyboard compensates for its lack of the oboe’s *cantabile* quality with profuse ornamentation and figuration, greater harmonic complexity, and rhythmic differentiation, sharpening the distinction between the soloist and the orchestra. The rhythmic complexities of the slow movement of Wq 40 are particularly striking; they have counterparts in the keyboard concertos of Johann Gottfried Mützel and Johann Wilhelm Hertel.<sup>11</sup>

Besides heightening the contrast between the soloist and the orchestra, in the keyboard versions of these concertos Bach expands the solo parts. While the first movement of Wq 39 is extended by a single measure of solo (m. 174), the finales of both concertos show changes that reinforce their virtuosic character. As was mentioned previously, Bach revised the right hand of the keyboard part of mm. 118–25 in the finale of Wq 39. In the earlier state this passage continues the sixteenth-note motion of the previous measures, which is already more active than the oboe version. In the later version Bach has made the keyboard writing still more brilliant and rhythmically striking. In the finale of Wq 40 Bach added twenty-seven measures. The solo part has been expanded by the addition of four measures to an unaccompanied passage (mm. 286–89) and the previously mentioned new accompanied passage that Bach drafted on the autograph of Wq 165 (mm. 324–39). Bach further added the concluding unison passage in mm. 388–94 that Michel mistakenly copied into Wq 165, intro-

11. It is significant that the revisions to mm. 63, 104, and 107 of this movement, mentioned above, serve to accentuate the complexity of the music; mm. 63 and 104 provide particularly interesting examples because in the oboe version these measures move in diatonic quarter notes, whereas the two variants of the keyboard part are progressively more chromatic and more rhythmically elaborate.

ducing unexpected rhythmic elements that increase the weight of the orchestral epilogue.<sup>12</sup>

Neither the rewritten passages of the concertos nor most of the new material would have required Bach to make a draft in score before copying out parts. The only new passage that is complex enough to require a draft is precisely the one Bach wrote out in the autograph of Wq 165. The extant house copy of Wq 39 is thus undoubtedly the original source for the concerto. As was previously indicated, there was most likely a similar source for Wq 40.

The manner in which Bach rewrote the oboe concertos for keyboard indirectly helps identify the instrument he had in mind for these transcriptions—namely, the harpsichord. Though the harpsichord was not capable of equaling the oboe in *cantabile* lines, the truly *cantabile* member of the keyboard family (certainly in Bach’s view), the clavichord, was not powerful enough dynamically to perform with an orchestra. In accordance with this, the sparse dynamic indications in the keyboard parts of the two concertos stand in sharp contrast to the highly differentiated dynamics of much of Bach’s solo keyboard music. The occasional change between *forte* and *piano* in the keyboard parts of these concertos can easily be accomplished by changing manuals on the harpsichord. Nuanced dynamic changes often appear in the string parts while the keyboard part does not participate (see Wq 40/ii, mm. 57–61, 71–80, 85–87). This is yet another indication that Bach did not originally conceive these works for keyboard. In the transitional period of the 1760s Bach might have occasionally experimented with the fortepiano. In general, however, the fortepiano was still not thought suitable for the role of concertante solo instrument in this period.<sup>13</sup>

### Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to all the libraries that provided source material for the edition; in particular the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv, and the Bibliothèque du Conservatoire Royal de Musique, Brussels, which also kindly gave permission to publish the plates.

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12. For further discussion of the adaptation process in these two works, see Wade, 106–7.

13. See Arnfried Edler, “Zwischen Händel und Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Zur Situation des Klavierkonzertes im mittleren 18. Jahrhundert,” *Acta musicologica* 58 (1986):198–99, 201, 213; also Edler, *Gattungen der Musik für Tasteninstrumente*, 2:33–42.